

North Area Committee

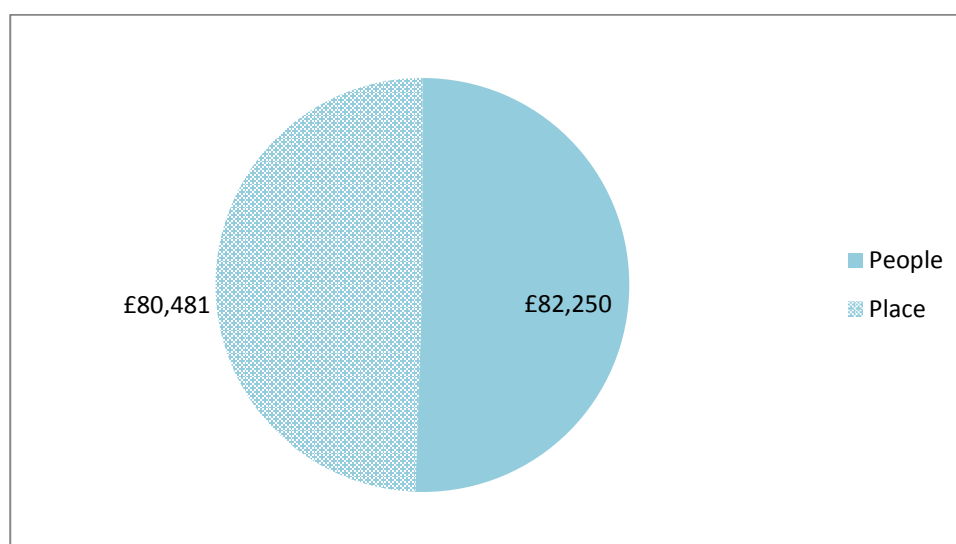
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Cllr Denny Wilson Sunderland North Area Chair

During 2014/15 North Area Committee members have continued to work alongside their communities to understand their needs and work together to address them.

A key part of our collective role is to influence how services are delivered in the North, underpinned by using our delegated budgets to kick start activity and innovation.

During this last year £XXX of Strategic Initiatives Budget was allocated by North Area Committee to support local priorities. Additionally £XXX of Community Chest was awarded to community groups to deliver activities providing genuine community benefit.



Breakdown of how SIB has been allocated in line with People, Place and Economy priorities during 2014/15

Examples of activity during 2014/15 include:

Place based priorities

Members continue to work with communities; officers and partners to achieve clean, green and well looked after communities. Focusing attentions on activities that improved and best utilised our environment and its green and open spaces:

We responded to residents' concerns about the condition of the site to the rear of Johnstone Villas, Southwick. Where a privately owned allotment which had been left abandoned and neglected for a number of years. We utilised SIB funding to remove debris, fly tipping, dilapidated buildings and fencing and re-landscape the site. Further shrub removal and bulb planting was carried in partnership with the Probation Service.

Environmental schemes were carried out by the council's street scene staff working alongside communities and local delivery partners. Thinning out plantations, tree removal and general tidy ups were carried out at Baltimore Avenue and Almond Drive, Castletown, hotspots across the Redhill ward, Keir Hardie Way and the rear of the Library building at Southwick, Seafields at Fulwell and around the Pirate Park and car park at Seaburn. Further work was carried out around St. Peter's to the rear of Bloomfield Court, the bankside at Sandpoint Road, and along the Sculpture Trail and Bonnersfield.

Currently we are working with a voluntary organisation and looking into the feasibility of developing the former caretaker's cottage in Thompson Park into a multi-purpose facility to provide a community amenity for local residents. Additionally further works are proposed by the Thompson Park Steering Group to encourage further visitor activity.

We continue to inform the Highways Maintenance Programme, helping to identify priority road improvements during 2014-15 and 2015-16.

Elected members are keen to improve engagement through local events and activities:

Working with the Area VCS Network to support and deliver five ward based events during the Easter Holidays. Showcasing services and activities available for families locally and providing healthy food to help combat holiday hunger.

Working in partnership with the Cultural Spring initiative, elected members and residents have helped identify opportunities for activities. The project aims to encourage people to experience and be inspired by arts and culture. Initiatives in the North have included a Summer Streets programme, graffiti arts projects, a Ukulele Project, and a Birmingham Royal Ballet Outreach Session at Southwick Primary.

The third successful Southwick Community Christmas event took place in 2014. Organised by and for the community and extremely well supported by local businesses.

Members continue to be involved in opportunities to make best use of our heritage in the Area:

Involvement this year includes the second stage Heritage Lottery Bid for Hylton Castle and Roker Pier, and the Coastal Communities Fund Phase 3 for the development of the Seafront as an out of season resort.

In September 2014 over 2000 visitors attended a very successful 'Castle at War Event' at Hylton Castle. Incorporating the SIB funded 'Why did Charlie Buchan Go to War' project activity, Beamish Learning Team helped deliver a WW1 Boot Camp, displaying period tents from the Museum and involving 250 children from local schools in Boot Camp activities.

Committee funds were approved for a Battle Re-enactment which is planned to take place at Hylton Castle during 2016.

We supported the purchase and installation of a clock at Wheatsheaf. Commemorating the start of WW1 and remembering the people of Sunderland killed during a Zeppelin bombing; members are currently looking at further options to develop the site in preparation for the centenary of the bombing in April 2016.



People based priorities

Improved health and wellbeing continues to be a key priority for the area:

Earlier this year members approved SIB funding to support local VCS organisations to help address social isolation in the North. Activities included:

- Wellbeing and horticulture sessions delivered by HOPs and CEED,
- Groundworks utilised local amenities including the coast, allotments and green spaces to introduce older people in the North to 'Active Green Living activities'.
- Age UK have delivered Dementia Awareness Training sessions throughout the year aimed at community and voluntary workers, and carers working, living and volunteering in the North, arranged a Friendship event and befriending service, produced an older people's newsletter providing information on services from across the North and a 'Bring a friend volunteer' event to encourage volunteering in the North.
- The Salvation Army are engaging with individuals at risk of social isolation, and supporting them to attend activities in Austin House. The centre has seen an increase in people attending activities such as the 60's befriending sessions, the ICT suite, activities aimed at preventing social isolation for older people and the community café.
- Local Community Associations were awarded funding to deliver services and activities in the area and encourage take up of those activities from socially isolated members of the community.

Members **and CCG Partners** have funded a package of initiatives at Marine Walk, Roker. Supporting major developments and linking into opportunities for improved and healthy lifestyles. Young People and community partners are helping to develop plans for the alternative use of the former paddling pool, a designated area of the beach for sporting activities, a bike hire scheme

offering a range of bikes for all ages and abilities including electric bikes and marked out routes for walking, jogging and running . It is anticipated projects will be in place during the summer season.

Members work closely with partners through the Youth Operations Group to help to influence and co-ordinate activities for young people in the North. Including XL Youth Village and contracted Youth provision:

Additionally Redhouse Academy Youth Project has provided 2 sessions per week from the RHAY centre which included a music workshop and now offers a drop in offering activities to raise self-esteem and confidence. The project is working with local youth providers to continue to offer youth provision for the young people who access the centre.

The Keep Kids Active project ran sessions during the summer holidays. Throughout the 2013/14 school year 27 events took place, engaging with 4,743 young people in a variety of physical activities in local schools. Successfully raising awareness of the importance of being active and increasing confidence and social skills.

A Wheeled Sports Park was installed at Downhill during 2013/14 and has proved very successful. Members have worked with RLS and Probation Service to carry out environmental improvements prior to moving to the second stage of development. Young people are working with us to determine further enhancements to the park during 2015/16.

Area Committee has supported projects to improve Job Prospects and Skills in the North:

SIB was awarded to the Foundation of Light to deliver the Back on Track First Steps Programme. Working with pupils from local secondary schools to inspire, involve and educate 14-16 year olds likely to become not in employment, education or training (NEET) at school leaving age. The project delivers accredited and non-accredited activities to support progression into education, employment or training and works with parents and carers to complete the Positive Parenting Programme.

Southwick Neighbourhood Youth Project was awarded funding to help improve employability for 16 – 25 years olds across the North. To date they have worked with 100 young people on a one-to-one basis, identifying needs and aspirations and through links with local training providers and businesses helped 21 young people into employment.

Over the year we have achieved many successes and plans are underway to achieve more in the year ahead. We recognise that it is only by working together in partnership that we are able to make a difference and as such I wish to thank all members of the Area Committee, Northumbria Police, Tyne and Wear Fire Service, North VCS Area Network, Responsive Local Services and Locality Teams for their continued hard work and support.