

**9 DECEMBER 2020****COALFIELD VCS NETWORK REPORT**

The Coalfields VCS Network have commenced VCS Network meetings via Teams since the last Coalfields Area Committee.

5<sup>th</sup> November 2020

- Area Networks VCS discussion - Presentation delivered by Helen Peverley

Councillor Blackburn was introduced as the new Area Chair of the Coalfields Area Committee – the Network would like to extend its thanks to Councillor Anne Lawson for her support as Area Chair. Approximately 18 groups attended the initial meeting. It was fantastic to hear about the great work taking place in the Coalfields and the support being offered to our most vulnerable residents.

26<sup>th</sup> November 2020

- Green Doctor Presentation delivered by Julia Bentley – Groundwork NE & Cumbria
- Covid-19 Winter Projects update from Pauline Hopper

The network was attended by approximately 30 groups and updates were received from the Network members about work taking place in the area.

Over the past 3 months, the Coalfields VCS organisations and groups have been invaluable in providing support to residents. A large number of organisations have continued to deliver through the Covid-19 pandemic and have been successful in securing funding to develop work in the Coalfields locality area. The Coalfields VCS network would like to take this opportunity to thank Sunderland City Council – Coalfields Area Committee for their support and funding over the past 3 months.

**Examples of Coalfields Projects**

- Easington Lane Community Access Point have continued to deliver the community hub and over the coming months they will continue their befriending service, shopping, deliver 500 meals to residents, and run the shopping bus. Funding has also been secured to provide Children's Meals to address holiday hunger.
- Hetton New Dawn continue to deliver the food bank from ELCAP and will be providing free Christmas lunches from the 21<sup>st</sup>-23<sup>rd</sup> December 2020 at the Apostolic Church. Hilary is working in partnership with Coalfield Sunderland Councillors to distribute presents to those most in need.
- Active Families have been successful in securing funding through the Covid-19 Winter fund and they will be delivering activity bags within the Coalfields. They are also working in partnership with Hetton School and Foundation of Light and delivering a 6-week healthy eating programme online.
- SHARP continue to provide information, advice and guidance to residents and will have a helpline number available over the festive period. They reported an

increase in clients reporting domestic violence through the Covid-19 pandemic. They continue to support with food and have cleaning supplies available for individuals most in need.

- Age UK have activity packs available through their Social Focus project. The packs are aimed at clients aged 50+ years experiencing depression, anxiety or who are socially isolated. Coffee mornings, quizzes have also been delivered

#### **4. Recommendations**

##### **4.1 Members are requested**

- To note the contents of the report
- To continue to support the Sector when developing and implementing actions against local priorities
- To use information gathered from Network meetings to inform current and future priorities and Area Committee Plan

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