

**TITLE OF REPORT:** Case Study – Street Cleanliness

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## **Introduction**

1. 'Street Cleanliness – Enforcement, Education and Community Involvement' has been identified as a key emerging issue for the Committee to review. This case study sets out the current services and approaches which enhance the cleanliness of the local environment and how they have had to change in recent years. It focusses on the work and relationships with the local community to tackle issues such as dog fouling and littering and examines the requirements for a step change improvement and development.

## **How we're doing things differently**

2. In responding to budgetary pressures the main choices have been:
  - **To change the way we provide services** - by sharing service provision, improved joint working and also enlisting greater support from the community;
  - **To reduce the level of service we currently provide** - rationalisation of facilities, reductions in service frequencies;
  - **To stop providing services;**
  - **To increase the income our services generate** – introducing new charges and also further developing the trading of our current services.
3. Whilst responding to budgetary pressures by reducing or stopping services, there has been significant change in providing and operating Waste Services, Grounds Maintenance and Fleet Management (WS, GM & FM) and Communities & Environment services, many of which have had a positive outcome.

## **Community Initiatives & Engagement**

4. Community environmental projects, initiatives and campaigns have been successfully progressed in a number of areas. A detailed update of each specific project can be found in Appendix 1.
5. In summarising progress and to help agree a way forward, the following strands have been identified as key to this theme:
  - Interaction with Customers and Communities
  - Emphasis on behaviour shift
  - Community working alongside Council to improve the environment
  - Access to funding from different sources that help the environment

## Interaction with Customers and Communities

### 6. *What we currently do*

- Area Co-ordinators work/engage with local communities, partners and ward councillors within geographic areas across the borough
- Community Engagement Officers working with groups and organisations – some health and wellbeing focus as part of a wider remit
- Commenced a 1 year Waste Behavioural Change programme in April 2016 to improve residents' approach to recycling and waste storage
- Work with Ward Councillors as Champions – identifying ways of mitigating inefficiencies
- Council funding administration (Local Community Fund (LCF) and Capacity Building Fund (CBF) some support offered for environmental projects)
- Volunteering – registration, signposting, insurance, risk assessment
- Over 23 groups including Friends of Groups, Crawcrook and Greenside Environment Group, Ryton Litter Action, Countryside Volunteers, adhoc project groups carrying out a range of environmental improvements
- Schools and groups' waste education initiatives
- Land of Oak and Iron consultation and ongoing engagement as part of the 2016 - 2020 programme
- Developing a Friends of Networking group to continue support to the groups and enable them to identify their needs
- Working with other organisations delivering activities within Gateshead

### 7. *What we could do*

- More strategic proactive approach – identification of key sites/groups to develop
- Consider appetite for/feasibility of community asset transfers
- Clarify and reinforce respective roles in going forward – practical/technical roles within Waste Services, Grounds Maintenance and Development/Volunteer Work, Asset/property responsibilities
- Greater publicity/promotion of volunteering opportunities and environmental initiatives (significant cost implications)
- Managed volunteer litter picking programme (staffing and resource implications)
- Extend the Behavioural Change programme (invest to save)
- Awareness sessions of the importance of keeping the environment clean including benefits and the impacts on the community within a community setting

## Emphasis on behaviour shift

### 8. *What we currently do*

- Waste Behavioural Change programme
- Ad hoc communication campaigns and publicity re. responsible dog owners, fly tipping and environmental projects
- Environmental enforcement activity
- Support and work with volunteers

- Ward Councillors working within the local communities to encourage greater community responsibility
- Schools and groups' waste and environmental education
- Support and work with Friends of Groups and other voluntary and community groups within Gateshead

9. *What we could do*

- Take a more strategic approach to behaviour shift
- Engage all Ward Councillors about social responsibility and less emphasis on Council efficiencies
- Identification of key sites/areas for action/promotion
- Explore the benefit of bringing back neighbourhood charters/agreements in key hotspot areas or more socially mobile/capable neighbourhoods. Revisit the idea of Street Representatives and the community walkabout inspections
- Extend the Behavioural Change programme (invest to save)
- Greater publicity/promotion (significant cost implications)
- Development work with college students

Community working alongside Council to improve the environment

10. *What we currently do*

- Community Engagement Officers working with groups and organisations – health and wellbeing focus as part of a wider remit
- Waste Behavioural Change programme (1 year)
- Work with Ward Councillors as Champions – identifying ways of mitigating efficiencies
- Council funding administration (Local Community Fund (LCF) and Capacity Building Fund (CBF) - some support offered for environmental projects)
- Volunteering – supporting registration, signposting, insurance cover, risk assessment of initiatives
- Over 23 groups engaged including Friends of Groups, Crawcrook and Greenside Environment Group, Ryton Litter Action, Countryside Volunteers, adhoc project groups
- Schools and groups' waste education
- Limited use/exploitation of Community Payback services
- Six volunteers have been recruited and trained for the Community Resilience Warden role
- Former Council Employees previously on the Emergency Response Team have also agreed to continue with their roles as Community Resilience Warden Volunteers
- Land of Oak and Iron initiative encourages community participation/involvement as part of the 2016-2020 programme
- Specific website development work to raise awareness

11. *What we could do*

- Take a more strategic proactive approach – identification of key sites/groups to develop
- Consider appetite for/feasibility of community asset transfers
- Clarify and reinforce respective roles going forward – practical/technical roles with Waste Services, Grounds Maintenance and Development/Volunteer Work, Asset/property responsibilities
- Greater publicity/promotion
- More effective/programmed use of Community Payback services – key projects throughout the year and early engagement/agreement of key services
- Further strengthen response arrangements in all communities by seeking additional volunteers to be Volunteer Community Resilience Wardens
- Develop specific area community plans and projects including environmental seasonal themes throughout Gateshead that will enable communities to self-help themselves in emergencies
- Work with Community Organisations and Networks to use their local buildings and facilities in emergency situations as a place of shelter for affected residents and communities

Access to funding from different sources that help the environment

12. *What we currently do*

- Community Engagement Officers working with groups and organisations – health and wellbeing focus as part of a wider remit
- Work with Ward Councillors as Champions – identifying ways of mitigating efficiencies/use of Local Community and capacity building funding to build local capacity
- Council funding administration (Local Community Fund (LCF) and Capacity Building Fund (CBF) - some support offered for environmental projects)
- Volunteers' month fund
- Work closely with Groundwork North East & Cumbria on various projects, including Big Lottery and SITA/BIFFA Landfill Tax funded activities
- Support Big Local Gateshead and their development of their environment projects around parts of Bensham and Teams
- Friends of Groups, Crawcrook and Greenside Environment Group, Ryton Litter Action, etc. have previously accessed funding from the Council and other sources
- Land of Oak and Iron initiative – (£2.2Million Heritage Lottery Funded programme from 2016-2020 and proposed £1Million Heritage Centre to be built at Winlaton Mill.

13. *What we could do*

- Take a more strategic proactive approach to funding across the Council – greater leverage of external funds (consider need for match, land tenure and ongoing

maintenance/responsibilities), including the potential to re-establish External Funding Officers Group (EFOG) and its SharePoint site

- Research best practice examples of public open space management already in operation in England & Wales with a view to agreeing an approach to actively pursue
- Strategic identification of key sites/groups to develop – for example Chase Park, Saltwell Park approach
- Consider appetite for/feasibility of community asset transfers
- Clarify and reinforce respective roles going forward – practical/technical roles with Waste Services, Grounds Maintenance and Development/Volunteer Work, Asset/property responsibilities
- Greater publicity/promotion of volunteering opportunities and environmental initiatives

### **New Working Structures and Methods**

14. Service teams have been re-aligned into a new structure including combined area working and zonal working for front line staff. These improvements have led to more efficient ways of delivering our services with reduced resources.
15. Annualised hours have been introduced to assist in meeting peak service demands during the growing season.
16. Fleet Management has been integrated into Waste Services and Grounds Maintenance to give greater synergy with the service main user and making our services more efficient.
17. The Environmental Enforcement Team has been relocated with Communities & Environment and reconfigured to ensure that the majority of its work is centred around areas and issues which create the greatest demand and impact on the environment. The team currently consists of 4 FTE officers enforcing planning, highways and environmental legislation (i.e. not full time on environmental enforcement) - one other officer is currently on secondment to Development Management assisting with the implementation of the Community Infrastructure Levy.
18. Given the reduction in the number of Dog Wardens to 1 FTE, efforts are now concentrated on reducing stray dogs and responding rapidly to ensure their collection and removal from the streets. This has had a positive impact in many respects and especially in terms of reduced fouling and scavenged litter. The Dog Warden also takes a positive and encouraging approach and provides dog waste bags and advice and guidance to dog owners. The Dog Warden continues to issue Fixed Penalty Notices for those failing to clear up after their pet but it should be recognised that there are difficulties and challenges in identifying and witnessing incidents across such a wide area of the borough.
19. An improved more robust herbicide application contract and monitoring regime has seen significant improvements. In house cost effective arrangements for the control

of invasive weeds have been put in place to protect building and infrastructure therefore reducing potential future costs. This improves the appearance of the area.

20. The number of depots has been significantly reduced where operationally effective. This has reduced the cost of maintaining the facilities and improved management of equipment, resources and staff.
21. Training requirements from annual appraisals are collated and prioritised in a combined training plan for the service. This ensures a coordinated approach to training, ensuring resources are allocated where most needed for the service.
22. There has been additional training for staff to ensure the most effective and safe operation of vehicles and machinery, reducing the risk of accidents and associated costs.
23. We are working closely with colleagues who manage leisure facilities to ensure resources are allocated in a way that meets the needs of users, keeps centres clean and further helps generate income for the council.
24. An improved budget management structure and frequent involvement in budget monitoring by staff ensures more effective use of funding and budget management.
25. There is a strengthened staff culture to ensure that we achieve as much as possible and as effectively as possible with the resources we currently have and also to constantly challenge why and how things are done to seek better outcomes.
26. There is improved openness, communication and face to face discussions with front line staff to seek views and ideas on how the services can be improved.
27. Overtime work and standby arrangements have been significantly reduced to further reduce the cost of the services. A new protocol was established with Carecall to filter and control out of hours service requests to ensure they are dealt with appropriately and more cost effectively.
28. Three Behavioural Change Officers have been employed for a year on an 'invest to save' basis to help promote the recycling service and other key recycling services. This will help the Council achieve its recycling target within Vision 2030 as well as helping achieve savings from diverting residual waste from more expensive disposal routes. It also has positive spin off effect in terms of improving our residents' approach to waste storage and reducing littering.

### **Improved Joint Working Arrangements**

29. The Gateshead Housing Company (TGHC) and Waste Services, Grounds Maintenance & Fleet Management (WS, GM & FM) work towards a Service Agreement which is reviewed and updated annually and reported to TGHC's Customer & Communities Committee. The Service Agreement establishes the level of service provided in neighbourhood estates and provides a framework for TGHC to help influence, specify and monitor the quality of environmental services provided

by WS,GM & FM. Tenants are involved in the monitoring of standards across each neighbourhood

30. Officers of TGHC and WS, GM & FM are working closer together on a number of key work streams to help tackle neighbourhood issues jointly. Work is being prioritised around tree work requests, the garden maintenance scheme and fly-tipping and verminous properties. Work streams have also been identified to improve joint working around special works requests and bordered open space grass cutting. The aim of the work streams is to improve understanding and communication to ensure limited resources are targeted where most needed.
31. We continue to work closely with crime and anti-social behaviour reduction partners through the joint 'Tasking' working group to reduce incidents of anti-social behaviour related litter, graffiti etc.

### **Review of street cleansing routes**

32. In response to a budget saving to reduce mechanical sweepers from 9 machines to 6, the sweeping routes were revised to ensure the remaining resource is targeted as effectively as possible.
33. New larger enclosed litter bins have replaced smaller open topped units which were more prone to misuse, overfilling, wind and vermin scavenged litter.
34. A new contract for mechanical sweepers is currently being tendered. As part of the process, different vehicles have been trialled to ensure the most effective vehicle types and configuration are procured.

### **New Housing Developments**

35. Work continues with Development Management to ensure landscape proposals for new housing developments include sustainable and low maintenance planting. A new developer options framework has been implemented to reduce or eliminate the maintenance burden on the council from new developments.

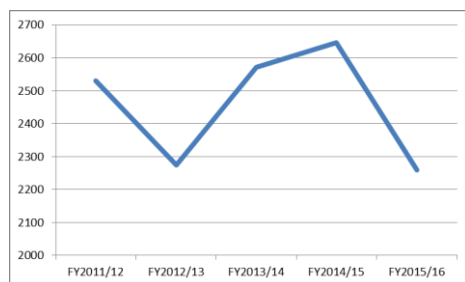
### **Trading our Services**

36. Work continues on promoting our services to the commercial sector or public to generate income and offset the cost of the service e.g. providing cleansing services for events or private car parks, roundabout sponsorship etc. This helps reduce the pressure on our budgets and therefore supports the continuation of frontline services in the neighbourhoods.

### **Communications and Managing Customer Expectations**

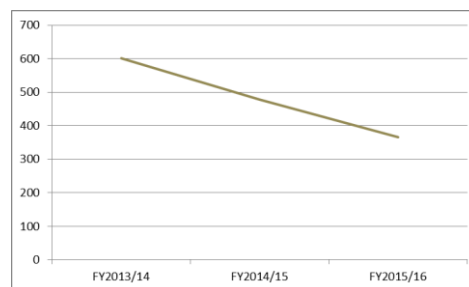
37. Funding for cleansing services has been significantly reduced over the last few years but much work has been undertaken to stabilise, and to some extent, improve services using the resources remaining. Management of customer requests, complaints and expectation has been a key aspect of this work.

### Cleansing Requests/Complaints



(Source: Lagan)

### Dog Fouling Requests/Complaints



38. We continue to use of a number of standard letters and website and media messages to respond to the more common complaint types which ensures that a consistent formal response which reduces the likelihood for repeat and escalated complaints.
39. We have significantly increased use of social media such as Facebook to help update our residents and explain changes and adverse effects on services. We continue to use Council News, internal publications, Team Briefings and the media to help get messages across to our residents and visitors.
40. Site meetings have been undertaken with residents and groups to explain service changes particularly in response to budget savings. We have made improvements to service requests management systems to help avoid complaints developing. We achieved Customer Service Excellence for our services and continue to maintain ISO 9001 & 14001 quality accreditation.
41. We continue to work with our Customer Services Unit on a routine basis and provide updates as soon as we aware of service problems which can be provided to the public and prevent complaint. We work closely with Ward Members to explain proposed changes in services or issues and also The Gateshead Housing Company which helps deliver messages to our tenants.

### Challenges for the Services

42. There is a lot of good work being carried out by volunteers across the borough to enhance the local environment and provision of environmental services. It should be recognised that this support does not come without a cost, and to date the staff resource available across the Council has been used to support the emerging growth of interested groups and initiatives. *However, to really make a step change and expand our volunteering offer further, a more targeted strategic approach is required with new structures and resources assigned accordingly.* This will enable groups and community leads to be actively sought out and supported and developed to ensure we obtain the greatest benefit from our community engagement initiatives.
43. *Greater publicity of opportunities, initiatives and to propagate the belief that volunteering is a mainstream activity will be required.* The cost and implications on the communications team will need to be considered although the use of social media and websites offer great opportunities (and risk) for wider, lower cost engagement.



44. There will be a need to maintain an environmental enforcement presence to effect behavioural change where education and awareness is not enough. *The challenge will be to identify sufficient resource to ensure a credible and effective enforcement deterrent.*
45. It is clear that the significant reduction in budget for street cleansing and grounds maintenance has had a very visible and detrimental impact on these front line services. Whilst there are many examples of how the service has responded to try and bridge the gap, it should be recognised that *services remain vulnerable to increased demands* due to customer expectation, inclement weather or further reductions in resources.
46. There is a need to continue to review and improve our services to ensure we maintain the best visual appearance that we can. *However there is a limit to the benefits that continued changes can bring and any future reduction in resources and budgets will inevitably have a detrimental impact on the appearance of the borough's streets and open spaces.*

### **Recommendation**

47. Overview & Scrutiny Committee is recommended to consider the summary comments in 'Challenges for the Services' above, and to discuss how these challenges may be overcome.

### Litter picking campaigns

This project is similar to the National Spring Clean event, but with a number of events held all year round:

- Volunteer Countryside Rangers are carrying out at least five litter picks every week, at least two of which are in the Derwent Valley, plus litter picks on each of the two practical task days per week.
- Volunteer Countryside Rangers also work with volunteers from Sustrans on the National Cycle Networks, holding regular volunteer days that include the placement of bags in agreed locations that can be collected later by Waste Services & Grounds Maintenance.
- Working in partnership with Durham Wildlife Trust's 'Wildground' project, two lake clearance sessions have been carried out in Oliver Henderson Park. It is estimated that over three tonnes of material have been removed from the lake, including bicycles, scooters, fencing, tyres, and bottles. More days are planned.
- A litter pick was carried out by Saltwell Park User Groups (SPUG).
- The Crawcrook and Greenside Environment Group have held at least three 'big tidy-ups' and a number of individuals collect and bag rubbish on a weekly basis as part of an agreed collection arrangement.
- The Friends of Greengates Park have held three tidy-up days in the park.
- The 'Friends Of' group have held five large litter picks in Wardley park.
- The Friends of Windy Nook group supported Volunteer Countryside Rangers litter pick of Windy Nook nature reserve. They continue to remove litter on a weekly basis.
- A new group has been set-up to litter pick and carry out other improvements to Dodds Dene, near Chowdene.
- A group of Polish residents in Bensham borrowed tools from the Council to hold a one-off litter pick, with WS&GM collecting the bags after the event.
- The Jewish community carried out a litter pick in Saltwell Park, and further discussions with the Council about other similar exercises have taken place.
- Acting as a good neighbour, SITA UK staff carried out litter picking outside the Campground boundary, even though litter was not related to Campground Waste Transfer Station or Household Waste and Recycling Centre.
- Two new groups have started a weekly litter pick these are in Oliver Henderson Park and Chowdene.
- Working with Gateshead's School's Council an 'All School's' litter pick is planned for the month of June.
- Ryton Litter Action – local litter picking activities.
- Clean for the Queen promotion as part of the borough wide Volunteers' Day in June.

## **Community composting**

This project was developed to run alongside the introduction of charges for household green waste collection. A programme of composting days was introduced which provides residents with an opportunity to dispose of garden waste in skips located at various points throughout Gateshead.

Three sites are available where skips are located and rotated on a three-weekly basis at Saltwell Park, Oliver Henderson Park and Barmoor, Ryton.

A member of staff is on site to supervise the skip but more importantly to provide information and encouragement on composting and other waste related issues.

## **Schools' education talks**

This project targets education and awareness activities around waste issues, and key achievements include:

- The Campground Visitor and Education Centre was officially opened by Bob Moncur and included participation from local 'relationship school' Fell Dyke Primary School. Third sector environmental charity Groundwork North East and Cumbria are coordinating an extensive programme outreach work in local schools, in the community and at the Centre, which also includes visits to South Tyne and Wear Waste Management Partnership's state-of-the-art Energy from Waste facility on Teesside. Since April 2014, the programme has engaged with over 7,200 local school children across the partnership area with almost 2,500 from Gateshead.
- The Clean Tyne Project is a partnership between North Tyneside, Newcastle, and Gateshead Councils, plus Port of Tyne, which is working with schools to raise awareness of the river and its environment, and includes a free-to-download Key Stage 1&2 education pack. We are in the process of writing a KS3 pack. A copy of which will be delivered to each secondary school in the three partner authorities and will be followed by a number of free sessions in to schools.
- Sessions have been delivered with Lingey House Primary School regarding wildlife-friendly food and litter in Oliver Henderson Park. This subsequently led to the children helping to design some interpretation around the lake about what to feed the birds and other wildlife that can be seen, and also make bird and bat boxes which will then be monitored by the school children as part of their project work.
- The Jewish Boys' School delivered a number of work days in the Saltwell Park that included litter picking.

## **Environmental Champion**

This project designates resident volunteers that report problems and provide support with campaigns:

- Volunteers from the Crawcrook and Greenside Environmental Group are utilising armbands to ensure that they are more visible within the community, particularly around the dog fouling issue.

- In partnership with the RSPB, events are being delivered in Saltwell Park that promote the environment, nature, and wildlife. A new RSPB post is based in the park and have a target to engage with 5000 young people.
- A volunteer will be recruited to work alongside the RSPB in Saltwell Park to develop the wildlife garden and promote the environment with schools and other community groups.

## Communications campaign

This project is aimed at ensuring that there regular articles on environmental issues and schemes are featured in Council News and on the Council's website. Successes include:

- A quarterly newsletter for Volunteer Countryside Rangers to brief them on site issues and project work. It also includes a diary of practical task days, training and other meetings.
- The Council utilises its Facebook account to, for example, publicise lost dogs, poor weather conditions, or changes to bin collections. The Friends of Chase Park, the Friends of Wardley Park, and the Friends of Greengates Park also all have active Facebook pages. The Volunteer Countryside Rangers use their Facebook page to show photos from task days, promote events and training days, and advertise their achievements. Crawcrook and Greenside Environment Group's Twitter feed – very effective self-managed comms route.
- In Greenside, every school child received a letter to take home to raise awareness about dog fouling and how the Council are working with the local Environment Group to tackle the issue. Leaflets have also been designed and distributed by group members.
- Working with The Gateshead Schools Council designing a poster / stickers for parks across the borough, to highlight a number of issues including litter, vandalism, dog fouling and graffiti. This forms part of the UNICEF Rights Respect Campaign that school children have been working on.



- The Friends of Chase Park group has undertaken three public consultation events to ask local residents how they think the park should be developed through Heritage

Lottery Funding. A new officer role will promote volunteering, events, and other community-led activities.

- Waste and recycling community engagement officers have been knocking on doors and giving advice on waste issues and the garden waste scheme and this scheme continues for 2016 with 3 Behavioural Change Officers.
- The Friends of Red Kites have received funding and are in the process of installing four new interpretation panels in Saltwell park, the Derwent Walk Country park, plus two others.
- The Friends of Oliver Henderson/Lingley House School have received funding from Tesco and the Council to work with an environmental artist/blacksmith to design and install new seating and sculpture. And working with WildGround new interpretation about wildfowl and feeding will be install around the lake.
- A day is planned to bring all of the environmental volunteers groups together. This will allow the groups to network, we will hold a number of workshops, where we can consult and inform groups and spread good practice. It is also a chance to thank everyone for their efforts and reinforce that even if they volunteer for a small amount of time that it is all import and adds to the wider community effort. The follow up will be a quarterly or bi-annual network meeting for the groups.

### **Local dog fouling campaign**

This project is aimed at supporting locally designed anti-fouling campaigns, such as the pilot scheme led by the Crawcrook and Greenside Environment Group to highlight and combat dog fouling in their area. Utilising armbands to ensure that they are more visible within the community, the volunteers have used spray paint to highlight incidents of dog fouling and distributed promotional leaflets to encourage residents to be responsible pet-owners.

There has been interest in expanding this scheme to other areas of the Borough.

### **Flower planting/ flowerbed maintenance**

This project encourages the maintenance of existing beds by community volunteers, such as:

- The Council is providing support to a range of small and local community groups to plant and maintain bedding. For example, as part of the bid for Heritage Lottery Funding, flower beds will be reinstated in Chase Park, with volunteers taking over their management following an initial officer-led role.
- The Friends of Ferndene Park carryout flower bed maintenance in the park and also grow plants that are used there. WildGround are working with the Friends of Ferndene to improve areas of the park including the dene and the alpine rockery. Other work is also planned and the group will also run a regular workday in the park.
- Local councillors are providing proactive support for bed maintenance for example in Rowlands Gill, Winlaton and Blaydon.
- Discussions have been held with the Jewish Boys' school regarding flowerbed maintenance at Saltwell Park's Rose Garden.

- Supported by Lingey House Primary School, a wildflower meadow has been created through the 'Wildground' project in Oliver Henderson Park. WildGround have expanded the wildflower planting and created a new area which has been sown with a wildflower mix.
- Working with the RSPB, volunteers have planted 300 trees in Saltwell Park.
- Thrive have developed a garden of reflection in Saltwell park. Thrive are looking for sponsorship to replant some of the floral bedding in Saltwell park.
- Voluntary groups planted World War I commemorative poppies. In Birtley, Partnership working with Wildground created a swathe of World War I poppies, mixed with a wildflower scheme to extend the flowering time and reduce the cutting regime.
- The new SuDS scheme that has been installed at Norwood nature reserve will allow new wildflower planting and plant more trees. This work will be carried by the Volunteer Countryside Rangers.
- Blaydon West Primary School – planted up WW1 commemorative garden beds adjacent to Blaydon Library
- Friends of Winlaton – Winlaton Garth planted shrub/flower beds

There are currently an estimated 480 Environmental volunteers active in Gateshead with approximately 60 Friends of groups operating within Gateshead. There is an average of over 6,000 volunteers active in general within Gateshead which equates to 8% of volunteers being designated to Environmental Activities.

### **Resilience wardens**

The aim is that the Wardens will support the council to clear paths for elderly/vulnerable people in their community. 6 volunteers have been trained and the Safer Communities team plan to continue developing the programme, encouraging more volunteers to join the scheme.

Volunteers assist communities to harness local resources and expertise to help themselves and those less able to help themselves in an emergency, in a way that complements the response of the local authority and emergency services. This includes working with Site Incident Officers from the Emergency Response Team collecting evidence e.g. anecdotal and photographic including environment information to relay back to the Major Incident Room and provide on-site knowledge of their local area

### **Gateshead Capacity Building Fund**

The Gateshead (Capacity Building) Fund supported 23 organisations during the periods 2014/15 and 2015/16, to help them deliver projects carrying out a variety of environmental work and improvements within Gateshead. This included:

- Provision of local gardening services
- Creation of community gardens
- Development of horticulture skills with young people at central nursery
- Creation of allotments
- Management of nature reserves

- Protection and upkeep of playing fields
- Maintenance and development of two community farms
- Support of local parks and gardens through Friends of groups
- Litter picks, garden tidies
- Greenkeeping, tree felling and crop spraying

The value of CBF support for this period was £118,255