



**Combined Worker Report February 2021**  
**Barbara Slasor Community Development Lead**  
**Susan Graydon Partnership Support and**  
**Volunteer Broker**



SG – 1 week's annual leave taken in this period.

Following government Covid – 19 guidelines we are continuing to work from home, until advised otherwise.

**Ongoing engagement: Social Media Facebook pages: Insights**

The Gaunless Gateway page			The Gaunless Gateway Volunteer Page		
New Likes	No.of posts	28 day post engagement	New likes	No.of posts	28 day post engagement
11	102	10,379	8	13	677

**Online platform – Zoom**

Zoom is still widely being used during COVID – 19 and many organisations including Local Trust has advocated its use to replace face to face meetings with multiple users, this will continue till advised otherwise. We are adapting to accessing some meetings via the TEAMS platform, this is a preferred choice for several organisations so to gain the widest reach across the partnership we must remain flexible.

**Good News Story**

**\*\*New\*\* Resident Action Group forms in West Auckland**



After meeting via zoom on 17 February, a group of 7 residents and volunteers discussed ways they could work together to find realistic, positive solutions to address local issues, whatever they may be.

Group aims include giving a voice to residents who may not be confident to speak up or share ideas and finding way to better connect people passionate about West Auckland and surrounding areas.

One of their first tasks was to register a new West Auckland Village Greens Neighbourhood Watch. [www.ourwatch.org.uk/scheme/54765/west-auckland-village-greens](http://www.ourwatch.org.uk/scheme/54765/west-auckland-village-greens)

They are at the start of their journey and exploring group name options and all agreed they would like to meet every month at 5.30pm on Wednesdays. They welcome all residents and anyone with a keen interest to join in.

## Community Energy Initiatives

Following on from discussions at the Bishop Auckland Climate Action group, the Vice Chair and local renewable energy business director have taken part in exploratory discussions with Ewan Boyd, an independent specialist, around Community Energy options. There are many factors to consider and the area can be complex, however there could be scope that an appropriate option could potentially generate a sustainable legacy project. We are aware that BA churches are also exploring this topic.

**For discussion:** Is this something you would like to explore?

**Recommendation:** If yes, to consider writing a brief that would result in an initial scoping and options report to support further consideration and discussion.

## British Psychological Society - tackling poverty

Dr Vicki McGowan shared an opportunity to become involved in a webinar and discussion with advisors and think tank members from across sectors. The primary objectives focused on approaching and unifying the sectors involved in the management and face-to-face contact with poverty.

The first session explored the foundations of poverty from perspectives of equality, mental health the economy, homelessness and criminal behaviour. The second session explored interventions likely to alleviate poverty: improving food poverty and obesity; mental health interventions, the Benefits project and community regeneration in the SW. The third session was a chaired panel discussion with four speakers from session 1 and 2.

### First

Met with Charlotte Windebank MD of <https://www.youarefirst.co.uk/>

They engage and support residents and young people to help build confidence and commercial awareness to prepare them for entering the jobs market or accessing startup business support. They use a community based flexible approach and run accredited 12 hr enterprise skill courses. They are looking to support provision in Durham and would like to explore south west Bishop Auckland delivery opportunities.

Here is a case study of the support they provide and it's worth a watch!

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=61qwYTpl0Zs>

**Recommendation:** to consider running a pilot in the Gaunless Gateway area with DM's, partners and young people to attend to, to provide feedback on course content to help them shape delivery within communities.

## Project Updates

### Bishop Auckland Table Tennis Club feasibility study

HC Horizons will present an update to all Decision Makers at their full partnership meeting Tuesday 23 February 2021

## **Partnership support and Volunteer Broker**

### **Better Impact Portal**

The online system is being populated with data. The platform has received an update and new instructional videos have been released.

### **Reaching out across Durham (ROAD)**

We are using a combined approach to support individuals with additional requirements into supported placements. We are fortunate to have access to volunteer roles that have staff with both qualifications and lived experience to ensure there is a place for everyone to reach their full potential.

### **Gaunless Gateway Big Local volunteer policies and procedures**

These continue to be reviewed, revised and adapted for community group use.

### **Organisational and befriending check ins**

Due to government guidelines smaller groups are still inactive. Those that are still active are still being supported as part of partnership support role. Befriending service to volunteers to combat loneliness and isolation is ongoing. 13 groups and organisations have been contacted during this reporting period

### **Changing Relations**

Ongoing support with 2 volunteers to become part of their steering group. The individuals will give updates (where confidentiality allows) on any exciting developments.

**Partnership Development** - partnership supported with signposting, information sharing, zoom training etc

### **Durham Community Action – Volunteer Coordinators Forum**

Attended, networked and gained updated information to support my Volunteer Broker role.

### **Meals on Wheels – Covid Cash Recovery Training**

Following on from our recommendation to register for this free training, we received feedback from a lady at Woodhouse Close Church Community Centre thanking us for the signposting as the training attended online will have a significant impact on her role.

### **Book Swap Shop**

This has been adopted by the Baptist Church and is being relished with new books on a regular basis.

### **New Volunteers**

Ongoing recruitment, this is strengthening and building capacity across the partnership with 2 new volunteers signing up and inducted in this reporting period.

**Advisory group for young people** – supporting National Institute for Health Research – Dr Vicki McGowan’s sign posting.

One of our volunteers has been in contact to become involved in supporting the research team

### **West Auckland Boxing Club**

Introductions and updates on the roles in the partnership were shared.

**Project proposals for discussion and decision / recommendation – N/A**

### **Combined work and collaboration**

#### **Neighbourhood Watch / Community Action Group**

A meeting took place facilitated by BS 17 February 2021 and it was agreed to provide action planning support and for SG to provide note taking - see good news story

#### **Local Electricity Bill discussion**

BA Climate Action group organised a meeting attended by Dehenna Davison MP. We were collectively asking her if she was prepared to support the Local Electricity Bill to enable communities to develop sustainable energy projects for community benefit.

#### **Full Partnership Monthly Meeting**

Ongoing attendance and feedback from our combined roles shared.

#### **Legacy Statement Planning Meeting**

Support given to decision makers from both staff members.

**AYCC full staff meeting - BS & SG attended**

#### **West Auckland Anti – Social Behaviour online meeting**

BS & SG both attended this meeting as it cross cuts through both our roles, BS gave an overview of the engagement currently (Youth Initiative & Street games / potential Neighbourhood Watch or Community Action Group)

#### **Kevin Grahams Memorial Service**

SG & BS were invited to attend as they have continued to keep in contact with Irene and the family, special memories were shared as Kevin was placed into his final resting place at West Auckland Cemetery.

**Online Training / workshops:** this is not an exhaustive list and does not list all individual meetings relevant to our job roles, just a snapshot of topics covered and some positive outcomes from attendance

Delivery body	Training / Workshop	Status	Initials
British Psychology Society	Tackling Poverty: How can psychology contribute? Unifying Science	Attended	BS
Learning Curve	Safeguard and Protect	Ongoing	SG
Learning Curve	Team Leadership	Ongoing	BS
Local Trust	Lessons from Lockdown - Advocacy Panel	Attended	SG & BS
Local Trust	Making Change Happen- Advocacy Panel	Attended	BS & SG
Local Trust	Building a Better Environment – Chris Stark	Attended	BS & SG
Together Newcastle	Covid Cash Recovery Train the Trainer- Just Finance Foundation	Attended	BS & SG