

Coalfield Area Committee Delivery Plan 2023 - 2026

Updated June 2025

The Area Plan commits the Area Committee to a number of priorities, which will be delivered within the Coalfield Sunderland area. This Delivery Plan provides an update on progress on the Area Committee's Area Plan and will be monitored by the Area Committee and actions will be addressed throughout the three years covered by the plan, via the Coalfield Neighbourhood and Community Board

Priority	Progress Update
Dynamic Smart City We will have	
A Can Do Project to develop skills of young people	Young people have attended the Neighbourhood and Community Board in November 2023, January, April and November 2024 to present their proposals to Councillors. Kepier School, Houghton Boxing Club, Philadelphia Cricket Club, the Old Rectory youth Club, Flatts Youthie, Houghton Rugby Club, Shiney Row Youth Club and Studio V were all successful in their applications for funding after presenting their ideas to relevant N&C Board meetings. The latest round of applications opened in February 2025 and two proposals were presented to the April N&C Board meeting. Funding was awarded to Houghton Boxing Club and Flatts Youthie. A proposal to align a further budget to this project is contained in Item 4 Budget Report.
Coalfield Communities Connected Project to develop digital skills of residents	The Coalfield Communities Connected IT project is delivered by Springboard in 'Community Hubs', each week. In all hubs, participants have access to laptops and PCs, and also get support in improving their knowledge on the use of their personal mobile phone and tablets (using venue's wifi).
Support to residents to improve financial resilience via R U Ready	The project offers support in all aspects of universal credit and many of this support leads to financial advice. These support sessions are complex and timely. Analysis of the client's engagement for RUReady support shows that sessions tend to be with new clients who want IAG and support relating to a particular UC / benefit topic and therefore to ensure everyone gets the support required appointments are booked not only during a session time but on an alternative afternoon. During the last quarter 79 individuals

	accessed support via the project, 44 of those were 'new' customers, and 25 were supported into training or employment. A comprehensive update was provided to members in May 2025, as part of the Q4 performance report.
A VAS and Road Safety programme	The current VAS programme consists of 32 locations and 14 signs which are rotated on a quarterly basis. The project has been extended until March 2026. Smart technology options are being explored for future phases of the programme, and officers will attend future meetings to consult with members.
A Tree planting programme across the area COMPLETE	In addition to proposals put forward to plant trees on a number of the 13 sites included in the LinkTogether project, members have been asked to submit relevant locations within their ward for consideration for inclusion in a 'community orchard' programme. Trees have been planted in Hetton Park, Herrington Colliery Welfare and Elemore Park.
Developed and delivered low carbon initiatives in the community	At the July Area Committee, an application for funding to deliver the 'Litter Free for Wildlife' was approved. The two year project will work with all schools across the area and commenced in September 2024. The Litter Free for Wildlife programme is making excellent progress, with more schools actively engaging in litter-picking sessions to promote cleaner environments and protect local wildlife. By connecting with schools such as Hetton Lyons, Shiney Row, Barnwell Academy, and East Rainton Primary School, the initiative has built strong partnerships and implemented hands-on activities that foster environmental stewardship among young people.
Healthy Smart City We will have	
Provision of positive activities for young people during school holidays	A total of 14 projects (totalling £62,590) commenced in July 2024, and will deliver activities during all school holidays until May 2025. A wide range of activities such as cycling, trips out, cookery, crafts, outdoor games and swimming will be available free of charge to children and young people across the area. All sessions will be promoted and advertised via the Coalfield Sunderland Community facebook page. Members discussed funding for 2025/26 at the April 2025 N&C Board meeting, and a Call for Projects was carried out. Proposals and recommendations are presented to the Area Committee in Item 4 Budget Report .
Youth clubs in each of the four wards	The two year Neighbourhood Fund project 'Youth Choices', delivered by Community Opportunities, provides two sessions of youth activity, per ward, per week. Current sessions are delivered at outdoor and indoor venues including Flatts Youth Centre (and field), Shiney Row CA (and Claremont Drive field), Houghton Racecourse CA (and Kirklea field) , Houghton Sports Centre (and MUGA). The sessions in each of the four wards provide our

	<p>young people with a safe space to meet, where they can engage in discussions and talk about issues that are relevant to their lives. This quarter 2 Youth Sessions each week have been delivered at Flatts Youthie. 1 session takes place each Monday at Houghton Racecourse Community Association and 1 outreach session takes place in the Copt Hill ward. Two sessions per week are delivered in Houghton with the Everyone Active MUGA being utilised for two different age groups. Shiney Row sessions are delivered from Shiney Row CA and, more recently, Community Opportunities shop front in Westbourne Tce. A total of 46 'new' young people have attended sessions over the last quarter, therefore increasing the overall number of people engaged. A comprehensive update was provided to members in May 2025, as part of the Q4 performance report.</p>
<p>A Coalfield Healthy and Active Teen (CHAT) programme COMPLETE46</p>	<p>Delivered by Everyone Active, the project offered the opportunity for 11-15 year olds in the Coalfield area of the city to participate in a programme of junior gym and wellness sessions at Hetton and Houghton Sports Centres. This project has now been successfully delivered and has made new partnerships with Foundation Of light, the HALO project, the local police and Community Opportunities youth workers to ensure that the young people are aware of opportunities that are open to them, and the jobs that are open within the leisure industry such as lifeguards, leisure attendants, tennis coaches and swim teachers. They have all been sent information about small group training that is available to them at certain times throughout the week and have been offered support as a group. The participants have been informed of exit strategies in the area which include social football, teen circuits and couch to 5K sessions and many more. In the final quarter of the project a further 9 participants have been introduced into the scheme. The project will have worked with 48 participants throughout the 12 month duration of delivery.</p>
<p>Activities to reduce Social Isolation</p>	<p>The Links for Life programme will support increased social and wellness activity. The Area Committee have approved funding to 12 organisations to deliver activities and events to reduce social isolation. The projects commenced in October 2024. Further updates will be given as part of the regular project performance report. The N&C Board will discuss this priority and options for future funding at the July 2025 meeting.</p>
<p>Social Prescribing Services</p>	<p>Links for Life is Sunderland's social prescribing programme. Further information will be provided each quarter as part of the Links for Life update in Annex 2</p> <p>The Advice on Prescription (AoP) Project funded via Neighbourhood Fund is a vital support to the patients of the 6 GP surgeries in the Coalfields. The AoP</p>

	<p>team receive direct referrals from GPs, health practitioners, social prescribers, the Stroke team and Macmillan. The casework approach used by the Advice Wokers means that patients are supported by a known worker who knows them and understands their needs. In the previous reporting quarter 260 local residents were supported to become more financially resilient and received ongoing support to manage their money and wellbeing. This project is now complete.</p>
Vibrant Smart City We will have	
The Coalfield Clean it, Green It project	<p>The two year Clean it, Green it project, delivered by Springboard, continues to deliver activity across all four wards on sites and locations which are not currently on a maintenance schedule and need environmental improvement. One Councillor from each ward sits on the steering group, alongside SCC and Gentoo colleagues. The partnership with Community Opportunities continues to flourish and an additional member of staff works with Springboard two days per week. A wide range of clean ups an tasks have been carried out, including restoring and painting of steelwork and litter picking/community clean ups. Recruitment is underway for a project officer. It is proposed that the remaining budget allocated for vehicle maintenance is used as a contribution towards a vehicle for the project. See Item 4 Budget Report</p>
Heritage Activities and Community Events	<p>Local community events throughout the year are supported by Community Chest and Neighbourhood Fund. A series of Christmas activities and events took place during November and December 2024. Planning for a range of events including Elemore Music Festival and Coalfield Pride is underway. Funding was approved for these two events at the December 2024 Area Committee meeting. A request for a further £4,000 for Elemore Music Festival is contained in Item 4 Budget Report.</p>
Delivered the Houghton Feast community programme	<p>The 2024 Houghton Feast was delivered successfully. The opening ceremony, and parade saw hundreds of community groups, schools and residents engaged in activities and entertainment. One Member from each ward, along with the PCRM for Coalfield sits on the HF Steering Group. Planning for the 2025 Feast has begun. The theme for this year is 'The Magic of Houghton le Spring'. Funding aligned at the March Area Committee is recommended for approval in Item 4 Budget Report</p>
Improvements to Herrington Colliery Welfare Ground facilities	<p>Following allocation of Neighbourhood Fund and Neighbourhood Capital Improvement Programme, works have been carried out to improve the pavilion at Herrington Colliery Welfare Ground. The Class A football pitch has been improved and encroaching trees have been removed and pollarded. Repairs to the spectator rail has been completed and external</p>

	fencing to protect the site has been installed. Picnic benches have now been installed, completing this phase of the project. Essential works were carried out to the bowling green in March 2025. An application for funding for further improvements is contained in Item 4 Budget Report .
Improvements to Houghton Rectory Park	Improvements at Rectory Park are now complete. New bins and benches have been installed, improvements to the red gravel path and new gates were carried out in April 2025.
Delivered the Stephenson Trail heritage programme COMPLETE	During this quarter all elements of the project have been finalised. Additional signage has been installed, and badges and walks/maps have been distributed from various locations including Elemore Park and Hetton Lyons Country Park. The project has now been completed with all elements of the action plan being delivered. The remaining funding has been allocated to three organisations across the East, Coalfield and West areas to continue environmental improvements for a further 2 years. Replacement waymarkers, maps and badges have been purchased in order to provide a legacy of the project. Partners will continue to promote the Trail and will distribute maps and badges to the local community.
Contributed to habitat and ecological improvements via the Links With Nature project	<p>The Links with Nature Project Team started on 1st July. The team includes an Engagement Officer, Greenspaces Officer and Hetton Park and Hetton Bogs Officer. Two Conservation Trainees have also been appointed.</p> <p>Work is continuing at a pace to deliver a significant programme of works on the 13 sites across the Coalfield area. Regular tasks are taking place, for example, at Copt Hill 1350 hedge plants and 23 trees were planted by local volunteers. A joint project with Clean It Green it and SCC's Environmental Services cleared rubbish and fly tipping from the woodland at Elemore Vale and open space alongside Ruskin Avenue. 40 standard trees have been planted alongside Herrington Burn. Wear Rivers Trust have carried out initial investigations on removing a disused pipe and crossing points from Herrington Burn and spoken the horse owners about moving manure from the edge of the field which can cause leaching into the watercourse. A full report was presented to Members in May 2025 as part of the project performance report.</p>
Continued the Proactive Coalfield Anti-social behaviour project and worked in partnership to tackle Motorcycle ASB	Regular proactive patrols have been carried out in the Coalfield Area, this has included working in collaboration with the Houghton Neighbourhood Policing Team and Officers from the HALO partnership project to organise Multi-agency Days/Nights of Action. A proposal to use £10,000 from the preventative measures budget to extend the Motorcycle ASB Officer post for a future 12 months was approved in December 2024. The team conducted

	11 proactive patrols this quarter as well as attending 2 multi-agency meetings and 2 site visits to discuss ongoing issues at Flint Mill and Herrington Country Park. Herrington Country Park is an area the team will look to target with a day of action over the coming summer months.
Held a Coalfield Pride Event at Houghton	This event took place at Houghton Rectory Field on Saturday 17 August 12 – 8 p.m. The event was a great success and attended by a wide audience from across the area. Funding for the 2025 event was approved at the March 2025 Area Committee, and planning for is underway.
Developed environmental improvements at Copt Hill and Seven Sisters	The project is progressing well with many areas covered. We have had more volunteer days supporting tasks including maintenance to the area, strimming and cutting back. The signage is now complete and will be installed in the next few weeks. The main panel will feature a panorama showing the view across from Copt Hill and identify local features.
Supported VCS organisations and Community Hubs	A Coalfield Voluntary and Community Sector Network meeting is held on the first Tuesday of each month. The meetings are chaired by the Vice Chair of Area Committee and continue to be well attended, participative and informative and provide a mechanism for attendees to network with Council Officers, partners and community organisations. Meetings are increasingly well attended by a variety of organisations and local groups. Partnership working and networking opportunities continue to be built upon
Improved Community Assets	The Area Committee meeting in March approved 11 applications for funding. Shiney Row Community Centre now has a new kitchen and flooring, Houghton Blind Centre, a new heating system, ShARP a refurbished Digital Hub, Houghton Racecourse CA, new flooring in the toilets and plans to redecorate the centre, ELCAP, a comprehensive new CCTV system and Penshaw Community Centre have installed a new kitchen. A further call for projects was made in April 2025, further detail and recommendations for approvals are presented in Item 4 Budget Report .
Supported the celebration event at former Houghton Colliery site COMPLETE	Work on the new retail development at Houghton is now complete and the mining heritage artwork has been installed. A display board has been installed and the project is now complete.
A Christmas Tree at Newbottle	Further to approval of funding at the September 2023 Area Committee to deliver the 'Coalfield Christmas' project, arrangements were made to install infrastructure at Newbottle and purchase lights. Christmas trees were provided in 2023 and 2024 as part of the project. The local community, including St Matthews, arranged switch on events and provided entertainment and refreshments.

A Music Event at Elemore Park	The 2024 event, headlined by The Lake Poets and featuring This Little Bird, Jesica Thoroughgood and King Ink took place on Saturday 24 August. Families were also able to enjoy free activities such as face painting, balloon modelling, juggling and magic. A proposal to align funding to the 2025 event was approved in December 2024. A call for projects was made and a request for additional funding is contained in Item 4 Budget Report .
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