

26 June 2025

Application 1

Organisation Details	
Organisation Name	Community Opportunities
Address Line 1	Winchester House
Address Line 2	Baxter Road, Town End Farm
City	Sunderland
Postcode	SR5 4LW
Project Details	
Project Title	Castle and Redhill Ranger Project
Project Overview (max. 50 words)	Community Opportunities will work with residents and local partners to deliver an environmental support scheme in the Castle and Redhill ward providing community clean-ups, litter picking, planting and forestry projects, refurbishing park and green space equipment, effectively engaging residents to volunteer and improve the appearance of their neighbourhoods by reducing littering and fly tipping and managing overgrown greenspaces.
Total Project Cost	£107,260
Match Funding	£7,260
Total NF Requested	£100,000
Project Start Date	1 st July 2025
Project End Date	30 th June 2028
Where will the project be based/delivered from?	Across a variety of locations in the Castle and Redhill wards
Assessor's Notes	<p>This was a good application which covered many of the objectives of the project. However, there were sections that could have been more specific and could have provided more details as to how the project was going to meet the objectives.</p> <p>There is an indication that the applicant will work in partnership with other organisations but how this will work in practice is not specified. The project is ambitious and would represent good value for money if it achieves the outputs stated. The outputs are subject to clarification with the applicant.</p>
Project Description	

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Community Opportunities propose to deliver a neighbourhood management and environmental improvement project in the Castle and Redhill wards which contribute to the North Sunderland area plan priority of creating and sustaining an attractive, clean and cared for environment contributing to the City plan objective of enabling Sunderland to be a place where people chose to invest, work and spend their leisure time

We propose to run a three-year project from July 2025 onwards, recruiting 30 local volunteers and delivering 810 environmental sessions, with additional educational, planning and project promotion sessions, through 33 hours of Ranger time per week provided by a dedicated, appropriately experienced and qualified Ranger who will be managed by our Community Services Manager, and directed by a project steering group comprising local Councillors, representatives of Gentoo, SCC Partnership and Community Services Manager and Environmental Services and will invite specialist support from such as Tyne and Wear Fire, Police as required. Minuted meetings will be held quarterly with the Ranger taking forward actions in a documented work plan, including risk assessments and identifying any impact to habitat, requirements of working on public land, Countryside Act, adhering to by-laws, health and safety requirements, identifying resource and tool requirements and any seasonal influences of pruning, nesting etc. The plan will be shared with the steering group and reviewed and updated in meeting and this will include timetabling re-visiting sites identified to address such as re-growth, littering etc in turn creating a sustainable local environmental management strategy. Any issues identified in planning are discussed with Council staff, eg: falling trees to be removed by SCC Arboriculture Team.

These services are led by the Community Services Manager manage other similar projects and would manage the Ranger to ensure peer support and sharing of good practice, training opportunities and volunteer input. Delivery will include community clean-ups, litter picking, planting and forestry projects, refurbishing park and green space equipment, effectively engaging residents to volunteer and improve the appearance of their neighbourhoods, reduce littering and fly tipping, managing overgrown greenspaces and this will lead to the collection of 1450 bags of rubbish. The Ranger will identify and remove areas of graffiti, improve 53 items of street furniture, fencing and railings by sanding and repainting. We will sustain the maintenance of areas by working with groups to develop additional skills, such as working with VCSE Organisations and their volunteers and we will continue to encourage corporate volunteering opportunities and reinforcing business/corporate responsibility for the appearance of neighbourhoods.

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We will provide an educational offer, communicating the importance of correct residential waste disposal, keeping their neighbourhood clean/tidy and reporting issues. We support local 'Friends of Groups' to lead smaller community clean ups and link with local schools to deliver environmental projects in school and local neighbourhoods. We also raise awareness of local recycling schemes, community furniture donation centres etc. We have worked with local holiday activity providers, attending holiday clubs to deliver litter picks and recycling / environmental workshops with the young people in the area.

We will bring knowledge and expertise from other similar projects into the Ranger project. 40 volunteers will be recruited and deliver 2200 hours of support, following a documented Volunteer Pathway, with an induction including project aims and objectives, verbal and practical individual assessment of skills, considering potential health issues and providing regular supervision. Volunteers receive a 'toolbox talk' to understand the correct/appropriate use of tools and equipment. We discuss generic and specific risk assessments, provide on-site volunteer training, explore conservation matters, grounds maintenance, habitat management and infrastructure maintenance. Case studies from our existing environmental work demonstrates how volunteering has reduced social isolation, improved physical and mental health, improved confidence and led to some volunteers accessing job opportunities. We will pursue new links with businesses.

Our proposal promotes community ownership, will raise awareness of green spaces and develop walking maps, introducing local signage describing wildlife, benefits of flowers etc and is founded on community partnership and encouraging residents to develop their own solutions and take more responsibility for local sites through developing friends groups, watering/weeding rotas agreed by a local group of residents etc. We will enable wildlife to move/colonise freely to access water, food, shelter and breeding habitat, and will allow natural communities of both animals and plants to roam the Dene, Downhill Pond, Castle grounds and other green spaces in the ward. Participants will have the opportunity to attend environmental courses, gain a first aid qualification and provide peer mentoring support to newly recruited volunteers across the programme life.

FUNDING BUDGET	
Budget Heading/Item	NF
Salaries	£ 89,199

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Management Costs (indirect costs associated with the management of project- not covered by any other budget headings)	£	3,090
Overheads (e.g. fuel, mileage, travel, venue hire, volunteer costs, marketing and publicity)	£	7,710
NF Funding Total	£	100,000

OUTPUTS		Overall Target Total
CODE	<u>Dynamic Smart City Outputs</u>	
104	number of low carbon initiatives supported (talks on protecting the environment)	12
CODE	<u>Healthy Smart City Outputs</u>	
204	number of items purchased (renewed items for equipment loan scheme)	11
208	amount of highway, cycle, pathways, greenspace improved by area (m2)	725(m2)
209	number of litter picks/community cleans up carried out	810
210	Number of bags of waste cleared from neighbourhoods	172
211	Issues reported via www.sunderland.gov.uk/report-it	24
213	number of street furniture and / or equipment funded to repaired/replaced/renewed	53
CODE	<u>Vibrant Smart City Outputs</u>	
305	number of NEW volunteers recruited	40
306	number of volunteers participating - counted each quarter	142
307	number of volunteer hours delivered	2200

Recommendation – Approve

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The Neighbourhood and Community Board recommend approval of this project, which delivers to the North Sunderland priority to provide support to the VCS and Community Hubs.

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Application 2

Organisation Details	
Organisation Name	Durham Wildlife Trust
Address Line 1	Rainton Meadows
Address Line 2	Chilton Moor
City	Sunderland
Postcode	DH4 6PU
Project Details	
Project Title	Castle & Redhill Ranger Project
Project Overview (max. 50 words)	Durham Wildlife Trust proposes to deliver a three year ranger service in the Redhill and Castle Wards areas between July 2025-2028 that will bring together community stakeholders and residents in collaboration with Sunderland City Council contributing to a clean, safe and natural-thriving area which local people feel proud of.
Total Project Cost	£101,901
Match Funding	£3,647
Total NF Requested	£98,255
Project Start Date	1 st July 2025
Project End Date	31 st July 2028
Where will the project be based/delivered from?	Castle & Redhill Wards

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<p>Assessor's Notes</p>	<p>This application was specific in which tasks would be carried out and who the beneficiaries are. However, there was little information on the local area or demonstration of research into the areas covered by the project. Some aspects of the brief were not covered in the application.</p> <p>The application mentions other organisations that could be worked with, however there was no demonstrable knowledge of the local area or existing provision. The project is ambitious and would represent value for money if the outputs stated were achieved (though further clarity on the profiling of these outputs is required).</p>
<p>Project Description</p>	
<p>Durham Wildlife Trust proposes to deliver a ranger service that will directly address the needs outlined by the North Area Committee. This service will contribute to creating a clean, cared-for environment that inspires community involvement, attracts investment, and improves the quality of life for residents. The ranger will be on a 0.6 contract, they will be initially supported by our Nextdoor Nature Officer to kickstart community group action; this will act as a match funding. Durham Wildlife Trust is dedicated to hyper-local working in Sunderland, and has made its 2030 mission to improve 30% of all land and sea by 2030 as well as engaging 1 in 4 people in our area to take meaningful action for nature; providing this ranger service will help us to better realise this goal and demonstrate our passion for protecting Sunderland's environment. Durham Wildlife Trust is also familiar with the different land-types and habitats in the Castle and Redhill Ward and can therefore plan strategically, with over 50 years of wildlife and environmental experience as a given track-record.</p> <p>What the Project Will Deliver and the Difference It Will Make -</p> <p>Community Empowerment: Facilitate community ownership by engaging local residents and groups in environmental improvement activities, fostering stewardship and pride in their local neighbourhoods. This will be done through a collaboration between the Redhill and Castle ranger and our Nextdoor Nature Community Organising Officer, who is a highly-trained community organiser with a solid track record of forming community groups and getting community projects off the ground.</p> <p>Environmental Enhancements: Improve the visual and ecological health of Castle and Redhill Wards through activities such as litter picks, bulb planting, pathway maintenance, pond management, graffiti removal, painting, and installation of planters.</p> <p>Education and Awareness: Deliver educational initiatives in schools and community settings to promote understanding of environmental issues and the value of green spaces. This will be done through a collaboration between the Redhill and Castle ranger and our Senior Education leader who is experienced in delivering in and with Sunderland Schools both at primary and secondary level.</p>	

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Volunteer Recruitment and Training: Develop a robust volunteer network, providing training and support to enable sustainable involvement in ongoing maintenance and conservation efforts. These efforts will be supported through our Volunteer Support Assistant who is able to provide 1-on-1 with our volunteers, including on-boarding and safety as well as using an online volunteer system to gain insight into volunteer trends.

Partnerships and Collaboration: Work alongside Sunderland City Council Environmental Services, elected members, and local groups to ensure a cohesive approach to neighbourhood management and environmental improvements. This is core to our mission at Durham Wildlife Trust who believes that to achieve its 2030 goal of getting 1-in-4 people meaningfully engaged in taking action for nature, community groups and individuals must feel empowered to take action in their local area.

The project aims to inspire positive change, reduce littering and fly-tipping, enhance local green spaces, and instil a lasting appreciation for the environment among residents.

Where the Project Will Be Delivered –

The project will primarily focus on key green spaces within Castle and Redhill Wards:

Castle Ward Green/Blue Space: Hylton Dene/Pond area(s)

Redhill Ward Green/Blue Space: Downhill Pond/wildlife area(s)

Additional activities will be conducted in various neighbourhood spaces as identified by local needs and concerns.

When Delivery Will Take Place –

The project will operate over 3 years (July 2025-July 2028), with specific activities aligned to seasonal needs:

Spring/Summer: Planting, pond management, and community events.

Autumn/Winter: Pathway maintenance, litter picks, and conservation work. Regular schedules will be developed in coordination with the steering group and community partners.

Who Are the Beneficiaries –

Local Residents: Improved local environment, opportunities to participate, and enhanced quality of life.

Schools and Community Groups: Education and engagement in environmental stewardship.

Volunteers: Skills development and a sense of contribution to their community.

Visitors: Enjoyment of cleaner, more attractive green spaces.

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FUNDING BUDGET	
Budget Heading/Item	NF
Salaries	£ 65,957
Management Costs (indirect costs associated with the management of project- not covered by any other budget headings)	£ 6,306
Overheads (e.g. fuel, mileage, travel, venue hire, volunteer costs, marketing and publicity)	£ 25,992
NF Funding Total	£ 98,255

OUTPUTS		Overall Target Total
CODE	<u>Dynamic Smart City Outputs</u>	
104	number of low carbon initiatives supported	0
CODE	<u>Healthy Smart City Outputs</u>	
204	number of items purchased (renewed items for equipment loan scheme)	0
208	amount of highway, cycle, pathways, greenspace improved by area (m2)	4250(m2)
209	number of litter picks/community cleans up carried out	208
210	Number of bags of waste cleared from neighbourhoods	1020
211	Issues reported via www.sunderland.gov.uk/report-it	0
213	number of street furniture and / or equipment funded to repaired/replaced/renewed	0
CODE	<u>Vibrant Smart City Outputs</u>	
305	number of NEW volunteers recruited	255
306	number of volunteers participating - counted each quarter	425
307	number of volunteer hours delivered	2550

Recommendation – Reject

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The Neighbourhood and Community Board recommend that this application is rejected.