



Annual Report of the Area Committees

2023–24

**Sunderland
City Council**

Contents

Foreword	3
Area Arrangements and growing community wealth	4
Area Committees and VCS Networks	5
Area Committees, Links for Life and Digital Health Hubs	6
Coalfield Area Committee	8
East Area Committee	12
North Area Committee	16
Washington Area Committee	20
West Area Committee	24
The year ahead	26
Area Committees 2024-25	27

Foreword



Councillor John Price

As Sunderland City Council's Cabinet member for Vibrant City, I am proud to present this Annual Report of Area Committees for 2023-24. This report has been produced to highlight the combined achievements of the five Area Committees (Coalfield, East, North, Washington, and West Sunderland) and their partners, and to demonstrate the successes of joint working which has taken place over the past year.

In 2023 each Area Committee developed a three-year Area Plan (2023-2026), using local knowledge and evidence, to outline priorities for their area for the benefit of local communities. Area Plans are designed to support the delivery of the City Plan at a local level, with an area-specific focus, relevant to the unique requirements of that area. Each Area Plan has been used to develop, fund and deliver initiatives and projects in collaboration with partners and local voluntary and community sector (VCS) organisations. We are extremely grateful to all the local groups who have helped us to successfully deliver a wide range of activities and

services across all areas. We have now delivered Year 1 of our three-year plan and this report highlights just some of the key achievements. We have recognised the need to be flexible in our support to communities and acknowledge the need to adapt our plans to address emerging issues and concerns within the community.

To deliver on each area's priorities, a total of £2,289,034 area budget was awarded, this year, across the five areas. This has enabled local groups and partners to attract a further £2,257,868 to the City, adding value and providing additional services within local communities. You can see more information and detail in the following, area-specific, sections of this annual report.

I would like to give my thanks and gratitude to the local Voluntary and Community Sector (VCS) organisations and all partners in each of the areas, who have continued to deliver projects and supported the work of the Area Committees throughout the past year. Area Committees are proud to support these groups who are providing valuable services for residents of all ages, and all Councillors are committed to supporting and working in partnership with the established five Area VCS Networks, which are linked directly with each of the Area Committees.

In the last 12 months, as well as being allocated funding from Area Committee resources, the sector has been awarded additional budgets to provide enhanced support to residents. Examples include funding to set up 35 Links for Life community hubs, and 22 Digital Health Hubs.

Further information on both initiatives is provided as part of this report.

The implementation of the Sunderland Voluntary Sector Alliance (SVSA), developed with key partners across the city, has further progressed this year. Area Committees and VCS Networks have worked closely with partners, during this year, to develop and support the Alliance which is now an independent charitable organisation, ensuring the voluntary sector is supported and resourced in the city.

Finally, I would like to offer my thanks to the Area Arrangements team for all their hard work and support over the last year. The relationships forged between the team and all stakeholders and partners has added value to the work we do within our communities for the benefit of the residents of Sunderland. The work involved in providing support to Area Committees, including the development of projects and initiatives, administering of grants, monitoring funded projects and working with residents, partners and communities for mutual benefit cannot be underestimated. In this year alone we have made 356 payments totalling £1,989,416 to VCS organisations.

Area Arrangements and growing community wealth

Sunderland City Council is committed to growing Community Wealth and bringing forward significant investment into the city. Sunderland elected members are all Community Wealth Champions, working together with residents and communities to reduce health inequalities, increase resilience and maximise the use of assets to improve communities.

The reality of Community Wealth Building delivery on the ground is practiced through Area Arrangements and the work of the Area Committees with their supporting Neighbourhood and Community Boards. The Area Committees are comprised of all Elected Members from the Area's wards who work closely with council officers, service delivery partners and members from the Area Voluntary and Community Sector Network (VCSN).

The role of the Area Committee is to:

- Identify the main priorities that reflect the biggest need in the area;
- Develop efficient and effective solutions to local area priorities as well as supporting city-wide issues; and
- Encourage local residents to become involved in decision making on matters which affect them



They do this in many ways, one of which is providing funding to take forward projects that deliver their identified priorities. Each of the Area Committees hold delegated budgets in the form of the Neighbourhood Fund and Community Chest. These budgets are allocated to support projects and initiatives that can demonstrate that their work will contribute to delivery of the Areas' identified priorities.

The focus of this locally delegated funding is as follows:

- Developing community capacity in localities, often involving volunteering to

make things happen

- Funding 'one off' projects where work would not otherwise be taken forward
- Acting as a catalyst to lever funding from other sources
- Implementing specific local actions to deliver priorities

Area Committees also, at their meetings, receive updates and information from internal Council services in relation to their area priorities and actions. This enables Area Committees to keep fully apprised of work within their own area, reducing duplication, adding value and ensuring that members are informed of upcoming plans.

Area Committees and VCS Networks

Area Voluntary and Community Sector (VCS) Networks were established in 2009 and operate in each of the five areas of the City - Coalfield, East, North, Washington and West.

The Networks aims are:

- To develop the capacity and influence of the VCS across the City, through open communication and partnership working
- To work together to build relationships within communities and between communities and local services and activities
- To act as the recognised route of Council engagement with the VCS within each geographical area
- To work together to develop and share good VCS practice
- To provide up to three delegates to represent the sector at Sunderland City Council's Area Committees, influencing strategic policies and priorities that affect local communities and the VCS. The delegates will represent the whole VCS in their geographical area at the Area Committee rather than their own organisational interests

The VCS Networks support the development and delivery of the Area Committee Area Plans, in meeting community needs. They help to build the community's capacity to engage in the development and delivery of services through relevant Networks to ensure inclusivity. The value of the VCS and the positive impact made by the

sector is demonstrated within quarterly reports presented to each Area Committee meeting.

Membership is open to all VCS organisations which operate in Sunderland, and meetings also include representatives from any sector working (or volunteering) in the area. This can be representatives from public and statutory authorities such as the council, police and health services or other organisations such as Gentoo, local schools and businesses who have a commitment to working with and supporting the VCS. All organisations attending the VCS Networks should operate within the principles of the Community Wealth Building Strategy, ensuring positive and productive relationships for mutual advantage and community gain.

Meetings are held approximately every four to six weeks or as determined by each geographical area VCS Network. Area Committees support the networks by operating under a co-chairing arrangement involving the Area Committee Chair or Vice Chair and a network delegate.

The network representatives regularly consult with the network to ensure that the agenda items reflect their requirements and also ensure that they take forward issues on behalf of the whole VCS in the area to the Area Committees and reporting back therefore providing a two-way flow of communication. This approach is welcomed by the Area Committee and assists

them in the effective delivery of their Area Plan ensuring a partnership approach that meets the needs of all within local communities.

Area Committees, Links for Life and Digital Health Hubs

Working closely with Area Committees, the Area Arrangements Team have supported local VCS organisations to develop a key wellbeing programme across the city. This has been changed and adapted to meet the needs of local residents, and now consists of 35 local organisations delivering a 'Links for Life' programme at locations in every ward.

We have supported VCS organisations on the Links for Life journey, which started with providing 'Warm Spaces' - social and wellbeing services set up to give local residents somewhere to go to meet, chat, and participate in activities in a warm and welcoming local venue where they could get access to a free hot drink and snack.

This pilot approach proved to be successful and developed further into 'Welcoming Spaces', which removed the focus on just being somewhere to go to keep warm, and encouraged people to attend and participate in wellbeing and social welfare activities. This invaluable provision is now a recognised service, accessed by hundreds of residents each month.

Sunderland's vision to build on, and support, the work being undertaken to promote health and wellbeing, by providing social prescribing through an integrated, city-wide service, has been realised in this Links for

Life programme. It is a service that is delivered by multiple providers, operating under a single point of access, sharing referrals and resource, breaking down organisational barriers, so that the service is seamless and proactively improves the health and wellbeing of the people of Sunderland.

The main objectives for Links for Life, Sunderland, are to:

- Improve health outcomes for residents, focusing on prevention and improving personal resilience
- Ensure all residents can access support services, ensuring equity for everyone and enabling all residents to receive support

The Links for Life Sunderland model expects all partners to work together to ensure the best outcome for the resident. The focus is to deliver services within communities, recognising that residents' lived experience should inform service delivery, and encourage VCS organisations to co-produce services which are most needed within communities.

Over £800,000 from the UK Shared Prosperity Fund and Sunderland City Council was awarded to Voluntary and Community Sector (VCS) organisations in every ward across the city, to provide the 35 Community Hubs, which collectively deliver the citywide service.

To complement the Links for Life programme, and in recognition of the need to support local organisations and residents to be more digitally connected, a number of digital health hubs have been set up across the city.

Staff and volunteers within these Hubs are working hard to ensure that support is available to communities at locations and venues where residents feel comfortable and able to seek support from trusted VCS partners.

To date over £500,000 has been allocated to 22 of our community partners to address digital exclusion through these local centres. From one to one advice, to provision of equipment to free digital data, the support provided is vital to those who feel excluded from some activities and services due to barriers in accessing information in a digital format.

Local people can receive support from other local people, who have been upskilled as Tech Mates. Tech Mates will help out, build confidence and share their digital learning and skills with others, who may have never been online before, for example, by showing people how to navigate around the web safely.



Councillor James Blackburn, Coalfield Area Chair

We have now delivered the first year of our 3-year area plan (2023-2026) which was agreed by the Coalfield Area Committee at the beginning of 2023/24. We have focused on the things that are important to our local residents, we have prioritised projects and actions that will make a real difference to our communities.

The dedicated support of local Voluntary and Community Sector groups, and partner organisations, has enabled continued delivery of a range of projects and services to local communities, supporting them to build resilience, access advice and support, and look after their wellbeing. Social inclusion and keeping active is something that VCS organisations have told us is important to people accessing their projects and services. We value the sharing of this information which informs some of our allocation of area budgets.

The natural and local environment gives local people a sense of pride. The Coalfield area has some unique outdoor spaces and is an attractive and green area. Working with council services, local partners, dedicated volunteers and Friends groups, a number of environmental improvement projects has taken place. The Coalfield Clean it, Green it project has been key in working with residents, carrying out a total of 338 litter picks and community clean-ups, engaging over 200 volunteers.

I would also like to thank my fellow Councillors, officers, partners, and volunteers who have supported the delivery of area priorities for the benefit of our Coalfield residents. Young people have been at the heart of area discussions and priorities. Area funded projects, alone, supported almost 500 young people to take part in youth clubs delivered every week in all wards.

Over 300 children and young people have taken part in holiday activities and clubs, and our CAN DO budget is available to groups of young people aged between 11 and 19 years old. The young people identify a need or issue and develop a funding proposal which they present to Councillors. We continue to be impressed by groups of young people who tell us how they will deliver a project for the benefit of their school, club, group and for the wider community. We are dedicated to continuing this important project into next year.

I am proud to present this Annual Report for the Coalfield Area which outlines some of the key achievements, right across the area. We continue to listen to local communities and what is important to them.



Coalfield Area Committee

Councillor James Blackburn, Coalfield Area Chair

Coalfield Area Priorities set out in the 2023–26 Delivery Plan were outlined as follows:

- Can Do project to develop skills of young people
- Develop digital skills of residents
- Support to residents to improve financial resilience
- A VAS and road safety programme
- A Tree planting programme and low carbon initiatives in the community
- Positive activities and youth clubs for children and young people
- A Coalfield Healthy and Active Teen (CHAT) programme
- Activities to reduce Social Isolation
- Social Prescribing Services
- Heritage activities and community events
- Improvements to parks and open spaces
- Proactive Coalfield anti-social behaviour project and tackling motorcycle ASB
- Environmental improvements
- Improvements to community assets

Coalfield Area key highlights

From our 2023–24 allocated budgets, we approved almost **£400,000** of area budget to deliver projects to meet identified priorities. Key highlights of the year, include:

£357,946 of Neighbourhood Fund was awarded to projects delivering against the Coalfield Area Committee priorities. This year we have funded 29 projects and worked with over 40 local partners.

The Neighbourhood Funding aligned and approved has attracted over **£910,000** match funding to the area.

£40,000 of Community Chest funding was awarded to local groups delivering a total of 52 Community projects. Projects were varied and have included; friendship benches to commemorate King Charles coronation, family fun day and animal experience, classroom resources and improvements to community venues. The average grant was **£769**.

A group of young people applied to Coalfield CAN DO fund to develop a video and resources to highlight the dangers and consequences of carrying a knife.

The Area Committee are using their inspirational presentation to develop a wider 'knife crime educational programme' working with the Connor Brown Trust.

The successful Communities Connected digital programme was awarded **£31,500** to continue delivery of support to residents in 6 local venues.

Over **£42,000** was approved to continue delivering the RU Ready for UC project to individuals who are moving to, or managing, their Universal Credit benefit.

The Coalfield Youth Choices project will deliver two sessions of youth provision per ward per week until 2026, thanks to Neighbourhood Funding.

Working with the Connor Brown Trust, a programme of bleed kit installations is under development. Funding has been aligned to install at least two kits in each ward within the Coalfield area.

The Coalfield Clean it, Green it project has worked on over 330 neighbourhood improvements, carrying out tasks such as painting, path clearing, litter picking and rubbish removal.

A number of community events were delivered including Christmas Cheer, Newbottle Christmas, Coalfield Pride, Shiney Christmas, Houghton Feast and the inaugural Elemore Music Festival which attracted around 500 people.

A number of local community centres and organisations were successful in a share of over **£79,000** to carry out improvements in their buildings.

A **£25,000** contribution has been provided to a multi- area partnership led pilot project to tackle motorcycle disorder across Coalfield and the wider Sunderland area.

Coalfield Area Committee our year in numbers

£358k 

Neighbourhood
funding awarded

29 

Projects developed and funded
via Neighbourhood Fund

12 

Local organisations supported
to improve community buildings

2,305 

Attendances by Children
and Young People at free fun
activities and holiday clubs

52 

Voluntary and Community
Sector organisations supported
with Community Chest funding

1,984 

Residents supported to
improve digital skills

167 

Local families supported
with additional gifts and
treats at Christmas

48 

Teenage residents provided
with gym memberships and
access to Teen Gym and
Bootcamp sessions

151 

Additional enforcement
actions carried out

320 

Sessions of youth
provision delivered

338 

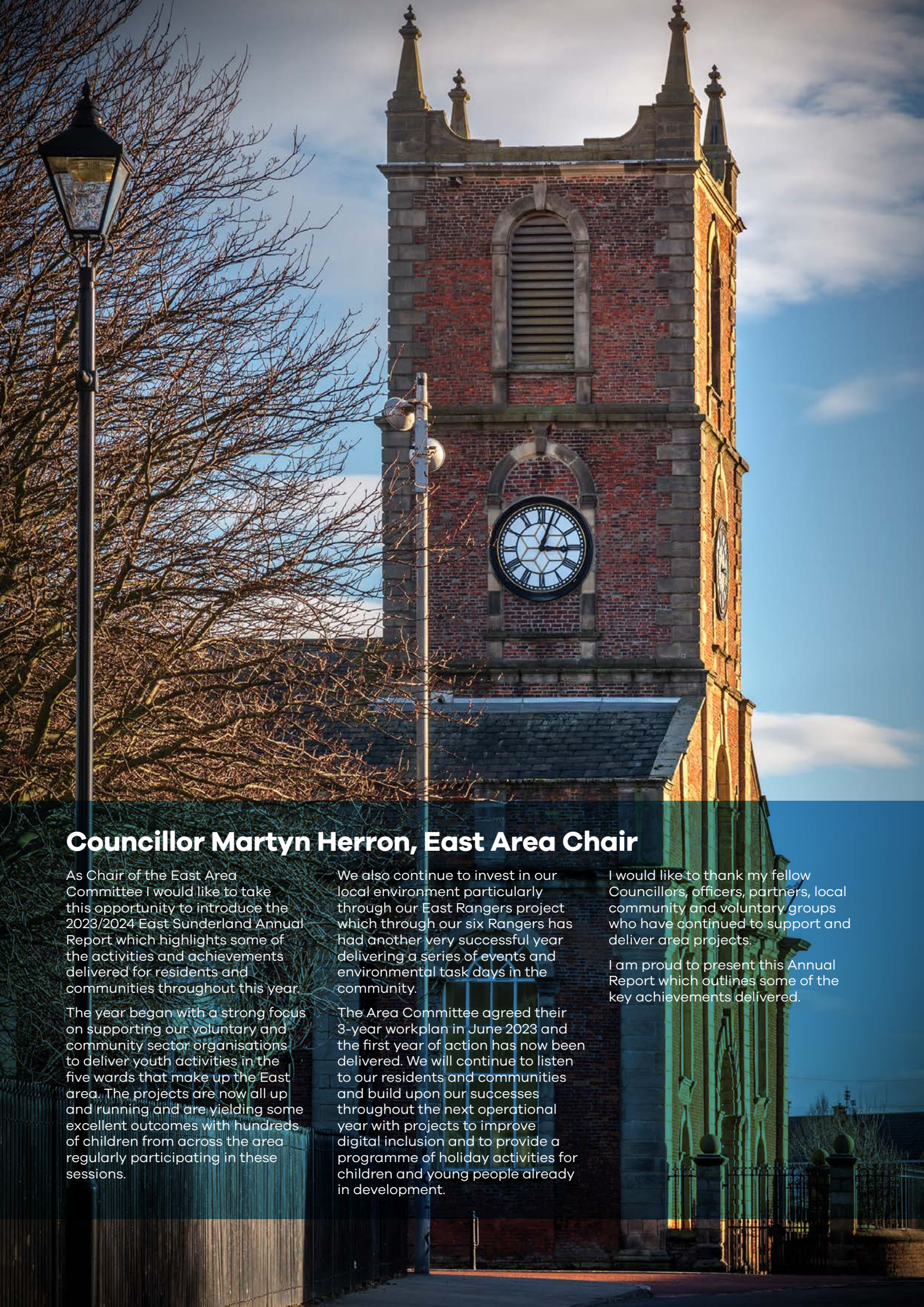
Community clean ups and
litter picks carried out

290 

Volunteers participated
in neighbourhood
funded activities

Coalfield Area Committee our year in images





Councillor Martyn Herron, East Area Chair

As Chair of the East Area Committee I would like to take this opportunity to introduce the 2023/2024 East Sunderland Annual Report which highlights some of the activities and achievements delivered for residents and communities throughout this year.

The year began with a strong focus on supporting our voluntary and community sector organisations to deliver youth activities in the five wards that make up the East area. The projects are now all up and running and are yielding some excellent outcomes with hundreds of children from across the area regularly participating in these sessions.

We also continue to invest in our local environment particularly through our East Rangers project which through our six Rangers has had another very successful year delivering a series of events and environmental task days in the community.

The Area Committee agreed their 3-year workplan in June 2023 and the first year of action has now been delivered. We will continue to listen to our residents and communities and build upon our successes throughout the next operational year with projects to improve digital inclusion and to provide a programme of holiday activities for children and young people already in development.

I would like to thank my fellow Councillors, officers, partners, local community and voluntary groups who have continued to support and deliver area projects.

I am proud to present this Annual Report which outlines some of the key achievements delivered.



East Area Committee

Councillor Martyn Herron, East Area Chair

East Area Priorities set out in the 2023-26 Delivery Plan were outlined as follows:

- Digital inclusion
- Delivering low carbon initiatives in the community
- Improving green spaces including fruit orchards and wildflowers
- Continued delivery of the East Rangers project
- Improving the Stephenson Trail
- Supporting youth clubs in each of the five wards
- Delivering a programme of holiday activities
- Supporting projects that increase physical and wellbeing activities for young people, help to support healthier lifestyles and lessen the impact of the cost-of-living crisis
- Supporting environmental enforcement initiatives to address issues such as motorcycle disorder
- Improving social prescribing opportunities
- Delivering capital improvements to community assets
- Delivering ward-based initiatives
- Supporting community assets to develop, grow and sustain
- Supporting St Michael's and Ryhope Community Centre projects
- Receiving updates on highways schemes and considering future options

East Area key highlights

From our 2023-24 allocated budgets, we approved over **£458,077** to deliver projects to meet identified priorities. Examples of funding awarded are:

£44,622 of Community Chest funding was awarded to local groups delivering a total of 38 Community projects. Projects which received support included heritage initiatives, community centre improvements and sports activity programmes. The average grant was **£1,174**.

The East Rangers project carried out 591 litter picks and collected nearly 2,000 bags of waste.

Five organisations received a share of **£186,493** to support them to deliver youth activities in each of the five wards throughout the year. Nearly 2,000 children and young people have benefitted from these sessions to date.

14 organisations received a share of nearly **£89,000** to make

improvements to their buildings, projects included: kitchen improvements, increased security measures and improved training facilities.

The Neighbourhood Funding aligned and approved has attracted over **£560,000** in match funding.

£47,740 was awarded to 6 groups to extend the East Rangers project to encourage volunteering and environmental improvements in each ward across the East.

£10,000 was aligned for distribution to small scale, young people led 'Can Do' projects.

£10,000 was aligned to support Hendon High Street Revolution through signage and parking improvements.


£78,077 was aligned to support a further phase of the Go! Get Online digital inclusion project.

£34,790 was aligned to support a further phase of the Fancy a Day Out holiday activity programme for May and Summer Holidays during 2024.

East Area Committee our year in numbers

£458k 

Neighbourhood Funding awarded to 16 projects

£44k 

Community Chest funding awarded to 38 groups

633 

Volunteers involved in area activities

1,314 

Hours delivered supporting residents with digital

9,312 

Hours of in-kind support provided by volunteers

71 

Motorcycle disorder patrols carried out

591 

Litter picks carried out

713 

People accessing digital support

1,669 

children and young people engaged in health and wellbeing activities

14 

Community buildings received funding to make improvements

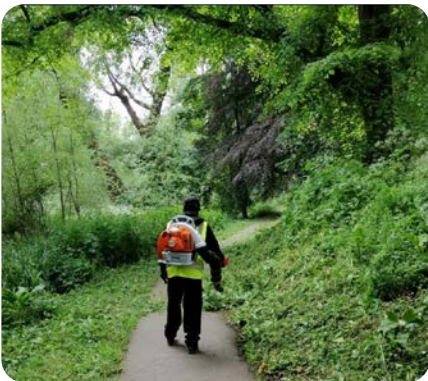
58 

VCS Groups received an area grant

1,927 

Bags of waste cleared from neighbourhoods by East Rangers and volunteers

East Area Committee our year in images





Councillor Denny Wilson, North Area Chair

As Chair of the North Area Committee I would like to take this opportunity to introduce the 2023–24 North Sunderland Annual Report, highlighting some of the activities and achievements delivered for residents and local communities across Sunderland North.

In June 2023 the Area Committee agreed their 3-year workplan for 2023 – 2026 and we have now delivered the first year of this plan focussing on the things that are important to our local residents.

With the dedication of local Voluntary and Community Sector organisations, Sunderland City Council and our partners we have continued to deliver a range of

services, activities and events that have benefitted the residents of Sunderland North and allocated funding where it is needed most.

Residents tell us our greenspaces, play areas and heritage are important and working with council services, local partners and dedicated volunteers a number of environmental improvement projects have been successfully delivered. This year has seen an amazing regeneration of Thompson Park with a much increased play and outdoor gym equipment offer for all ages.

We have had amazing support for our Christmas programme with lights, events and illuminations

at Southwick, Hylton Castle and Redhouse. Without the dedication of area-based projects and local volunteers we would not be able to achieve what we have and I would like to offer my thanks to my fellow Councillors, officers, partners, local community and voluntary groups who have continued to support and deliver area projects. These projects have supported our residents to build resilience, access services and activities for all ages, care for their health and wellbeing, improve their green spaces and celebrate heritage.

I am proud to present this Annual Report for the North which outlines some of the key achievements delivered.





North Area Committee

Councillor Denny Wilson, North Area Chair

North Area Priorities set out in the 2023–26 Delivery Plan were outlined as follows:

- Ward based Raising Aspiration projects
- Communication project
- Benefit advice/guidance for residents focusing on digital Inclusion
- Low Carbon Initiatives
- Provision of a wide range of youth activities
- North Quarry run
- Play Zone project
- Health and wellbeing
- Wildlife, walking, cycling and running destinations
- Social Prescribing services and activities
- Heritage and culture
- Events
- Regeneration of Thompson Park
- Support to VCS and Community Hubs
- Redevelopment of Downhill Wheeled Sports Park site
- Roker and Seaburn washing facilities

North Area key highlights

From our 2023–24 allocated budgets, we approved and aligned over **£370,344** to deliver projects to meet identified priorities. Examples of funding aligned and awarded are:

£49,344 of Community Chest funding was awarded to local groups delivering a total of 40 community projects. Awards have included Outdoor Activities for Scouts, Welfare Advice and Guidance sessions in local community projects, Improvements to Community Venues, Activities for all Ages, The average grant was **£1,234**.

Thompson Park Regeneration complete with an overall total of **£300,000** funding allocated from North Area Committee over the past two years.

Hylton Castle Winter Wonderland delivered in 2024 with **£100,000** previously awarded.

£10,000 awarded to deliver the Roker and Seaburn washing

facilities project with an outdoor shower installed at Roker and a tap planned at Seaburn.

£150,000 at £30,000 per ward aligned for Ward improvement projects.

£21,774 for the ward Improvement - Castletown Mural Project.

£6,000 for Fulwell Community Library Christmas Project.

£6,930 for the Ward Improvement - Phase 1 of the Redhill Christmas Illumination Project.

£10,000 for the Redhouse Community Centre Refurbishment Project.

£20,000 for youth services and activities to add to previous funding in order to offer a range of services

and activities across Sunderland North for young people.

£100,000 aligned for a project that aims to deliver environmental improvements at the Downhill Wheeled Sports Park site.


£20,000 towards the Citywide Motorcycle Task Force.

Match funding from external funders, VCS organisations and Sunderland City Council totalling **£556,657**.

North Area Committee our year in numbers

£321k 

Neighbourhood funding awarded to 12 projects during 2023-24

£49k 

Was awarded to 40 projects via Community Chest, with an average grant of £1,234 to support neighbourhood projects

10k 

Attended the North Battle Re enactment Event at Hylton Castle

7,240 

Young People engaged in youth activities - footfall

106 

Community clean ups and litters picks delivered across all Neighbourhood Funded Projects

2,104 

Volunteer hours delivered across all Neighbourhood Funded Projects

3,611 

Attended Christmas Illumination Events at Hylton Castle, Southwick and Redhill

497 

Residents engaged in activities addressing social isolation

1 

Regeneration and refurbishment of Thompson Park

71 

Motorcycle Task Force patrols carried out

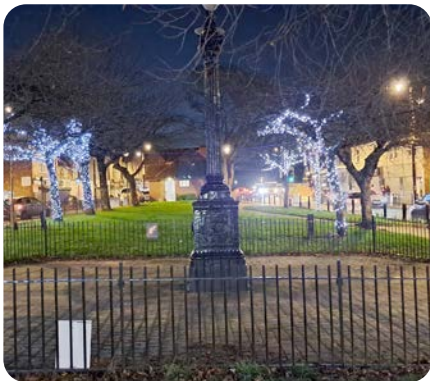
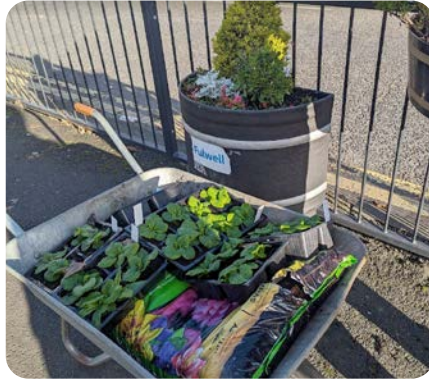
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Outside Shower Installed at Roker Beach

82 

Number of people receiving information, advice and guidance

North Area Committee our year in images





Councillor Sean Laws, Washington Area Chair

As Chair of the Washington Area Committee, I would like to highlight some of the key areas of work delivered over the last year. At the beginning of 2023, the Area Committee agreed their workplan following research and consultation amongst communities and neighbourhoods across the area. This three-year Plan (2023-26) is now underway, and we have recognised the need to adapt and review the plan to meet the ongoing requirements of Washington residents and communities. We do this through our project groups, steering groups and board meetings, and will continue to do so to ensure that area budgets are targeted in the most beneficial way.

I want to offer thanks to my fellow Councillors, officers, partners and

volunteers who have supported our Washington residents. Priorities included enabling and supporting services and activities to help our local communities including tackling issues caused by financial uncertainty and the cost of living. We have given support and funding to continue the WISP project which offers a bespoke approach to providing welfare rights, benefit, debt and housing advice to people, on an individual basis, at venues in Washington.

Area Committee has also been dedicated to planning and developing Washington 60 celebrations - a programme to be delivered in 2024 to mark 60 years of the building of Washington New Town. We were delighted to have Washington-born George Clarke

on board to launch our design challenge and work with us to develop and encourage the skills of young people. This is an exciting and unique opportunity for our designers of the future. We look forward to reporting on the progress and success of this programme in our next Annual Report.

Washington Area Committee, together with its partners, has continued to deliver the actions outlined in our Area Plan with several great projects and improvements being seen across the area. Some of the key highlights are contained in the following pages.



Washington Area Committee

Councillor Sean Laws, Washington Area Chair

Washington Area Priorities set out in the 2023-26 Delivery Plan were outlined as follows:

- A plantation and tree management programme
- Washington Clean and Green project
- Support for VCS organisations and community hubs
- A heritage and culture programme
- A road safety and VAS programme
- Celebrations for Washington 60
- Recognition of Washington volunteers
- A feasibility study for the vision of Fatfield Riverside development
- A programme of outreach and diversionary youth provision
- Neighbourhood management and enforcement
- Investment in parks and play areas
- Positive activities for young people during school holidays
- Improved access to allotments and community gardens
- Supporting people into work and developing skills of young people
- Providing individual welfare and financial support

Washington Area key highlights

From our 2023-24 allocated budgets, we approved over **£470,000** to deliver projects to meet identified priorities. Examples of funding awarded are:

£49,000 Community Chest was awarded to 61 local groups who delivered a variety of projects including community events. The grants were, on average, **£815**.

Washington Clean & Green project was awarded **£60,000** to enable community clean-ups, by engaging residents into volunteering and supporting the delivery of environmental projects.

£30,000 funding was awarded to deliver the Washington Design Challenge to celebrate the town's 60th anniversary. It is open to all schools in Washington with the help of George Clarke and his charity MOBIE.

Washington Individual Support Project – WISP is a unique project delivered by a dedicated Advice Worker to provide welfare rights, benefit, debt and housing advice to people presenting in crisis.

Tyne & Wear Fire and Rescue Service will be delivering 4 PHOENIX programmes to Secondary Schools and 5 SPARK programmes to Junior Schools. Educational activities aimed at reducing the increasing instances of deliberate fire starting will be delivered.

Funding has been awarded to local community organisations to make improvements or repairs to their buildings to enable them to continue to provide a wide range of activities and services.

A programme of activities and events including the miner's picnic, and Christmas festivities has been enabled.

Additional training and support for young people aged 16-19 is available following approval of a grant of over **£45,000**.

Washington Area Committee funded a varied holiday activity programme for children and young people. All activities are provided free of charge and include a snack/meal during each activity.

Over **£95,000** awarded will provide additional environmental enforcement and street watch provision for a 2 year period commencing in April 2024.

10 portable Vehicle Activated Speed (VAS) signs will be deployed across 43 locations in Washington following further funding of **£21,500** being approved.

Washington Area Committee our year in numbers

£423k 

Neighbourhood funding was awarded to 15 projects

£49k 

Community Chest was awarded to 61 local groups

1,605 

Enforcement actions carried out

5,000 

Residents participated in local events and celebrations

624 

Young people aged 11-19 benefited from positive holiday activities

40 

Volunteers worked on Neighbourhood Fund projects

1,325 

Children under 11 took part in activities and events during school holidays

691 

Local people more financially resilient

121 

Advice sessions delivered in local venues

495 

Hours of volunteer time contributed

62 

Young people benefited from financial awareness programmes

101 

Community clean ups and litter picks

Washington Area Committee our year in images





Councillor Joanne Laverick, West Area Chair

As Chair of the West Area Committee I would like to take this opportunity to introduce the 2023–24 West Sunderland Annual Report, highlighting some of the activities and achievements delivered for residents and communities.

The Area Committee agreed their 3-year workplan in June 2023 and we have now delivered the first year. We have focussed on the priorities that make the most difference to our communities and have worked with Sunderland City Council, partners and the Voluntary and Community Sector to deliver these priorities where they are most needed.

The priorities delivered have been a range of activities and services as well as the 3-day Barnes Park Event which saw over 700 children and 10,000 local residents attend. We have invested in our local environment and have extended our Clean and Green/Rangers projects and enhanced the impact in the community with the West in bloom projects located across the area and delivered by the Local Voluntary and Community Sector.

Improvements to parking at Bishopwearmouth Cemetery and Silksworth Ski Slope complex have been delivered and we have continued to invest and influence environmental enforcement and

highway improvements across the Area.

Young people continue to be at the heart of our priorities and Area funded youth activities have continued to be delivered with over 2000 young people attending sessions across the year.

I would like to thank my fellow Councillors, officers, partners, local community and voluntary groups who have continued to support and deliver area projects.

I am proud to present this Annual Report which outlines some of the key achievements delivered. We will continue to listen to our residents and communities.



West Area Committee

Councillor Joanne Laverick, West Area

West Area Priorities set out in the 2023-26 Delivery Plan were outlined as follows:

- Environmental improvements and improved green spaces
- Improved community assets
- An improve social prescribing offer
- Improved youth activities including cultural and enrichment activities and raised aspirations.
- Improved access to ICT
- Tackle ASB and environmental enforcement
- A map of defibrillators across the West
- Initiatives to support mental health and wellbeing in young people and to reduce child poverty and child obesity
- Additional heritage walks
- Improvements to small, neglected shopping and enterprise areas
- Improved access to Welfare Right support

West Area key highlights

From our 2023-24 allocated budgets, we approved over **£540,387** to deliver projects to meet identified priorities. Examples of funding awarded are:

£60,000 Community Chest was used to support 59 groups including funding youth projects and celebrating cultural and enriching events, values of the grants were on average **£1,016**.

The West Clean and Green/Rangers project carried out 412 litter picks and worked with 450 volunteers making environmental improvements.

The Neighbourhood Funding aligned and approved has attracted over **£102,475** in match funding.

Young people age 10+ from across the West Area had access to 576 youth sessions. An average of 150 young people per week attended.

Residents have been supported to access additional welfare rights services including specialist advice. Over the past year residents have

received **£229,080** in back dated benefits.

A Mental Health specialist Charity delivered sessions in all West secondary schools, attended by 2,953 young people to help improve their mental health and wellbeing.

Following 2 successful years of Area Committee funded neighbourhood enforcement, the Area Committee have now enhanced the project to include an Environmental Enforcement Officer and an Anti-Social Behaviour Officer.

10 Vehicle Activated Signs located in 22 locations across the area continue to support the local community by making drivers aware of their vehicle speed and encourage drivers to reduce their speed.

The 3 day Barnes Park event gave 735 school children the opportunity

to be engaged in 24 different activities. The family fun day attracted over 10,000 residents to experience a variety of activities including, trampolines, archery, basket ball, dancing, tennis, music, digital skills, a fun fair and more.

9 Digital hubs established with over 230 sessions delivered throughout the year to support residents with online journal access, digital camera operation, account setup, and email communication.

In Bloom projects supported to deliver a spring/summer environmental programme across 11 of centres.

West Area Committee our year in numbers

£540k 

Neighbourhood funding awarded to 16 projects

£60k 

Community Chest grant was awarded to 59 groups

2,953 

Secondary school pupils positively engaged in activities that provided emotional and mental health support

14,604 

Young people engaged in youth activities - footfall

10k 

Attended the West Area Event in Barnes Park 2023

6,041 

Volunteers worked on Neighbourhood Fund projects

2,709 

Number of enforcement actions

31 

Number of new parking bays at Silksworth Ski Slope Complex and Bishopwearmouth 9/10 bays

12 

Digital hubs created

403 

Number of residents supported with specialist welfare advice

412 

Young people benefited from financial awareness programmes

33 

Highway and road safety improvements

West Area Committee our year in images



The year ahead

In the year ahead each of the Area Committees will reflect on the success of the first year of delivering their 2023-26 Area Plan. Each Committee will ensure that their priorities are still relevant and meet the needs of residents and communities, and progress the second year of the plan, whilst also looking ahead to Year 3. Working with service leads, partners and VCS organisations, actions within the plans will be considered, and through the Neighbourhood and Community Boards, be developed and delivered.

We recognise the need to be flexible and prepare for ongoing challenges, aligning area budgets to meet these challenges where relevant. Communication across all

elements of area working is vital and we will continue to make a commitment to the Voluntary and Community Sector partners who continue to support Area Committees year on year.

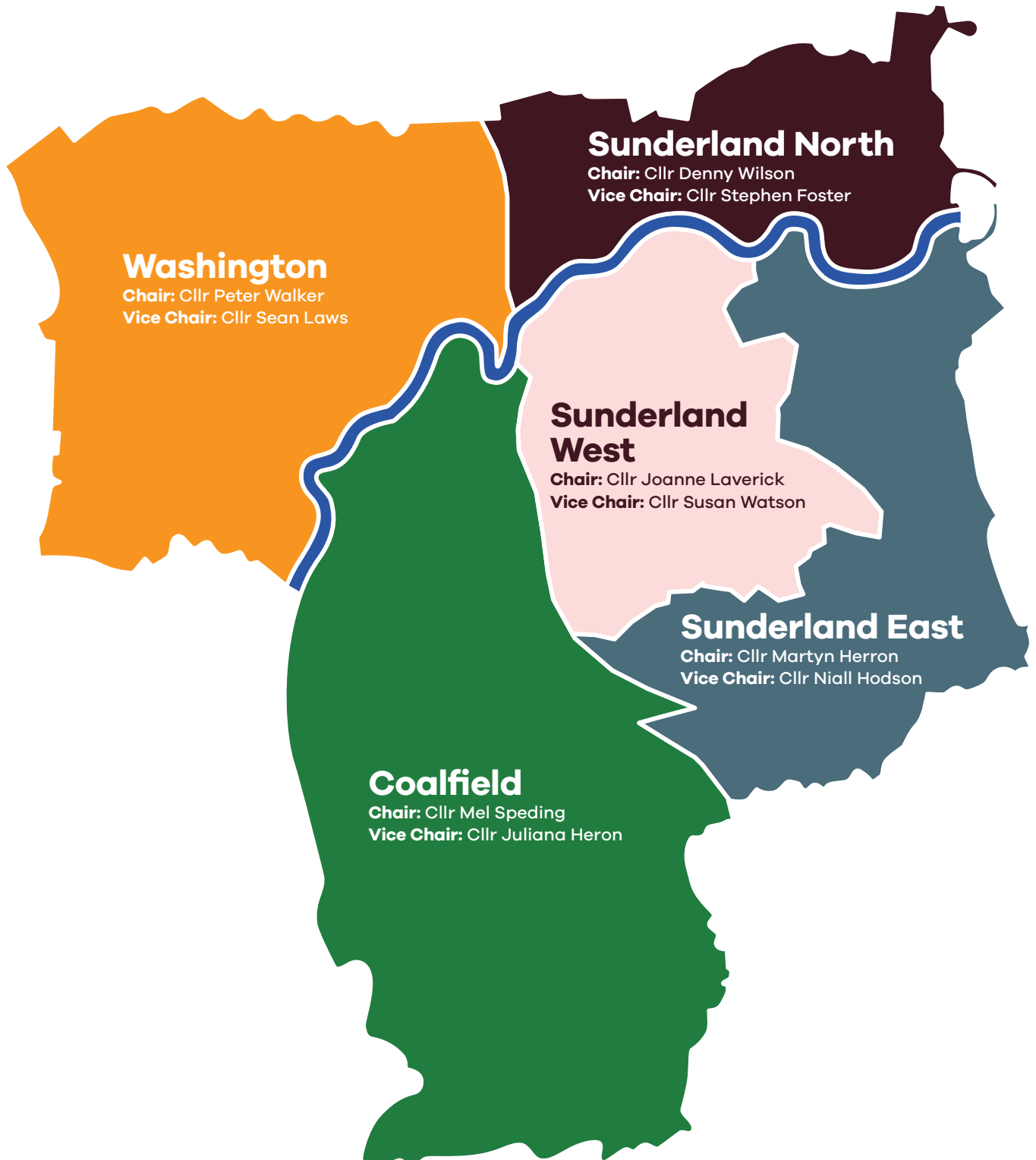
Challenges faced over recent years have demonstrated the huge value and importance of our VCS organisations to residents of the city, and how working in partnership with the key stakeholders in the city has made and will continue to make a significant difference to the delivery of services. These partnerships will be built upon and strengthened as a recognised way of working within communities. The VCS have a vital role to play within all our neighbourhoods. The facilities and services they

offer, their local knowledge of the communities of which they are such an integral part and their understanding of the needs of residents within those communities are all invaluable to supporting the work of Area Committee to meet the objectives set out in each area's plans.

The 2023-26 Area Committee Plans will be reviewed and refreshed, in line with the City Plan, throughout the remaining two years to inform the development of priorities and projects beyond the current plans. This will be done via VCS Networks, resident consultation, Area Neighbourhood and Community Boards and Area Committees.



Area Committees 2024-25



**Sunderland
City Council**