



Better for everyone

Derwent Valley Area Action Partnership

Annual Report

2023/24

Introduction



Councillor Elizabeth Scott

Portfolio Holder Statement

As the Cabinet portfolio holder for Economy and Partnerships I am proud to say that the Area Action Partnerships fall within my remit.

AAPs have been supporting work in local communities for 14 years now. Funding has helped to sustain and develop numerous local organisations right across County Durham. Nearly £30m has been allocated through Area Budget grants since AAPs were created back in 2009 supporting nearly 3000 different applications.

The 14 AAPs cover the whole of the county, each with effective boards of 21 people which are made up of partners, public, councillors and agencies. The Boards work on their specific priorities that reflect the needs of the county's varied localities. Over the last year they have again allocated nearly £2m which has supported over 190 local projects.

Fellow County Councillors and I are very grateful for the support we get from the AAPs in allocating our Neighbourhood Budget. This is funding every councillor gets to support good causes and projects in the areas we represent. Since 2009 over £37m has been allocated through nearly 8000 different applications. You can imagine the difference funding via the AAPs and Councillors has made to our towns, villages and city. This year councillors have supported well over 600 projects with over £2.4m of funding.

At a time when communities and families are having to deal with ongoing financial pressures AAPs have been able to help those organisations who are helping others. The strength of the voluntary and community sector in County Durham never fails to amaze me.

I do want to take this opportunity to thank everyone who gives up their time and volunteers with local organisations. Be that with sports clubs, management committees at community centres, environmental schemes or those people who

volunteer on AAP Boards. County Durham would be a poorer place without you. However, volunteering has to be supported and it's a key area that AAPs help with in terms of supporting groups with volunteer management, training and support.

There is no doubt that community organisations are struggling through the ongoing cost of living crisis so if you have ever thought about volunteering now could be the time. Local organisations give so much to their communities, and they do need our help.

Since 2009 AAPs have been a feature of our communities but change is ahead. Last year the council concluded a review of its community engagement activities which included the AAPs. The outcomes of this review are now being implemented and this is going to lead to enhancements in 2025 with AAPs being replaced by new 'Local Networks'. The Local Networks will continue to bring local people, councillors and organisations together building on the legacy of the AAPs with the aim of broadening the reach within communities and developing Local Network Plans setting out the longer-term aspirations for our many towns and villages. Over the coming months we will keep people updated as we develop Local Network structures.

Prior to the launch of Local Networks in 2025, AAPs will continue to deliver over the next year which will only be possible with the hard work of all involved. So, a big thank you from me to fellow councillors, AAP Board members, partner organisations, members of the public and the AAP staff. I look forward to continuing to work with you all over the next 12 months.

Councillor Elizabeth Scott,
Cabinet portfolio holder for Economy and Partnerships.

Derwent Valley Area Action Partnership 2023/24 Key Information



FUNDING

£126,553

AAP funding allocated to local projects

100

community projects supported through AAP and Councillor funding

Approximately

£172,000

of Councillor Neighbourhood Budget allocated

COMMUNITY SUPPORT

1,825

people supported either into education, training and/or employment programmes



1,006

families will benefit from schemes aimed at improving support and outcomes

COMMUNITY INVOLVEMENT

6,388

people benefitted from projects across the Partnership area



COMMUNICATION

22,085

engagements with the community through social media

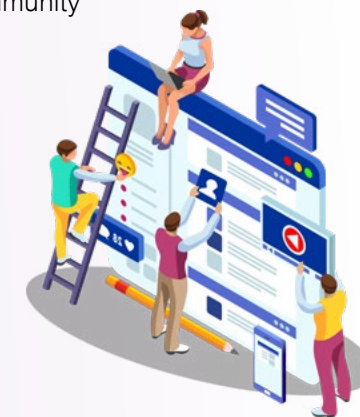
Approximately

1.8k

Facebook followers

910

Forum members regularly receive information about the DVP



HEALTH

2,335

people involved in initiatives to improve their mental health and wellbeing

Derwent Valley Area Action Partnership

Established in 2009 Derwent Valley AAP (DVP) brings together local people and partners to act on local issues. Areas covered by the DVP include Consett town centre and the outlying villages of Benfieldside, Blackhill, Bridgehill, Burnopfield, Crookhall, Delves Lane, Dipton, Ebchester, Flint Hill, Hamsterley, High Westwood, Iveston, Leadgate, Medomsley, Moorside, Shotley Bridge, Templetown and The Grove.

During 2023/24, the key focus for the partnership was around four priorities: Employment, Enterprise and Training; Environment; Health and Wellbeing and Towns and Villages. This report provides an overview of our work during the 2023/2024 financial year.

Welcome from the DVP Chair, Lea McConnell



My year as Chair of the DVP Board has absolutely flown by. Firstly, my enormous thanks must go to Corinne and the DVP Team for their tireless hard work, commitment and expertise. The team are the beating heart of the DVP and every act of good that we achieve as an AAP in our community is brought to life through their incredible work. I also thank the many wonderful community groups that bring much of our work to fruition, all for the benefit of our community.

We as a Board, rely on the day to day actions of the team, community groups, volunteers, councillors and partner organisations who together help deliver some absolutely amazing work across our DVP area. Illustrating that only when everyone acts together, in true partnership, that the very best results are achieved for our local communities.

Following the County's AAP review and the new proposed 'Networks' from April 2025, our work in 2024/25 is one of transition with the three, long established Task Groups moving to a single group format. At a recent DVP celebration, many volunteer task group members attended the event which gave us the opportunity to reflect on the work of the task groups over the last 14 years. A special thank you to Kath Clements, who retired from the DVP Team at the end of April 2024, for her work with the Health and Wellbeing Task Group.

The new 'Networks' offer a new beginning and provides the opportunity for my hope of broader public engagement, more community led projects and creating a greater sense of place in the years ahead.

Our People

Anyone who lives, works, studies or volunteers in the area can get involved with the Area Action Partnership. We currently have around 910 people who are part of our wider Forum who receive regular updates and who are invited to get involved in the work of the DVP.

Our Board is the decision-making body of the DVP and is made up of local people (public representatives), elected councillors and representatives from partner organisations. Our Board members for 2023/4 were:

- Lea McConnell (Chair)
- Linda Acres
- Helen Marley
- John Marshall
- Rosemary Morris
- Fraser Neill
- David Scott

- Cllr Stephen Robinson (Vice Chair)
- Cllr Veronica Andrews
- Cllr Kevin Earley
- Cllr Kathryn Rooney
- Cllr Watts Stelling
- Cllr Michelle Walton
- Cllr Alex Watson

- Mark Clelland (Derwentside Trust, Vice Chair)
- Allan Hobson (Fire and Rescue Service)
- Philip Pollard (Karbon Homes)
- Inspector Dave Stewart (Police)
- Donna Tunney (The HUB)
- Joanne Waller/Alison Lazazzera (Durham County Council)
- Health Representative vacancy



Christmas in Consett



Delves Lane Lunch Club, Christmas Lunch



Competition winners at Benfieldside, Blackhill, Bridgehill and Shotley Bridge Family Fun Day



Visit Consett website publicity in a local bus shelter

2023/24 Funding Allocation

Area Budget

The Area Budget is a funding allocation that the DVP receives annually, also includes Youth Fund and Welfare Reform funding, to support projects linked to the DVP's priorities.

£6,661, OASES: Derwent Valley Climate Friendly Schools. Climate education and guidance for whole school communities to facilitate and enable climate action (project mainly funded from 2022-23 Area Budget with additional funding allocated from this year's budget).

£12,000, Friends of Blackhill and Consett Park: Derwent Valley Bike Club. To add value to the existing bike club at Blackhill and Consett Park by encouraging a wider range of users to access active travel opportunities in the Derwent Valley area.

£10,000, Digital Voice for Communities CIC: Derwent Valley Reports. A series of videos which will show the impact on health and wellbeing, based on up to 8 DVP funded health and wellbeing activities.

£10,350, Friends of Blackhill and Consett Park: Community Garden and Men's Group Programme. Expanding on the existing community garden programme, with more of a focus on older men (age 50+) and working collaboratively with local men's groups.

£6,120, St John's Ambulance: Derwent Valley Primary Schools First Aid Training. First aid training for primary school age children and delivered in 18 primary schools in the DVP area.

£19,500, Derwentside Trust: Readiness for Employment for Neuro Diverse/ Special Educational Needs and Disabilities (SEND)/Not in Employment, Education or Training (NEETS) and Long Term Unemployed. Delivering accredited training courses, up to Level 3, that aim to support individuals into employment.

£1,783, Celebrate Difference: Celebrating

Neurodivergent Young People. Helping young people get further in life by giving them the confidence, the skills and advantages others may have acquired elsewhere. (Total project cost is £5k with £3,217 made up from underspend from previous years).

£5,000, Derwentside Trust: Mini Medics. Basic First Aid Training for children and young people that includes simple CPR, applying the recovery position and calling for help. Advanced training, including how to use of a defibrillator, will be offered to those aged 14+ years.

£3,044, NHS Harrogate and District Foundation Trust: Blackhill Community Allotment Young People's Project. Creating an accessible outdoor space for gardening and creative activities for young people to come together to socialise, build confidence, connect with nature and learn new skills.

£17,020, OASES and Durham Community Action: Growing Community. The new Derwent Valley Community Growing and Food Network will offer networking, training, workshops and funding opportunities for those involved, eg local schools and community organisations. Funding is also being made available to enhance a further two growing sites which are located in Medomsley and Burnopfield.

£16,545, Engineering and Manufacturing Network: Reducing Present and Future Employment Skills Gaps in the Derwent Valley. A collaboration between employer/educational providers to create a centralised information resource to link and promote training, apprenticeship and skill development opportunities with potential job vacancies.

£8,530, If U Care Share Foundation: Suicide Prevention Awareness Raising and Training. Providing support to businesses, organisations and adults to enable them to promote positive wellbeing to improve mental health and prevent suicide.

Funding has been ringfenced for two projects which are in the planning stage: £5,000, School Walking Bus Scheme and £5,000, Pre-loved Fashion Show.

2023/24 Funding Allocation

Towns and Villages Improvement Fund

The Towns and Villages Improvement Fund of £210,000 was allocated to the DVP (to be spent over a 3 year period 2021-24) to support local schemes to enhance Towns and Villages in the area. The remaining funds were allocated to the following projects:

£3,225, Project Genesis Trust: Visit Consett Initiative Enhancement of Visit Consett Website to help promote businesses in the Consett Town Centre area.

£35,000, Derwent Valley Partnership Towns and Villages Programme: Consett Town Centre Events. Consett Town Centre events programme - Christmas in Consett 2023, Brass Festival and Christmas in Consett 2024 and a Summer Festival in 2025.

£10,000, Durham County Council: Town Centre Signage and Bus Shelter Publicity. Improved signage in Consett Town Centre for visitors and local people, eg to car parks and leisure facilities as well as bus shelter advertising to promote Consett Town Centre.

Holiday Activities with Healthy Food Fund

Funding was allocated to the DVP to support the provision of holiday activities with healthy food for as many children and young people as possible during the school holidays, with particular consideration for those who would normally receive free school meals.

£3,455, Random's Retreat CIC: Fun, Friends and Furrries

£610, Learning a New Way: Wellbeing for All

£3,724, Stomping Grounds: Into the Wild with Stomping Grounds

£840, Derwentside Trust: Glenroyd Easter Fun and Activities

£1,490, Collierley Nursery and Primary School: Forest School

£645, Derwentside Trust: Glenroyd May Fun and Activities

£1,775, Mad Alice Theatre Company: Drama Day with Fun and Food

£1,935, Stomping Grounds: Into the Wild with Stomping Grounds

£1,519, The Friends of St Patrick's: Half Term Fun and Food at St. Patrick's

£3,150, Consett Heart: Fun and Drama at the Heart

£2,915, Delves Lane Community Association: Kids Club

£1,447, Derwentside Detached Youth Project: Food and Fun for School Holidays Moorside/The Grove

£3,600, Derwentside Trust: Glenroyd May Fun and Activities

£8,884, Eden Miners Centre: Children and Young People Holiday Programmes

£5,189, Hamsterley and Low Westwood Community Association: Hamsterley Summer Youth Programme

£4,996, Random's Retreat CIC, Fun, Food and Furrries

£8,998, Stomping Grounds: The Best Summer Ever in Leadgate

£960, Derwentside Trust: Glenroyd Fiendish Fun with Healthy Food and Activities

£935, Dipton Community Association: Dracula and Dinosaur Discovery

£1,000, The Friends of St Patrick's: Halloween Half Term at St Patrick's

£680, Hamsterley and Low Westwood Community Association: Fun and Food

£835, Mad Alice Theatre Company: Drama Fun Day with Henk the Hungry and Cordelia Queen of Carrotology and all Things Veg

£999, Random's Retreat CIC: Freaky Forest Feast

£955, Stomping Grounds: Into the Wild

£1,300, Mad Alice Theatre Company: Santa Gets Fit after an Indulgent Christmas

£2,963, Random's Retreat CIC: Christmas Crackers

£2,250, Derwentside Trust: Glenroyd Grotto and Festive Fun

£695, Derwentside Trust: Glenroyd Fun, Healthy Food and Activities

£509, NHS Harrogate District Foundation Trust: Growing Healthy Young People's Project

£2,242, Stomping Grounds: Into the Wild with Stomping Grounds

Neighbourhood Budget

Neighbourhood Budget is an allocation of £19,400 that each County Councillor gets each year to spend on Community Projects. The process is supported by the DVP team.

The projects listed below have been supported by County Councillors: Veronica Andrews, Kevin Earley, Dominic Haney, Declan Mulholland, Stephen Robinson, Kathryn Rooney, Alan Shield, Watts Stelling, Angela Sterling, Michelle Walton and Alex Watson.

Neighbourhood Budget Main Grant

Durham County Council Regeneration, Economy and Growth, Traffic Management and Speeding, £15,000

Ebchester Community Association, Health and Wellbeing, £3,980

Durham Pride UK, PRIDE 2023, £1,750

Consett Lionesses Football Club, Football Kit and Equipment, £2,143

Durham County Council Neighbourhoods and Climate Change, Hamsterley Mill Rural Footpath, £32,812

Watling Spaces CIC, The Roxy Seating Refurbishment, £4,000

2023/24 Funding Allocation

Durham County Council and Investing in Children, Entry into Care and Care Leaver Packs, £8,800
Beyond Caring Project, Contribution to Beyond Caring Performances, £1,000
Eden Miners Centre, Heating Project, £1,610
Derwent Valley Sports Initiative CIC, Steel House – Derwent Valley Sport Initiative, £5,850
Eden Miners Centre, Creative Kitchen at Eden Miners Centre, £2,160
Durham County Council Regeneration, Economy and Growth, Blackfyne Pitch Improvements, £2,196
Foundation for Good, FFG Foodbank, £1,200
Delta North, Roof Refurbishment, £3,600
Durham County Council Neighbourhoods and Climate Change, St Mary's Christmas Tree, £1,712
Consett Park Bowls Club, Club Upgrade, £2,400
Just Love Project, Just Love Premises and Shelving, £2,309
Durham County Council Regeneration, Economy and Growth, Delves Lane Speed Visors, £23,386
Delves Lane Village Hall, Activities and Equipment at Delves Lane Village Hall, £9,553
Benfieldside, Blackhill, Bridgehill and Shotley Bridge Community Partnership, BBB&SB Family Fun Day, £4,000
Durham County Council Regeneration, Economy and Growth, Traffic Calming Pemberton Road/St Mary's, £4,882
Durham County Council Neighbourhoods and Climate Change, Shotley Bridge Christmas Tree, £1,712
Building Self Belief, Benfieldside Community Garden, £4,000

Durham County Council Neighbourhoods and Climate Change, Bridgehill Development (Maple Gardens), £8,034
Consett Detached Youth Project, Community Organiser Moorside, £5,000
Durham County Council Neighbourhoods and Climate Change, Consett South Salt Bin Provision, £2,810
Durham County Council Neighbourhoods and Climate Change, Burnopfield and Dipton Christmas Trees, £3,623
Burnopfield Communal Room, Burnopfield Communal Room SLA compliance, £1,106
MHA Communities, Burnopfield Older People's Social Group, £1,000
Neighbourhood Budget Small Grants
Leadgate Arts and Crafts Friendship Group, The Peoples Art Project, £950
Durham County Council Clean and Green, Ebchester Village Tree, £300
Medomsley Community Action Group, Medomsley in Bloom, £500
Medomsley Community Action Group, Village Engagement Programme, £975
CBS Theatre Group, Kinky Boots Performance, £500
Sherburn Park Bowling Club, Bowling Club Equipment, £990
Rosemont Care Home, TV, £700
Blackhill and Comrades Social Club, Summer Trip Transport Costs, £300
NHS Harrogate and District Foundation Trust, Summer Holiday Activities, £500
Delves Lane Lunch Club, Christmas Lunch, £300

Crookhall Community Centre, Christmas and Art Supplies, £370
Leadgate Community Livewires, Delves Lane Livewires Event, £500
Foundation of Light, Ice Skating Trip, £120
St Patrick's Church Hall, Christmas Party, £250
Delves Lane Methodist Church, Christmas Gifts for Children, £200
John F Kennedy Care Centre, St Mary's Summer Fete, £500
Shotley Bridge Village Trust, Blooming Shotley Bridge, £999
Consett and District Heritage Initiative, Digitising Original Drawings, £500
Derwentside Detached Youth, Derwentside Detached Youth Christmas Party, £250
St James Burnopfield PCC, Celebratory Lunch at St James Church, £500
Burnopfield Community Partnership, Burnopfield Christmas Party, £175
Councillor's Towns and Villages Fund
Each Councillor was awarded an additional Towns and Villages Fund of £10,000 (to be spent over a 3 year period 2021-24) to deliver localised projects with the aim of making a real difference and a significant impact to beneficiaries within their communities. The remaining councillors' funds were allocated to the following projects:
Kennedy Centre Refurbishment, £5,036.50
Benfieldside Traffic Calming, £10,000
Zero Carbon Consett, £5,000
Zero Carbon Consett Website, £5,000

The Difference We Have Made



Climate Action Workshop

Climate Action Workshop

As part of the Environment Task Group, the DVP, working with Durham Climate Fresk Facilitators, provided a free Climate Action Workshop for local residents, partners and communities. Through a series of interactive activities, the workshop explored the science behind climate change, and the things that we can do individually, and collectively, to help our environment.

Attendees found the workshop to be informative and educational and they learned a lot about the causes and effects of climate change.

Derwentside Trust, Mini Medics, £5,000

Area Budget (via a Contingency Fund)

Basic First Aid training sessions aimed at 5 – 14 year olds to understand the importance of first aid. The sessions will include identifying when someone needs help and what to say when phoning the emergency services, how to do simple CPR (cardiopulmonary resuscitation) and how to easily put someone in the recovery position.

Basic Life Support training, accredited to Level 2, will be aimed at 14+ year olds which will teach them how to use a defibrillator, administer CPR, put someone in the recovery position and do relevant checks on someone to relay to emergency personnel.



Digital Voice for Communities, Derwent Valley Reports, £10,000

Area Budget (via our Health and Wellbeing Priority Task Group)

A series of videos which will show the impact on health and wellbeing of some of the DVP funded health and wellbeing activities aimed at benefiting the health of residents of the Derwent Valley.

The project will work in partnership with voluntary groups, engage in research to ensure a range of different activities and groups are represented, and will find good news stories that show the impact through their positive messages of wellbeing as a result of taking part in the groups.



Digital Voice for Communities

The Difference We Have Made



Children from Bishop Ian Ramsey School session planning



Children from Bishop Ian Ramsey School tree planting

OASES (Outdoor and Sustainability Education Specialists), Derwent Valley Climate Friendly Schools, £6,661 (full project amount is £36,982 with the majority of funding provided in 2022/23)

Area Budget (via our Environment Task Group)

Climate Friendly Schools provides climate education and guidance to children so that they understand the issue and the climate implications of the everyday choices that they make. By informing people of the facts and empowering them to take climate action, the initiative aims to combat the feeling of helplessness that individuals may feel.

So far five schools, in the DVP area, have met with the OASES team and completed assemblies and staff training and are at various stages of completing their audits and action plans, with some having already completed some actions. The majority of activity and the delivery of practical actions in schools will take place during the summer terms. Another five schools will be joining the initiative later this year/early next year.

The Difference We Have Made

Celebrate Difference, Celebrating Neurodivergent Young People, £5,000

Area Budget (via our Employment, Education and Training Priority Task Group)

This project will deliver sessions which aim to engage with young people and empower them to ask for help and know what help is available. The sessions will help young people get further in life by giving them skills and advantages others may have acquired elsewhere.

The social aspect aims to raise their confidence and give them practical and life skills to aid their mental health, and will cover:

- Jobs and careers
- Physical self-care and mental self-care
- Learning about neurodivergence
- Relationships with partners, friends and family
- Coping mechanisms



Representatives from Durham Enable visit Celebrate Difference to get the project underway

Holiday Activities with Healthy Food Programme

Over each of the school holidays, the DVP supported 30 organisations through its Fun and Food Fund. With part funding received from the Department of Education, children and young people took part in a variety of fun and engaging activities that also included a healthy meal.

Activities included:

- forest school activities - campfire cooking, den building, treehouse making, etc
- animal care
- yoga
- making aromatherapy based slime
- sports activities
- drama days
- a trip to Alnwick Gardens
- healthy cooking
- storytelling
- holiday themed activities, crafts, treasure hunts and more

The children and young people were able to socialise in a different environment and learn something new which helped improve their confidence and mental and physical wellbeing.



Here we come! Drama Day with Mad Alice Theatre Company



Learning about making healthy pizzas at Glenroyd House



Contact Details

Derwent Valley Partnership
Customer Access Point, 36-38 Front Street, Consett
County Durham DH8 5AQ

Tel: 03000 260725
Email: dvaap@durham.gov.uk
www.durham.gov.uk/derwentvalleyaap
www.derwentvalleylife.org.uk
Derwent Valley Partnership - AAP