

Coalfield Voluntary and Community Sector Network Report

The Coalfields VCS Network have met on 2 occasions since the last Coalfields Area Committee. The meetings have taken place at Easington Lane Community Access Point and have been well attended. The meetings have been chaired by Councillor Juliana Heron and have been co-chaired by the Coalfields VCS Representatives.

The network has welcomed speakers as detailed below.

May 2022

Due to the guest speaker having to postpone their presentation, we had only one agenda item which allowed a lot of the groups to provide an update about their projects and forthcoming activities.

Area Committee Call for Projects

Pauline Hopper shared with the group that there was an Area Committee Call For Projects

Holiday Activities - Pauline shared the news that £40,000 was available to be allocated for delivery of Holiday activities from July22-May23. Each application up to the value of £5,000 was available and should cover at least 6 sessions during the summer holidays, 2 x during October half term, 1 x February half term, 2 x in Easter holidays and 1 x in May half term, therefore each award would cover delivery of 12 sessions.

Clean it Green it – A budget of £100,000 was available to establish this environmental project. The project has two main elements:

1. Clean & tidy green space
2. Engage with community groups to coordinate and support them to make the spaces useable

The project would work in full partnership with Sunderland City Council Environmental Services Manager to develop an education element of the programme. The project will run for 2 year and be led by a programme manager. The project will be responsible for planning and facilitation clean ups across all Coalfields wards as well as educating and delivering environmental messages.

24 individual VCS projects were represented at the meeting.

April 2022

Elemore Park presentation delivered by Helen Peverley (Sunderland City Council)

Helen provided an overview of the development of Elemore Park on the site of the former Elemore Golf Club (and prior to that Elemore Colliery). Plans for the site were shared with the group including a café, heritage/education centre and garden centre/nursery within the building. The intention, longer term, is to establish a trust for the site. Helen thanked Margaret Smith from Friends of Herrington Country Park for advice and support regarding requirements for setting up a group.

Stephenson Trail presentation delivered by Emma Horsman (Cultural Spring)

Emma's presentation on the development of an education and art project to celebrate 200 years of the Hetton Colliery Railway which carried coal from Elemore to the staithes at the River Wear. She informed the group about the various opportunities to be involved in community activities.

VCS Representative to Coalfield Area Committee

Two candidates for the role, Emerly Christie from the Old Rectory and Amy Swan from Active Families, each gave a short presentation to the group, outlining why they would like to represent the VCS Network. A vote took place and a discussion followed as to how to select the candidate after each nominee received the same number of votes.

The network agreed to ask Emerly and Amy if they would be willing to share the role. They each bring a range of attributes and strengths, and the group could not decide between them. This was agreed and Emerly and Amy will share the role.

24 individual VCS projects were represented at the meeting.

The Coalfields VCS network continues to be well attended with approximately 35 groups regularly taking part in meetings.

The Coalfields VCS network would like to take this opportunity to thank Sunderland City Council – Coalfields Area Committee for their ongoing support and providing funding opportunities for local VCS groups and organisations.

VCS Representatives

Wendy Cook, Community Opportunities

Eileen Bewick, ShARP

Amy Swan, Active Families

Emerly Christie, The Old Rectory