

## **Cabinet**

**18 September 2013**

## **County Durham Partnership Update Report**



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**Report of Corporate Management Team Lorraine O'Donnell, Assistant  
Chief Executive**

**Councillor Simon Henig, Leader of the Council**

**Councillor Brian Stephens, Cabinet Portfolio Holder for Neighbourhoods  
and Local Partnerships**

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### **Purpose of the Report**

1. To update Durham County Council's Cabinet on issues being addressed by the County Durham Partnership (CDP) including summaries from the Board, the five Thematic Partnerships and all Area Action Partnerships (AAPs). The report also includes updates on other key initiatives being carried out in partnership across the County.

### **Summary**

2. 2013 is a Year of Culture for Durham and there is a continued focus on a series of events taking place throughout the County. As well as the annual events such as the Bishop Auckland Food Festival, Book Festival and Brass, this year sees the return of the Lindisfarne Gospels to the city. These can be viewed until the end of September, as well as the recent fourth match in the Ashes test series at the Emirates Cricket Ground in Chester le Street, where England won the Ashes outright.
3. The final event for Durham's Year of Culture will be the return of Lumiere in November. Once again, Artichoke is working alongside the County Council to put on this spectacular exhibition of light over a four day period. Due to the increasing success of the event, this year's will be subject to a ticketing system that, although free of charge, will need to be obtained in advance.
4. The County Durham Partnership continues to focus on preparing for the impacts of the changes to the welfare system whilst analysing changes that are already becoming apparent. Through working with partners in the voluntary and community sector (VCS) and within the AAPs to share information on what is taking place as well as identifying gaps in provision, the partnership is gathering a vast amount of information in order to continue to develop and implement appropriate programmes of support for the communities of Durham.

### **Strategic Partnership Priorities**

5. County Durham Partnership held an event at the end of July focussing on welfare reform. The event brought together service providers, partners and the voluntary and community sector in order to build a good early understanding of the impact of

welfare reform across the county to identify where additional support might be required. The feedback received, both on the day and on reading the written feedback collated at the event, was very positive. The main aim of the day was to share information on what is known to be taking place in order to help minimise the adverse impact of the various changes brought about by welfare reform and to seek other good examples of activities. Further information on the outcomes and required actions will feature in the next update report.

6. The AAP supported Welfare Champions project is specifically focussed on mitigating the impacts of welfare reform. The project has recruited and trained volunteers who provide advice and support to local people adversely affected by welfare reform and benefit changes. The Welfare Champions work within their community base (often with the Credit Union Development Officer) passing on their knowledge of potential signpost destinations and issues, including: Welfare Reform/Benefit Changes; Credit Union; Illegal Money Lending Unit; Welfare Rights; CAB; Priority/Non Priority Debt; Emergency Interventions (e.g. Emergency Food Parcels). Since the launch there have been over 400 interventions, with most beneficiaries being male, with the predominant age of beneficiaries in the 50 – 59 age range. Each intervention is recorded and there are examples of the benefits individuals and families have gained from this support.
7. Also linked to this area of work is the **East Durham AAP** Credit Union Development Officer, with the first phase of this project being seen by partners as a success. To date: 850 new accounts have been opened, loans in excess of £80,000 have been given and savings topping £135,000. Stage one also ensured that more than £100,000 remained in the local economy and collectively saved families and individuals in East Durham over £107,000 had they had used doorstep lenders and over £1.1 million had they used a loan shark.
8. East Durham AAP Board has recognised this success and, utilising the information gained through the first phase of the project, has decided to support the project for a second phase. Phase two will target areas of deprivation and look at further development of partnerships and networks across the area, recruiting further volunteers and increasing the number of companies who promote the Credit Union and offer payroll deduction facilities to their workforce and the development of a Credit Union Customer Group serving the people of East Durham. Membership of this Group will be drawn from East Durham Partners with the Group having direct input into the Credit Union's main Board of Directors.
9. A further priority will be to reduce the impact of payday loans, especially for those with minimum wage/temporary contracts; this will be achieved through the promotion of payroll deduction schemes throughout East Durham. The project will contribute to the County wide response to issues arising from welfare reforms, including access to a bank account. Durham County Credit Union propose to offer a pre-paid debit card (money would be downloaded onto the card for the member to use for shopping or at an ATM) and a simple bank account to accept tenants benefit payments and for the Credit Union to pay the landlord direct.
10. People across County Durham are to decide how thousands of pounds should be spent in their area and the county as a whole as part of the consultation on the Council's Medium Term Financial Plan. During October and November, the Council's 14 Area Action Partnerships (AAPs) will each an event where large

numbers of people can get involved in a practical way to decide how money should be spent.

11. This is the first time that the Council has combined a number of different elements into local events to decide: How future savings can be made to the council's overall budget; which local community projects should get a share of a local cash pot of between £20,000 and £60,000 and AAP priorities for the next year.
12. Working across the partnership with our networks continues to be important for the partnership and one example of this through the AAPs is in the mid Durham area. **Mid Durham AAP** has completed a joint village 'surgery' exercise with its County Councillors and Parish Councils. During June and July 18 villages were visited with over 200 residents attending for a coffee and a chat about village assets, concerns and solutions. From this the AAP has been able to develop 18 village action plans.

## 2013 A Year of Culture

13. Durham has a vast amount to offer during 2013 to celebrate culture. The first major new event to celebrate Durham's heritage has been The Lindisfarne Gospels exhibition. On loan from the British Library, the Gospels have now arrived in Durham and are displayed in the Palace Green Library from 1 July to 30 September 2013.
14. The AAPs are also involved in supporting the cultural and heritage celebrations mainly focused on the Ashes test match. The Chester-le-Street & District AAP developed a coordinated package of projects with support from Durham County Cricket Club, the local Business Association and Beamish Museum. This included an entertainment package with the aim of entertaining visitors on the way to and from the Ground, together with a large town centre presence to ensure the local community who perhaps didn't have tickets for the Ashes match could feel part of the Ashes festival of cricket. This included street entertainment, bands, a temporary beach and also cricket nets to encourage people to pick up a bat and ball and have a go. This generated a lot of media coverage, particularly at a regional level and, as a consequence, businesses have reported increased takings.
15. Another project supported was the Volunteer Ashes Makers Project. Through this intervention 66 Ashes Makers were recruited and trained to support the Ashes and provide a friendly face to visitors and provide local information on routes to the ground from the town centre. Investec, the main Ashes sponsor, produced uniforms and included the AAP Logo on all of these. The T-shirts included the phrase 'Can I help you' on the reverse. In addition to AAP financial support, £10,000 from the Portas Pilot bid that the AAP Submitted in 2012 was used to meet the costs of these interventions.
16. This package of projects was further enhanced by the production of a 'Guide to Chester-le-Street' leaflet that included details of the walking routes into the town centre from the cricket ground. 25,000 of these were produced and all of them were handed out to cricket fans by our volunteer 'Ashes Makers'. This also included details about the Gospels and Lumiere to ensure visitors had information on future events in County Durham.
17. The final event will be Lumiere. The festival, which runs from Thursday 14 until Sunday 17 November, will feature, amongst other instalments, a fish-filled

illuminated phone box, an interactive exploration of the eye in all its beauty, and a consumerist Christmas tree amongst its new installations as well as the return of *Crown of Light* on Durham Cathedral. The full programme is due to be announced in the autumn.

18. Following the success of the 2011 festival, which attracted more than 150,000 visitors and generated £4.3m of economic benefits for County Durham, organisers Artichoke have been working with the County Council and Durham Constabulary on an event plan for new LUMIERE 2013, which includes a new crowd management system in the centre of the city, a larger footprint for the festival, extended operating hours, extended Park and Ride services, and improved communications before, during and after the event to help visitors to come and go more easily.
19. The website will be updated with news and information as it becomes available, before, during and after the event. The full artistic programme will be announced in the autumn on [lumiere-festival.com](http://lumiere-festival.com)

### **Participatory Budgeting**

20. Following on from the visit of American delegates who were interested in our approach to Participatory Budgeting, the County Council recently hosted a visit by 18 Danish delegates on the same subject. Danish municipalities are looking for new ways to engage more actively with their local communities in order to maintain levels of service, save costs and particularly improve the relevance and quality of service delivery. The purpose of the visit was to learn from the practical experiences of introducing welfare reforms in the UK and new methods of co-producing welfare (service delivery). The Danish delegates requested examples of successful co-production methods and participatory budgeting projects from the perspectives of both local people and councils.
21. The delegates visited Future Leisure in Coxhoe (FLIC), a successful DCC asset transfer and were able to explore the DCC consultation methodology and the rationalisation of indoor leisure provision. FLIC's Chief Executive then gave a presentation on the asset transfer process, the role of the community and volunteers in the delivery of indoor leisure facilities. The delegation was introduced to Participatory Budgeting and the successful outcomes for voluntary organisations and the high levels of community participation. A presentation followed on procurement and Children and Adult Services development of voluntary sector consortiums enabling them to submit competitive bids to deliver Services on behalf of the public sector. The day was completed with a visit to Macrae House, a community building asset transfer. The delegates were impressed with the level of community involvement and use of volunteers and the commitment of Durham County Council to involve the local public at every stage of the process.
22. Following on from the **Three Towns AAP** 'IT'S UP 2 U' event which saw 1,353 people turn out in the snow in February this year in order to vote for the projects of their choice, the Three Towns AAP board has allocated the remaining £68k from the Elite Hall funding to the 11 projects which did not receive funding through the public event. The projects include refurbishment and improvements to five community buildings and grounds, a new meeting room for an allotment project, a community gym, equine therapy and a pedal powered cinema.

## Altogether wealthier

23. The **County Durham Economic Partnership** board met in July and Paul Woolston (North East Enterprise Partnership, Chair) joined the meeting to lead a discussion on prioritisation and future investment as a consequence of the Adonis Review and announcements through the Comprehensive Spending Review. This discussion was a continuing dialogue with local partners to ensure County Durham is maximising delivery opportunities.
24. '*This is amazing, this is Durham*' is Durham's current national marketing campaign and its second theme, '*Discover Durham's Heritage*' went live in May. Large advertising posters are being displayed in locations such as Kings Cross Station and the London Underground. Focusing on our heritage it features new imagery of Beamish Museum and in July is featuring the Lindisfarne Gospels exhibition. The campaign is showcasing Durham as an extraordinary county, with award-winning attractions and enthralling events. This heritage focus gives the visitor a glimpse of times gone by and celebrates our social and industrial to spiritual and sporting heritage. Some of our key heritage assets include; Beamish – The Living Museum of the North, Locomotion: The National Railway Museum at Shildon, Durham Cathedral, The Lindisfarne Gospels, The Bowes Museum and Emirates Durham International Cricket Ground. For further details please visit the official heritage website for Durham: <http://www.thisisdurham.com/heritage>.
25. To support the CDP's top priority of Altogether wealthier, a number of initiatives are being supported. The ongoing countywide Employability Project provides one to one tailored support for unemployed people in the South Durham area to achieve sustained employment. The principle of the model developed is to co-ordinate a programme of pathways into employment; enable unemployed people to access opportunities and build the skills that lead to sustainable employment and work with local employers to identify staffing needs to help fill vacancies from the target group. Through a partnership approach working with 2D Voluntary & Community Organisation and South Durham Enterprise Agency, the project is engaging with local training organisations including Jobcentre Plus, National Apprenticeship Service, One Point and Housing Associations to support residents back to work. There are 2.5 Mentoring Officers working across South Durham and the project provides a flexible fund to break down barriers to employment e.g. transport, skills, equipment and start-up costs (self-employment).
26. Linking into other County Council initiatives such as Targeted Recruitment Training (TRT) and the Apprenticeship Programme the project provides a holistic offer of support to both residents and employers. Outcomes for 2012/13 include: 1,624 residents have been made aware of the Employability Project; of which 425 clients have been referred for employment support; 365 residents have received intensive one to one mentoring support and 181 residents have moved into employment (conversion rate of 50%)
  - a. 102 people into paid work
  - b. 34 people into self-employment
  - c. 45 people into apprenticeships
27. In addition, the project has supported 94 residents gain new skills and 47 residents have gained work experience through volunteering/work placements. Financial support has been made available to both employers and potential employees with an aim to create apprenticeship opportunities and remove barriers to employment.

Through this scheme 29 employers have provided opportunities for 30 apprentices utilising a wage subsidy allowance of £2,500. A further 39 residents have received financial support towards gaining new skills, starting a business/becoming self-employed as well as help with transport costs/work wear. £84,354 has been directly allocated through grants to both employers and residents to support the creation and take up of jobs over the last 12 months. Cost of delivering this project for a 12 month period is £312,000 which equates to £855 per resident receiving individual one to one mentoring support or £1,724 per job outcome achieved.

28. There are a number of positive examples coming from the employability initiatives taking place across the County. One, in the **Bishop Auckland and Shildon AAP** area, is of a woman who had not been in full time secure employment since 2001. She was very low in confidence and didn't recognise the skills and experience she had to offer. Through working with her Mentoring Officer, she updated her CV, practised filling application forms in and worked on her interview skills.
29. Her previous experience was in factory work but as she now had caring responsibilities and only wanted part time work this was no longer a realistic option. She was therefore encouraged to look at other options such as care work or supported services as these are often advertised as part time, local and would utilise her softer skills. She applied for two positions and was successful in both and is currently awaiting confirmation of her roles. The applicant has said that she is very grateful for the support the project has given her. She now recognises her abilities and has the confidence to approach employers. She has said that she finds it hard to recognise the shy person she was a few months ago, but now appreciated that in some situations a gentle and caring voice is the one that is right for the job.

### **Altogether better for children and young people**

30. Due to the fact that County Durham has a higher rate of young people not in education, employment or training (NEET) compared to the England average a Peer Review was undertaken recently by Wakefield local authority which identified a number of areas for improvement:
  - a. Understanding the needs of young people who are NEET
  - b. Determining priorities – developing a shared understanding and responsibility
  - c. Managing transition and tracking - improve understanding, tracking and engagement of young people who are at risk of becoming NEET
  - d. Establishing support mechanisms – including raising the profile of the One Point Service with schools/young people and developing the workforce used to support young people who are NEET and at risk
  - e. Identifying provision needs – matching services and provision to identified gaps and areas of need
  - f. Communicating the message – in relation to the knowledge and understanding of the raising of the participation age.
31. A Strategic Partnership Plan will be developed for NEET and a pilot will be undertaken in schools to identify children who are most likely to become NEET. In addition, work has been undertaken to address the high numbers of young people whose destination in terms of education, employment or training was 'not known'. This has resulted in a significant reduction in the 'not known' figures.

32. A lot of work is also being carried out by AAPs to support young people. The **East Durham Rural Corridor AAP** is working with 'Young Enterprise', the United Kingdom's largest business and enterprise education charity. Every year they help 250,000 young people learn about business and the world of work in a classroom environment under the guidance of volunteers from 3,500 companies. Their mission statement is "to inspire and equip young people to learn and succeed through enterprise." Its guiding principle is to do this through 'learning by doing.' Their programmes cover a whole range of topics exploring the world of work, saving, earning, decision making, teamwork, presentations, skills needed for certain jobs, interview techniques, entrepreneurship and raising aspirations.
33. By including Livin in the discussions at the AAP Task Group, £7,700 of Area Budget (2012/13) and £9,500 from Livin funds were secured, along with £21,000 worth of volunteer time, £3,200 from School funds and £3,000 worth of Young Enterprise Local Funding; nine primary schools and one secondary school within the AAP area will be able to take part in this project. All schools within the AAP area were approached and all of those willing/ able to take part have been included. By providing quality materials and volunteers from the local community to deliver the programmes, the students will engage in fun interactive sessions that will help them achieve employability and key life skills that they will need in later life.
34. The AAP Co-ordinator and Community Development Project Officer volunteered to be trained and teach some of the sessions, as has a public representative Board Member; all Board Members will have the opportunity to go along and spectate at sessions. The volunteers have taught the sessions, and feedback is excellent. Pupils have engaged and have certainly learnt from the sessions, positive outcomes include the engagement of an autistic child who doesn't normally engage in lessons, and children now understanding the importance of work.
35. The **Three Towns AAP** is supporting young people through its Youth Counselling project. The young person's counselling support project based at Parkside Sport College aimed at improving the emotional wellbeing of some of the neediest students. During the 2012/13 academic year 34 students have received support from this voluntary project for a range of issues including bereavement, relationship issues, low self-esteem, eating disorders, self-harm and anger/emotional issues. This project has been supported additionally through the use of a counselling student placement line managed by the school counsellor for the first time which will be repeated again in the new academic term.
36. During the **Spennymoor AAP** supported community trips of 2011 and 2012 parents were asked if they would like to 'find out more' and help on future trips. Having completed training with CAVOS and working closely with Spennymoor Extended Services, Spennymoor Area Family Events, S.A.F.E for short, came into existence.
37. The SAFE Trip's project ultimate goal is to provide opportunities to bring the community together. It is hoped that by offering fun activities, events and trips, which can be enjoyed by the whole family, a stronger and happier community will become a reality. Over the past few months SAFE have been very busy planning and organising events to bring the local community together. To date there have been two very successful events held, a Launch Party held at Spennymoor Leisure Centre attended by 792 people and Lightwater Valley Trip, held in the Easter

holidays. Trips for this summer included Sunderland Air Show, South Lakes Animal Park and Beamish. It is hoped that the above trips will prove to be as successful as the aforementioned events.

### **Altogether healthier**

38. The Shildon Health Express Project will tackle the health inequalities in the area of Shildon, improve access to services and increase healthy life expectancy. Ultimately Shildon will become a 'healthier town', a town that is conscious of health and strives to improve it. Health Express will create a local commitment to health by creating effective partnerships and networks to ensure local people are engaged with, have access to and understand the processes for accessing the Health support opportunities in their area. These partnerships will improve health equity and wellbeing for people who grow, live and work in Shildon and resources will be in place to enable people to mutually support each other in performing all the functions of life and to therefore develop their maximum potential. Simply put; *'People of Shildon will lead healthier lives and have every opportunity to do so.'*
39. The Marmot Review, *'Fair Society, Healthy Lives'* synthesised the best available evidence on what works in reducing the social gradient in health. The Review presented evidence that demonstrated the importance of 'life course', in other words 'the conditions in which people grow, live and work' have a profound impact on health inequalities (Marmot 2009).
40. The Review highlighted the fundamental role that social networks play in improving the health of local communities. Social networks can provide friendship, close bonds, neighbours who look out for each other, promote trust and inclusion and access to local resources both human and material. The relationship aspects of social networks can provide a source of resilience, buffering against life's stressors and challenges. Communities with greater social capital have greater participation, involvement and control over local issues and have better social and health experiences. With this in mind it is envisaged that a major aspect of the project will be the establishment of a network of Community Health Champions (CHCs).
41. Commissioned by DCC's Public Health Team and supported by **Bishop Auckland and Shildon AAP**, this 'hands on' community level project will recruit and train local people to be CHCs. These individuals will be supported to volunteer and use their life experience, understanding and position of influence, to help their friends, families and work colleagues lead healthier lives. This aspect of the project is consistent with the findings of the Marmot Report around the fundamental role of social networks in improving health in local communities.
42. The **EDRC AAP** Healthy Hubs project aims to build strong, resilient, sustainable communities through increasing confidence, motivation, knowledge and skills. Using asset based community development approaches (focusing on a community's strengths/ assets not deficits) engagement will take place with local people (including young people), community needs will be explored, additional provision in communities will be established and local residents skills will be increased. Preliminary work has already commenced in Bowburn Community Centre, including linkages with Wellness on Wheels (WOW) which was based at the Centre. A gym is now open in Fishburn Youth Centre for the community to use at a reduced rate.



## Altogether safer

43. The **Safe Durham Partnership's** Women's Diversion Project has a focus on two areas: a custody diversion element with inclusion into Integrated Offender Management arrangements and a mentoring element offered to all females leaving HMP Low Newton who intend to reside within Durham and Darlington.
44. The project will aim to assess whether by identifying and addressing offending triggers we can reduce re-offending rates and victims, reduce the impact upon and safeguard dependants of female offenders and to reduce demand upon front line officers. The project went live in April 2013 and runs force wide. The project is supported by the Home Office and the Prison Reform Trust and part of a national Women's diversions pilot.
45. The Alcohol Seizure Procedure has been shortlisted for a Problem Oriented Policing Award and Neighbourhood Watch team attended the House of Commons to receive the 'Outstanding Achievement Award' at the June 2013 national Neighbourhood Watch Awards.
46. Junior Neighbourhood Watch is a fun informative multi-agency educational package being supported by the **4Together AAP**. It introduces primary school children to Neighbourhood Watch, the largest voluntary organisation in the UK, and its ethos of promoting safer and stronger communities. As part of the package pupils are invited to take part in a series of activities held at their own schools for 9 weeks with the last week being held at the dog support unit allowing the young people to experience a day in the life of a working police dog.
47. Each week will focus on a different agency that will have a different safety message to give to the young people. The funding will be used to pay the costs of running the programme, transport, and activity packs.
48. The project will include all seven primary schools 352 pupils in total - Cleves Cross, Broom Cottages, Ferryhill Station, Chilton, Bishop Middleham, West Cornforth and Dean Bank to participate in this experience as they will benefit from it greatly as young people often become aware of incidents but do not know what to do with the information they have. The pupils will be from year six and this will run for the next two years. The programme will start in September 2013 and 2014.
49. The above will be incorporated into the PACT meetings that will run in each school on a monthly basis by the PCSOs. This allows the young people to set out priorities for local officers and highlight any issues or concerns they have relating to their neighbourhood. We recognise the importance of empowering children from a young age to feel involved in matters affecting their community and building trust in young people to increase public confidence.
50. There is an identified need for Junior Neighbourhood Watch over the 4 Together AAP as crime has a detrimental effect on the children who are living in the area. The children are affected in more ways than one and will benefit greatly from this experience. They will be able to discuss their own views and ideas within a controlled group and will be fully supported by their local PCSO and school.
51. Junior Neighbourhood Watch is about promoting good citizenship and greater public awareness through Neighbourhood Watch groups, increasing public

participation in the prevention and detection of crime, reducing the fear of crime, improving police/community liaison and increasing community safety. Neighbourhood Watch is about making sure that no one has to feel afraid, vulnerable or isolated in the place where they live. It's about people looking out for each other, crossing barriers of age, race and class to create real communities that benefit everyone.

52. This is not a statutory provision so therefore relies on external funding. It will provide opportunities for the children and young people to take part in an exciting new programme designed for them and their friends to learn and gain new skills learning:
  - a. Crime prevention and staying safe in their home, school and community.
  - b. Staying safe online.
  - c. How to keep property safe and to security mark family belongings.
  - d. Alcohol awareness - learn about the dangers of alcohol by wearing beer goggles and taking part in a computer simulated driving game. Emergency Aid - learn the recovery position and CPR.
  - e. Animal welfare - learn how to protect our domestic animals (cats, dogs, hamsters etc) and wildlife.
  - f. Meet Jet and Ben, community safety dogs, earn and gain many more skills throughout the programme.
  
53. The **Derwent Valley AAP** is working in partnership with the Derwentside Health Network and local leisure provider, Leisureworks, to develop and deliver a programme of alcohol free events for young people. These events will take place bi-monthly in Derwentside College between November 2013 and May 2014 and will host two bands per event alongside a range of complimentary activities and workshops delivered by local partners / youth and health related organisations to include healthy eating, nail art, drama and dance clubs, alcohol awareness and sexual health. Durham Constabulary will also be supporting the events by running their StaySafe campaign alongside the programme.

### **Altogether greener**

54. Over recent months, the **Environment Partnership** which delivers the 'Altogether Greener' theme has been reviewing and refreshing the existing Partnership structure. The remit is to ensure that the composition, terms of reference and the Partnership, remain fit for purpose and the key actions of focus which the Environment Partnership will deliver in future years are strategically aligned to the Sustainable Community Strategy refresh. The review of the Environment Partnership is scheduled to be completed by September 2013.
  
55. The Environment Awards were opened for entries on 28<sup>th</sup> May 2013 and work is underway to maximise publicity and ensure engagement with media partners. There has been a great deal of interest and sponsorship received from various organisations. Next year will be the 25<sup>th</sup> year of The Environment Awards and work is being carried out now in terms of attracting partners and funding. There will be two new award categories next year: Urban Green Space and Urban Green Technology. Judging is currently taking place and the Environment Awards ceremony will take place in October 2013.
  
56. In addition the themed groups within the Partnership are involved with a range of environmental activity i.e.

- a. The Local Nature Partnership is strategically building further links with the Local Enterprise Partnerships within the North East.
  - b. The Heritage Lottery Fund Landscape Partnership bid for the Derwent Valley has been submitted by Groundwork and successful bids will be announced in October 2013.
  - c. Work is ongoing within the Partnership to review the County Durham Biodiversity Action Plan.
  - d. A wide range of community activity has taken place in relation to the Pride team; these include education work involving 1360 school children across the county, The Big Spring Clean, Slam Dunk The Junk and Blackhall Denemouth clean up (with over 7 tonnes of rubbish removed). Litter picking, the responsible dog owner scheme and fly tipping investigations continue.
  - e. Heritage Open Days are planned for 12<sup>th</sup> to 15<sup>th</sup> September with 46 venues already signed up to the national campaign.
  - f. The Climate Change group is actively working with the Health and Wellbeing Board, Environment Board and Altogether Wealthier Board to discuss how to tackle fuel poverty across the County.
  - g. A regional catering waste project is well underway which is led by the Environment Agency in partnership with Groundwork, Northumbria Water and the Authority. 40 waste audits of catering premises have been carried out across County Durham which has resulted in businesses taking the correct action in disposing of their waste.
57. The Environment Partnership is currently progressing plans with the AAPs to carry out and become further involved with environmental projects and improvements such as community clean-ups, tree planting, use of allotments, targeting litter and graffiti and providing a litter free coast. The use of the volunteer networks across the County play a vital part in this work and engaging further with these networks is a key priority area for the Partnership.
58. The **Stanley AAP** Area Budget funded Walking in Stanley project is to be launched by Groundwork North East in the next few weeks. The project will have two main aims: to engage local residents in walking activities which will improve the health of the individuals involved and to establish a group of volunteers who will monitor Public Rights of Way (PRoW) within the Stanley AAP area.
59. Groundwork Project Officers are working with community groups in the Stanley AAP area to help walk and assess 2-3 mile routes from central locations within the villages. Each walk will last about 1 hour, be fairly easy going and aimed at introducing people to walking as a form of exercise which is available to everyone for free. Those who take part will be encouraged to then progress onto other walking programmes such as the County Council's countywide walks programme and Leisureworks weekly health walks across the former Derwentside area.

## Area Action Partnerships Update

60. The AAPs continue to contribute towards the strategic priorities of the CDP, as shown in the previous sections of this report. They also, however, continue to support smaller, more local initiatives that have been chosen by people living in their communities, a selection of which is highlighted below.
61. Many of the AAPs over recent years have supported a variety of summer activity programmes and this year has been no different. The activities vary from trips to attractions and theme parks across the country to more locally focussed play schemes. These programmes offer the opportunity for parents to place their children in safe environments whilst continuing to work as well as giving children and young people the opportunity to mix with new people and gain valuable skills and experiences. Some of the activities are for the whole family such as bus trips to different locations. These are much more affordable than families having to make the trips independently and also offer an opportunity for parents to socialise. Due to some individuals' financial circumstances these are often the only opportunity that families have to take their children to different places.
62. An AAP success story that came about from funding to the Louisa Allstars by **Stanley AAP** and Stanley Town Council has recently come to light. Last year funding was awarded to the group to purchase landing mats for their Double Mini Trampoline area. Since then, one of the Club's members has become the U15 Girls British Champion at the National Championships. A coach within the Club stated that without the mats and support from the AAP, this would not have been possible.
63. Stanley AAP Board Members also allocated £5,000 of Area Budget funding to the Stanley Music Festival 2013 to cover part of the cost for the hire of the stage and PA system for the festival. The Music Festival took place on Sunday 25<sup>th</sup> August 2013 in the grounds of Oakeys Playing Fields in Tanfield Lea. It was an affordable, enjoyable and extremely beneficial event for the residents of Stanley and beyond. It allowed bands from the local area, County Durham and wider North East to perform in a large arena in front of an estimated crowd of 3,500 people. The event was headlined by Dodgy, boasting several top hits along with The Bowie Effect, Leesa Mae, Mitch Laddie Band and local youngsters Criptic Metaphor - this is an eclectic mix of music genres that were available throughout the Festival, thus increasing its overall appeal to music fans of all ages and tastes.
64. It also attracted visitors from outside the area who came to the festival as well as using the local amenities in the town. Large groups of people near and in the town centre will always add to the economic vitality of the area, thus contributing to the regeneration of the town.
65. The **Derwent Valley AAP** has also delivered a successful outdoor live music event on Sunday 14<sup>th</sup> July in Middle Street, Consett as part of its Consett Town Centre Events Programme. The music event was one of 27 held regionally as part of the national 'Our Big Gig' campaign aimed at using creativity and music to improve the health and wellbeing of local communities.
66. Over 400 residents came along to support the event, enjoying an afternoon of free activities and performances from local bands and music, drama and theatre based

groups. The high street stores which opened on the day of the event saw a 50% increase in business.

67. The Derwent Valley 'Big Gig' was supported and sponsored by the Arts Council, Department for Communities and Local Government and Superact, a not for profit arts organisation, and was voted as one of the best gigs in the region at the debrief event in Birmingham. Residents are keen to support the AAP in hosting a second 'Big Gig' next summer.
68. Over the last four years **GAMP AAP** has not had a bespoke mechanism for gathering the views and ideas of children and young people (C&YP). A consultation has recently been completed to address this issue.
69. The consultation project was managed by the Extended Schools Co-ordinator and obtained the views of C&YP aged up to 16 years of age. The consultation was undertaken through the virtual platform Moodle at the secondary schools, face to face discussions and focus groups in primary and infant schools, focus groups and one to one discussions with Aycliffe Youth Council and Surestart. The consultations were carried out earlier in the year and were based around the nine GAMP priorities. A group of young people from Greenfield Community College worked on the project alongside the Extended Schools Co-ordinator to ensure that the project was C&YP focused from the beginning.
70. Specifically, the consultation sought feedback to identify the top three priorities for C&YP in the area. A total of 823 C&YP, parents, grandparents, carers and childminders participated. The consultation information will now be used to support the work of the GAMP and partners in addressing Children and Young people's issues in the area.
71. GAMP AAP is also supporting community safety initiatives, in partnership with the local Neighbourhood Police Team, by purchasing of crime prevention equipment for example, keypad shed alarms, warning signs to accompany the alarms, UV pens to mark property, dog fouling bags, bike locks and bike marking labels and pens, UV keyrings. The Police have used the resources at various locations across the GAMP area where they have identified either potentially vulnerable areas or areas where there have been reported burglaries/thefts from sheds.
72. Working with Cowshill Village Hall group, the **Weardale AAP** small grant fund has supported a "honey bee" project; working with other partners, new bee hives; protective bee suits and a colony of honey bees have been provided. The community group are working to increase the supply of bees to pollinate local wild flowers and crops. The fruits of their labour will be the supply of local honey harvested from the hives, to make the long term future of the project sustainable.
73. The idea of **East Durham Rural Corridor AAP's** Youth Workers in Training project was to train six local people from the AAP area to Level three Youth Work status, to enable them to deliver youth work across the whole area. All of the places are full at the moment, and as well as being employed as Workers in Training throughout the duration of the course, therefore adding value to existing provision, the workers are also equipped with the necessary skills, qualifications and experience needed to continue with a career in this field. They are all progressing and passing assignments, and have attended a weekend of training which looked at the practical and theoretical side of running a youth club.

74. **Durham AAP** Board is pleased to co-opt both the new Community officer from Durham University's Student Union and the Student Community Action group in its efforts to forge closer links with the student community. Now it is under way again, the Board has also agreed to continue with the Small Grants Fund for local community groups to apply for up to £500 and via Neighbourhood Budgets is supporting the refurbishment of several play areas including Allergate and St Oswalds.
75. Working with Councillors and communities **Teesdale Action Partnership (TAP)** is supporting a number of projects that will develop the economic impact of the area as well as supporting those most affected by the current economic down turn. The work through the Rural Employability Programme continues and set targets have already been achieved with local people gaining employment (including apprenticeships), entering training or gaining additional experiences through volunteering
76. TAP's main thrust on economic development comes through its work on tourism. Attracting visitors is seen as vital for the economic survival of the area and TAP are currently looking at how tourism related activities on the ground can be more effectively coordinated. Other issues such as the refresh of the Barnard Castle Destination Plan have also been considered by TAP's Tourism Group. TAP's Tourism Small Grants fund has recently ended with 18 local projects benefiting. Projects supported include additional promotion for community fairs and carnivals, the production of a room browser for local accommodation and a market research exercise on tourism being carried out by Barnard Castle Business Guild.

### **Recommendations and reasons**

77. Cabinet is asked to note the content of the report.

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**Contact: Clare Marshall, Principal Partnerships and Local Councils Officer**  
**Tel: 03000 263591**

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## **Appendix 1: Implications**

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**Finance** - Area and Neighbourhood budgets are utilised and delivered through the 14 AAPs and ensure the Council (and AAPs) receive improved information on the outputs achieved through use of locality budgets.

**Staffing** - None

**Risk** - None

**Equality and Diversity / Public Sector Equality Duty** - The actions set out in this report aim to ensure equality and diversity issues are embedded within the working practice of AAPs.

**Accommodation** - None

**Crime and Disorder** - Altogether safer is the responsibility of the Safe Durham Partnership.

**Human Rights** - None

**Consultation** - The County Durham Partnership framework is a key community engagement and consultation function of the Council and its partners. The recommendations in the report are based on extensive consultation with AAP partners and the establishment of a Sound Board to progress the recommendations and will continue this consultative approach.

**Procurement** - None

**Disability Issues** - None

**Legal Implications** - None