

Big Local Gateshead

Health and Environment Focus Group

Tuesday 2nd of March 2021 10am, Zoom: 897 7942 2112

1. Welcome and introductions

Present: Chris Folwell (BLG), Helen Bell (operational lead - community link worker), Jenna Brooks (National Trust), Christine Frazer (Community Impact Agency/NHS development officer), Liz Keating (Bensham court food co-op, Teams walking group), Brenda Clelland (local councillor), Suzanne Amey (BLG horticulturalist).

Apologies: Simon Turner (artist), Lisa MacDonald (Tyneside Mind)

2. Member Updates

Chris Folwell – Big Local Gateshead Bike Club still meeting in pairs, looking forward to supporting group rides again once able. 6 members will undergo ride leader training.

Pop-Up shop is still running Fridays 2-4pm from the Big Local Bungalow, open to all with pay as you feel donation system for food that would go to waste otherwise.

Suzanne Amey – Has partnered up with TVC #IDigTrees project to distribute 250 free trees into the area. Some to care homes, primary schools, probation service, and directly to residents. A posting to the NE Permaculture network has resulted in dozens of requests from outside the area which will have to be redirected to TVC. A few trees still remain available.

Working on a new batch of spring seed kits to go out to residents, alongside this Suzanne will deliver some sowing workshops at a handful of community spaces, Yetholm Road, Bensham Court, and Teams Medical practice were all suggested as possible venues.

Helen Bell – Staff are settling in and listening to local needs through referrals, hoping to be on the ground and offering more options for engagement in the near future.

Jenna Brooks - Working to secure a sustainable future for the Staiths and Riverside park partnered with Tyne and Wear Building Preservation Trust and Friends of the Staiths organisations. Currently working on a 'Spirit of Place' document – 2-3 sentences of what is unique and cherished about the place. Looking for input from local people. Will share a link for community to give their thoughts and feelings on the area.

Christine Frazer - Joined the Community Impact Agency in February, her work is to make inroads to community and facilitate conversations to learn pressing issues and how funds might best be allocated and spent. Some local concerns have been raised about 2 attempted child abductions in the area. Some carers from The Ropery are looking for spaces in the area for young adults to exercise. Many parents are finding schools uniforms no longer fit, is there a way to exchange them for new uniforms? Brenda has said St. Philip Neri and Dunston Hill both operate a scheme already, St. Chad's Community Project had previously offered a uniform swap - **Chris to find out if it is still operating.**

Liz Keating – Walking group are still walking in pairs or by themselves, have not join the walking scheme offered by Gateshead Older People Assembly.

Suggested OurGateshead.org to help advertise presence of this group and wider community projects.

Brenda Clelland – Brief for youth worker has been submitted to the police commissioner to hire a detached youth worker.

Excited to hear about the National Trust's involvement in the area, especially to help improve the route from the Staiths to Gibside.

Many new reports of arson and anti-social behaviour now the weather has become mild, creates tension and fear with people passing through, especially at night. Hopefully the detached youth worker can help to alleviate this by referring them to youth work or other services. See more discussion of this below.

3. Matters Arising

Discussion - misuse of public green spaces and antisocial behaviour - what can this group do to help?

Since 2010 youth work in the area has been in dramatic decline, outside of organised sessions at Dunston Community Centre there is nothing to offer young people.

Riverside Delights owner is looking at ways to offer more to young people and parents in the area – a movie night is being planned.

Discounted/subsidised exercise classes might be considered in gyms, Helen Bell is very interested in physical activities she can refer patients to.

Gateshead council is having to review it's leisure centre and gym offering as both are currently unsustainable and do not have a wide enough offer to benefit all residents. They are exploring alternative offerings such as less intense classes in public spaces.

This might also help to include young people and make better use of outdoor spaces, increase feeling of ownership, etc.

This group could subsidise rates for local people, offer places to parents at local schools, or pay outright for fitness provisioners to lead classes for free in the area. Some projects that have been attempted in the area include tai chi and Zumba, might the leaders of these activities be invited to join the network or make an application?

Boxing suggested as an outdoor activity that might attract young people causing anti-social behaviour.

Helen was looking for more information about a gym for disabled people that had opened on Team Valley just before lockdown. Brenda would be keen to do something similar at Dunston Community centre.

Suzanne reminded the group that gardening offers gentle exercise that benefits physical and mental health, some surgeries do refer patients to Gateshead Carer's allotment, this group could do the same to the Big Local community allotment.

This discussion will continue next month. Funding for this group can be used to support outdoor activities, provisioners very welcome to attend and we can support them through the application process. Group members will enquire with local personal trainers etc.

4. Project Proposals

None

5. New member suggestions

6. AOB / next meeting

Tuesday 30th of March - 10am