



# Annual Report of the Area Committees

2022–23



# Contents

Foreword	2
Area Arrangements and growing community wealth	3
Coalfield Area Committee	5
East Area Committee	9
North Area Committee	13
Washington Area Committee	17
West Area Committee	21
The year ahead	24
Area Committees 2023-24	25

# Foreword



Councillor Linda Williams

As Sunderland City Council's Cabinet member for Vibrant City, I am incredibly proud to present the Annual Report of Area Committees for 2022-23. This report is produced specifically to highlight the combined achievements of the Area Committees and partners and to demonstrate the remarkable joint working which has taken place over the past year.

Through Let's Talk Sunderland resident engagement, we developed each of the five Neighbourhood Investment Plans and have continually consulted with local communities to ensure the plans were still relevant to meet the needs and expectations within local areas. The areas have now delivered the final year of those 3 year plans, which have been updated on a regular basis to keep our residents informed of progress.

As we commenced 2022, we recognised the need to be flexible in our support to communities to deliver more advice, guidance, and practical help in relation to the ongoing financial issues and cost of living crisis. The emphasis during the winter months being to support residents to keep safe and warm and provide social and welfare support to those who needed it most. We also recognised the importance of continuing to

deliver health and wellbeing activities, provide support and positive activities to children and young people and to ensure our neighbourhoods were kept clean, tidy, safe, and attractive for the benefit of residents. To deliver on each Area's priorities, a total of over £2,880,000 area budget was awarded across the five areas. You can see more information and detail in the following sections of this annual report, for each Area Committee.

I would like to give my thanks and gratitude to the local Voluntary and Community Sector 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, including support for children and young people to protect their physical and mental wellbeing.

Sunderland City Council continues to support the Voluntary and Community Sector (VCS) across Sunderland, through the established five Area VCS networks, which are linked directly with each of the Area Committees.

In the last 12 months, in addition to Area Funding, the sector has been awarded additional budgets to provide enhanced support to residents. One example of such funding was the Warm Spaces Funding which provided a total of £816,596 to Voluntary and Community Sector (VCS) organisations in every ward across the city, to provide 67 Community Hubs. Those organisations have provided a welcoming place, refreshments and social and welfare support to individuals and families. A total of 41,851 residents were registered as accessing those Hubs during winter months. As we move

now into springtime and warmer weather, we continue to work with those organisations to adapt and develop their Hubs to provide support with digital skills, welfare and benefit advice and health and wellbeing activities. The What Matters to you initiative seeks to help grow Sunderland's Community Support Programme and Social Prescribing Offer and awarded £268,223 of grant to 35 VCS Organisations. We are immensely proud of how local groups, organisations and volunteers remain so resilient and continue to work tirelessly with Elected Members, officers and partners to ensure that residents of the City are fully supported to access relevant services.

The implementation of the Sunderland Voluntary Sector Alliance (SVSA) which has been developed with key partners across the City, has progressed this year. Key partners across the City, including Sunderland City Council, Sunderland Integrated Care Board (ICB) and Gentoo are committed to supporting the Alliance which will be pivotal in ensuring the voluntary sector is supported and resourced in the city.

We have now delivered the final year of the three-year plan and look to the future as we develop new plans for 2023-26 for each of the five Area Committees. We continue some of the priorities from the previous plans and develop new ones as need arises. The work involved in providing support to Area Committees, including the development of projects and initiatives, administering of grants and working with residents, partners and communities for mutual benefit cannot be underestimated and I would like to offer my thanks to the Area Arrangements team for all of their hard work and support over the last year.



# Area Arrangements and growing community wealth

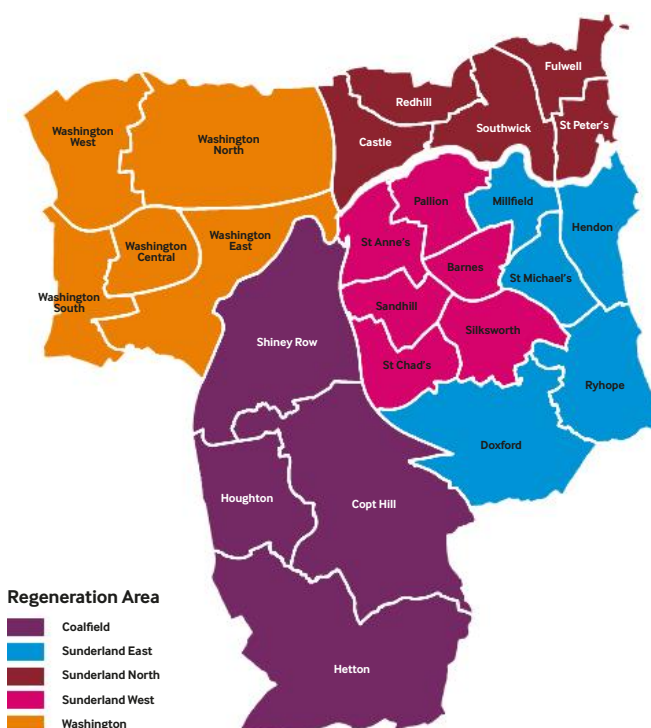
Sunderland Council is committed to growing Community Wealth and bringing forward significant investment into the City. Sunderland Elected Members are all Community Wealth Champions, working together with residents and communities to reduce health inequalities, increase resilience and maximise the use 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 Communities 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 (NF), Neighbourhood Capital Investment Programme (NCIP) and Community Chest. These budgets are allocated to support projects and initiatives that can demonstrate that their work will support 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

The past year has been challenging for everyone involved in Area Committees. Priorities have changed, and Area Committee focus has changed and adapted to meet the requirements and needs of each local community. The commitment and direction from all Elected Members, Officers and Partners is demonstrated in the outcomes and achievements highlighted in the individual area chapters of this report. A flavour of local projects that are making a real difference in local communities are highlighted throughout.





## Councillor James Blackburn, Coalfield Area Chair

I would like to take this opportunity to reflect on the past year, and on the challenges faced by our residents and communities. 2022/23 saw the final year of delivery of our 3 year plan, set back in 2020. External influences threw up a number of challenges impacting on those plans, not least the cost of living crisis and financial uncertainty faced by all. Despite the challenges faced, Coalfield Area Committee has, with the dedicated support of local Voluntary and Community Sector groups and partner organisations, continued to deliver a range of projects and services to local communities supporting them to build resilience and look after their wellbeing. A number of environmental improvement projects and additional work in parks has also taken

place. The Coalfield is an attractive and green area, and we are all doing our bit to keep it that way and make improvements. Without the dedication of area based teams and local volunteers we would not be able to do this. I would like to offer my thanks to them all.

I also want to thank my fellow Councillors, officers, partners, and volunteers who have supported the implementation of area priorities for the benefit of our Coalfield residents. The range and scope of projects is diverse and impressive. 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. A total of 246 children and young people have taken part in

holiday activities and clubs, all receiving information and guidance on healthy lifestyles. Partners continue to support children and young people to protect and improve their mental and physical wellbeing. Despite the challenges, actions from the Coalfield work plan have been delivered.

During the past few months we have been planning for 2023-26 and Area Committee is developing its plan to continue to provide services and projects of benefit to the local community in line with current needs.

I am proud to present this Annual Report for the Coalfield Area which outlines some of the key achievements, right across the area.





# Coalfield Area Committee

Councillor James Blackburn, Coalfield Area Chair

## Coalfield Area priorities set out in the Delivery Plan

- Improve housing and neighbourhoods
- Improve the physical and natural environment, and local greenspaces
- Increase access and improve support to digital resources
- Support local shopping centres and businesses
- Improve access to education and employment opportunities
- Reduce social isolation and improve health and wellbeing
- Invest in local voluntary and community sector organisations/assets
- Support young people and provide positive activities and opportunities
- Preserve and celebrate heritage

## Key highlights

From our 2022–23 allocated budgets, we approved over **£475,000** of area budget to deliver projects to meet identified priorities. Key highlights of the year, include:

**£35,807.79** of Community Chest funding was awarded to local groups delivering a total of 47 Community projects. Projects were varied and have included; Improvements to community venues including replacement cooker & a lincat boiler, Family Fun Days, A wreath making workshop, accessible bowls equipment & A violinist to provide entertainment at a Christmas party. The average grant was **£761.87**

As part of a parks improvement scheme, lighting has been installed in Houghton Rectory Park, with funding of **£35,000** approved by Area Committee

The first Coalfield Pride event took place in Hetton in July 2022, attracting groups and families from the local and surrounding area. Funding allocated enabled the organising group to develop this event which is to become a regular feature in the Coalfield calendar

An additional, pro active, anti social behaviour (ASB) officer, dedicated to the Coalfield area, has been employed for a 2 year period. Enabled by a **£79,840** grant

from Area Committee, the officer will work with Councillors and partners to identify areas of concern

A total of **£91,000** of area budget has been allocated for improvements in Herrington Colliery Welfare Ground, to include improvements to the bowls pavilion, environmental works on the parkland area, a community orchard and work on the football pitch

Educational and arts projects to celebrate the 200th anniversary of the Hetton Colliery Railway were delivered in partnership with VCS organisations. A community loco was made by local schools and groups and a celebration event to mark the occasion was held in November 2022

The Stephenson Trail project has carried out environmental improvements along the Coalfield stretch of the walking/cycling route of the original Hetton Railway.

Local community centres and organisations have been supported to carry out improvements in their buildings.

Shiney Row CA received funding to renew their kitchen area and repair flooring to the main hall. A new youth club is now being delivered from the centre

A Christmas tree was provided for the Fencehouses community, in partnership with Karbon Homes

Buddies Toddlers was established thanks to funding provided by Area Committee. The group provides a safe space for toddlers who have additional needs, and their parents/carers.

Funding was approved to deliver ward based youth provision, providing at least two sessions per ward per week for young people aged 10–19

The Coalfield Clean it, Green it project was set up to complement and add value to environmental services across the area. The project works with volunteers and apprentices delivering projects including cutting back vegetation, litter picks and community clean up days and painting and general maintenance to enhance the visual aspect of the area

# Our year in numbers

23 

Projects, totalling £439,200 awarded  
Neighbourhood Fund

222 

Young people participating in the  
CHAT (Coalfield Healthy and Active  
Teens) project

8,471 

Passenger journeys using  
Community Transport services

408 

People supported to improve their  
digital skills in community settings

71 

Adults supported to progress into  
employment, education or training

90 

Organised litter picks  
carried out

16 

Tonnes of waste removed  
from local greenspaces by  
Clean it, Green it

77 

Residents supported to  
access Universal Credit

240 

Children and young people taking  
part in art and music workshops  
as part of Houghton Feast

491 

Children and young people  
accessing term time youth clubs

246 

Children and young people  
accessing holiday activities  
and clubs

47 

Community groups and  
organisations were awarded  
Community Chest funding



# Our year in images







## Councillor Martyn Herron, East Area Chair

As Chair of the East Area Committee, I am proud to present this Annual Report which highlights the key achievements delivered in partnership with groups and organisations from across the East area. This year which was the final year of the 3 year delivery plan saw residents and communities face external challenges, which were considered when delivering the Area Priorities.

I want to offer thanks to my fellow Councillors, officer, partners, local groups and volunteers who continue to come

together to deliver the area projects which benefit the residents of East Sunderland.

The voluntary and community sector has continued to deliver activities and projects such as The East Rangers, which delivered over 500 litter picks, Go! Get online which saw over 600 people supported digitally as well as all the other projects delivered across the Area. My thanks go to the groups and the many volunteers who support these projects which are impressive and impactful.

During the past few months we have been planning for 2023-26 and Area Committee is developing its plan to continue to provide services and projects of benefit to the local community in line with current needs.

I am proud to present this Annual Report for the East Sunderland Area which outlines some of the key achievements, right across the area.





# East Area Committee

Councillor Martyn Herron, East Area Chair

## East Area priorities set out in the Delivery Plan

- Tackle empty properties
- Derelict land
- Private landlords
- Affordable homes
- Love Where You Live
- Enforcement
- Bloom activities
- Carbon and plastic pollution
- Highways, pavements and street lighting
- Parks, play, cycle and walking routes
- Digital technology and 5G
- Use of existing and vacant properties
- Job clubs and educational centres
- Community cohesion
- Social prescribing
- Enhance local green space
- Support voluntary and community sector
- Volunteer platform
- Local events
- Youth clubs and spaces
- Reduce fear of crime
- Support local organisations
- Fuel poverty
- Credit solutions
- More than a Foodbank
- Heritage assets and activities
- Preserve heritage

## Key highlights

From our 2022–23 allocated budgets, we approved over **£524,908** to deliver projects to meet identified priorities. Examples of funding awarded are:

**£49,939** of Community Chest funding was awarded to local groups delivering a total of 42 Community projects. Projects were varied and included; Outdoor classroom equipment, Buggy Buddies fitness, Wellbeing Fitness sessions, Christmas meals for the elderly, Female swimming lessons, Reading pods and Funding for Football Kits. The average grant was **£1,189.02**

**£63,606** was awarded to VCS Groups to deliver the Fancy a Day Out Programme. The grant has enabled Groups to deliver sessions, which were fun and educational to children and young people during the

13 weeks of the school holidays, whilst providing access to a nutritional meal

The joint project with the Coalfield and West Area Committees celebrating the 200th anniversary of the internationally renowned Stephenson Trail continued

**£42,000** was awarded to deliver the WoW Features

**£43,340** was awarded to support Ryhope Community Association

**£18,500** was awarded to five VCS Groups to deliver the Maximising Community Assets programme

**£70,000** awarded to Go! Get online

**£28,845** was awarded to Sunderland MIND to deliver improvements to an outside space

**£99,800** was awarded to 6 groups to extend the East Rangers project to encourage volunteering and environmental improvements in each ward across the East



# Our year in numbers

398 

volunteers involved in area activities

738 

hours of digital support  
to residents

9,312 

hours of in-kind support  
provided by volunteers

403 

litter picks carried out.

255 

community clean ups  
environmental improvements

2,070 

Enforcement actions, including  
written warnings, investigations and  
fixed penalty notices

1,212 

children and young people received  
a meal and accessed activities that  
were educational and fun throughout  
the school holidays

20 

environmental improvements  
carried out using the Walk and  
Talk Programme

378 

people supported to GO! Get Online  
to reduce the digital divide

1,029 

Socially isolated and vulnerable  
adults received support

69 

VCS Groups received  
an Area grant

1,462 

children and young people engaged  
in health and wellbeing activities

# 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 2022–23 North Sunderland Annual Report, highlighting some of the activities and achievements delivered in what has been another very challenging year for everyone.

The Area Committee agreed their workplan following extensive research and consultation amongst our communities

and neighbourhoods across the area.

I want to offer mine and the Area Committees thanks for the amount of support and dedication shown by local community and voluntary groups who have worked tirelessly alongside ourselves and partners to ensure that the services and support have been available to help and care for the residents of North Sunderland.

Despite the challenges and restrictions we have faced the North Area Committee and partners have continued to deliver the actions outlined in our Neighbourhood Investment Plan with some great projects and improvements being seen across the area. I am proud to present just some of the key achievements delivered.





# North Area Committee

Councillor Denny Wilson, North Area Chair

## North Area priorities set out in the Delivery Plan

- Tackle empty properties
- Derelict land
- Affordable homes
- Love Where You Live
- Transport Routes and Parking
- Highways, pavements and street lighting
- Parks, play, cycle and walking routes
- Social Prescribing
- Support voluntary and community sector
- Support youth clubs and spaces for young people to be together and feel safe
- Volunteer platform
- Support communities to deliver local events
- Improve CCTV and Enforcement
- Promote Heritage Assets and Deliver Heritage Activities
- Preserve and Celebrate Local Heritage

## Key highlights

From our 2022–23 allocated budgets, we approved and aligned over **£830,000** to deliver projects to meet identified priorities. Examples of funding aligned and awarded are:

**£48,739.54** of Community Chest funding was awarded to local groups delivering a total of 38 Community projects. Awards have included; A boxing ring & equipment, summer trips to the aquarium & bowling, festive trips & celebrations, carnival workshops & furniture and equipment for community venues. The average grant was **£1,282.62**

**£100,000** awarded to develop 'Christmas at the Castle' at Hylton Castle

**£100,000** towards improvements in Thompson park

Awarded **£5,000** to develop a park run in the Quarry

Supported 16 projects and awarded **£250,000** towards activities for young people

Working with partners and the community awarded **£11,000** towards a fence in Redhill

Awarded **£10,000** towards the development a Playzone

**£25,000** towards a Battle Re-enactment at Hylton Castle

**£19,981** towards an event in Thompson Park

# Our year in numbers

2,256 

young people benefiting  
from school holiday activities

1 

Fence installed to tackle Anti Social  
Behaviour and improve safety

243 

Young People Accessing  
sessions - Southwick  
Raising Aspirations

839 

Young People attending  
Youth Provision - St. Peters  
Raising Aspirations

86 

People benefiting and  
enjoying independent lives -  
Fulwell Raising Aspirations

40 

Community cleans ups and  
litter picks delivered -  
Castle Raising Aspirations

133  2,036 

adults enjoying a healthier  
lifestyle - Redhill Raising Aspirations

volunteer hours delivered

1 

Southwick Illumination  
Switch On Event delivered

122 

Residents volunteered in  
the local community

38 

Community Chest grants with an  
average grant of £48,739 awarded

1 

Park run



# Our year in images







## Councillor Len Lauchlan, 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. The Area Committee agreed their workplan following extensive research and consultation amongst all communities and neighbourhoods across the area.

I want to offer thanks to all the key workers, my fellow Councillors, partners and volunteers who have supported our Washington residents. The priority became

ensuring that services and activities to help our local communities were continued, and that residents who were facing issues caused by financial uncertainty and the cost of living were given support and advice. Priorities were delivered through the commitment of partners and volunteers pulling together to support each other to support those who were most vulnerable or struggling with isolation.

Despite the challenges and restrictions, as well as providing additional support to our residents throughout the past year, the Washington Area Committee, together with its partners, has continued to deliver the actions outlined in our Neighbourhood Investment Plan with some great projects and improvements being seen across the area. Some of the key highlights are contained in the following pages.





# Washington Area Committee

Councillor Len Lauchlan, Washington Area Chair

## Washington Area priorities set out in the Delivery Plan

- Invest in parks, play, cycle and walking routes, open spaces and Love Where You Live activities
- Improve housing, tackle empty properties and ensure enforcement is used to manage neighbourhoods effectively tackling flytipping, litter and dog fouling
- Road safety, highways, pavements and street lighting
- Increase 5G access & support digital learning to improve employment opportunities and basic skills
- Health and Wellbeing – including social isolation and emotional wellbeing
- Support and invest in the Voluntary & Community Sector and volunteering
- Support the VCSE to deliver local services such as social care and welfare
- Support for young people
- Events, culture and local heritage
- Create safe neighbourhoods

## Key highlights

From our 2022–23 allocated budgets, we approved over **£450,000** to deliver projects to meet identified priorities.

**£49,788** of Community Chest funding was awarded to local groups delivering a total of 52 Community projects. The funding has gone to various different projects including: Improvements to community venues, Day trips out, Local litter picks throughout Washington, Jubilee Celebrations and installation of benches. The average grant was **£957.46**

We approved **£90,000** to deliver a programme of local events across Washington including the Springwell Village 40's weekend, Miners Picnic and Washington Illuminations

We supported the 'Creative You' project, delivering an outreach plan into Washington schools, strengthening relationships and delivering a diverse programme of Young People's Arts Activities in three locations across Washington

We invested a further **£20,000** to support improvements in Usworth and Princess Anne Parks

A programme of positive activities for young people, to be delivered during school holidays, was developed. Funding of **£100,000** was approved to support a

number of local groups and organisations to work with children and young people aged 5–19

A youth matters financial education and resilience programme commenced, working with schools and youth groups across the Washington area

A tree management programme commenced to manage a number of plantations across the area. **£100,000** was allocated to deliver the programme

# Our year in numbers

16 

projects awarded  
neighbourhood funding  
during 2022–23

48 

Clean & Green Environmental  
Programmes and community clean  
ups delivered

8 

local organisations supported  
with funding to improve  
community buildings

1,500 

enforcement actions  
carried out

31 

groups of young people invited  
to present their project ideas and  
all received funding from the  
CAN DO budget

51 

local voluntary and community groups  
received Community  
Chest grants to deliver projects  
within their neighbourhoods

2,473 

engagements by young  
people participating in the  
youth outreach programme

14 

individual Ward Improvement  
Projects were delivered

3,300 

residents attended local  
events and celebrations funded  
by Area Committee

311 

residents in crisis receiving  
much needed information,  
advice and guidance

324 

local residents benefiting from  
'Healthy Lifestyles' Projects

693 

hours of volunteer time  
committed to community  
clean ups



# Our year in images







## Councillor Peter Gibson West Area Chair

As Chair of the West Area Committee I would like to take this opportunity to introduce the 2022–23 West Sunderland Annual Report, highlighting some of the activities and achievements delivered in what has been a challenging year for residents and communities.

This year was the final year of delivery of our 3 year plan, set back in 2020. This year the Committee considered the priorities and the impact of external factors, not least of which being the cost of living crisis and financial uncertainty faced by all.

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

community and voluntary groups who have continued to deliver area projects to benefit the residents of West Sunderland. Young people continue to be engaged and involved in our area and over 2000 have been involved in our area projects. Environmental improvement projects have been established in each ward and improvements have been made to local communities and parks. I would like to thank these groups and the volunteers who are working together to make the area a nice clean and tidy place.

As an Area Committee, we have continued to work with colleagues from the Coalfield

and East Area Committees and a wide range of services and partners to enhance 'the Stephenson Trail project' which saw a number of exciting celebrations and educational activities delivered and improvements to the route.

During the past few months we have been planning for 2023-26 and Area Committee is developing its plan to continue to provide services and projects of benefit to the local community in line with current needs.

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





# West Area Committee

Councillor Peter Gibson, West Area Chair

## West Area priorities set out in the Delivery Plan

- Create safer neighbourhoods
- Invest in the voluntary and community sector
- Improve the feel and look of neighbourhoods
- Improve Health and Wellbeing
- Improve activities for young people
- Digital skills, career and educational opportunities
- Event, Culture and heritage
- Reduce carbon and plastic pollution

## Key highlights

From our 2022–23 allocated budgets, we approved over **£457,181** to deliver projects to meet identified priorities. Examples of funding awarded are:

**£59,100** of Community Chest funding was awarded to local groups delivering a total of 53 Community projects. Projects included; Christmas parties, the Installation of Defibrillators to multiple locations, Environmental improvements, Poppy march, replacing damaged property to the cricket club, winter wellbeing and Family fun days. The average grant was **£1,115.09**

2 local parking improvements projects initiated **£50,000**

1 Community Minibus supported to help Voluntary groups deliver activities across the West

Transport costs were provided to ensure local schools could get young people to Safetyworks!

Holiday Activities delivered in 6 wards throughout the school holidays, funding awarded **£29,824**

Large Scale event delivered in Barnes Park, attracting thousands of local people

**£161,990** was invested in 6 ward based environmental projects, working with residents, volunteers and local community groups to improve local neighbourhoods

Young Peoples Emotional & Mental Health project continued to be delivered in schools

A programme of youth activities continued to be delivered across all 6 wards, delivering 2 youth sessions per ward per week. Additional funding of **£49,760** was provided to deliver sessions to target youth ASB

The West enforcement programme continued to be delivered with an additional enforcement officer and 2 neighbourhood wardens as well as 6 street watch cameras



# Our year in numbers

18 

projects awarded £457,181  
Neighbourhood funding  
during 2022–23

255 

litter picks and community  
clean ups

7,309 

children and young people  
attended youth clubs, advice and  
support to improve wellbeing  
and develop life skills

165 

People supported to be more  
resilient and able to help  
themselves in a crisis

673 

children accessing  
'activity with food' sessions  
during summer holidays

52 

ward based improvement  
projects: reduced ASB and  
crime and improved the  
physical environment

259 

residents volunteered in the  
local community

1,094 

people accessed digital support  
across the West

53 

Community Chest grants with an  
average grant of £1,115 awarded

2,050 

young people supported with their  
mental health and well-being

69 

VCS Groups supported

1,476 

enforcement actions, including  
written warnings, investigations and  
fixed penalty notices

# Our year in images





# The year ahead

In the year ahead each of the Area Committees will focus on the first year of their new plan for 2023–26 and ensure that priorities are aligned to meet the needs of residents and communities. Working with service leads, partners and VCS organisations, actions within the 3-year 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 have supported Area Committees throughout a very difficult period.

The year ahead will see further implementation and strengthening of the Sunderland Voluntary Sector Alliance (SVSA), which has been developed by the sector with key partners across the City.

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 throughout the coming years to inform the development of priorities and projects beyond the year ahead. This will be done via VCS Networks, resident consultation, Area Neighbourhood and Community Boards and Area Committees.

We have a new City Cabinet Member for Vibrant City, Cllr John Price, following the Annual Council in May 2023, Cllr Price will work hard to continue to further support and develop the positive achievements delivered to-date within Area Arrangements. .



# Area Committees 2023-24

