



Empowering Communities

Case studies 2022-23

- **Introduction** 3
- **Environmental impact**
 - Big Clean-up Project 4-5
 - Bullring bonfires phase one 6-7
- **Crime and anti-social behaviour**
 - Providing activities for children in Pallister Park 8-9
 - Social Action Project with MFC Foundation 10-11
- **Building social infrastructure** 12-13
 - Building relationships in Central Mews 14-15
 - A new approach to tackling loan sharks
- **Improving life chances:** 16-17
 - Creating a warm space at The Annexe
 - Supporting customers with the cost of living in winter 18-19
 - 20-21
- **Our outcomes 2022/23**
- **Social value**
 - Getting the best social impact out of our environmental investment 22-23
 - Bringing empty homes back to life with South Bank Community Trust 24-25
- **A big thanks!** 26-27



Teams across Thirteen have been working in our neighbourhoods to build resilience by developing stronger relationships with residents and partners to empower our communities.

We have taken a partnership approach to our work in communities to ensure change is sustainable to maximise the impact of support, and to create great places where people want to live.

We consulted with communities to gain a deeper of the issues most important to them and identify ways we could work together to tackle them.

Through our consultations, we identified four key areas for improvement, including:

- environmental impact
- crime and anti-social behaviour
- building social infrastructure
- improving life chances

This document provides a summary of the projects we've supported to tackle our four community priorities, as well some of the project we have been working on to build social value in our neighbourhoods.



Big Clean-up Project



About this case study

Many of our communities have told us they are concerned about their local environment, particularly the impact of litter and fly-tipping. However, residents did not know the best way to tackle the issue.

We wanted to support residents to improve the local environment and make our neighbourhoods clean and attractive, while also improving biodiversity.

What did we do?

- held 'Big Clean-up' events across Middlesbrough, Stockton and Hartlepool
- several smaller events were also held in targeted locations
- worked closely with community leaders and partners to get residents involved in a range of activities including:
 - litter picking
 - graffiti and waste removal
 - community skips
 - tree and wildflower planting
 - pop-up recycling shops
 - community trips to our recycling centre
 - community police activity

What was the outcome of our support?

- removed 31.2 tonnes of litter from streets
- completed 8 garden makeovers, handpicked by young people in the community
- removed 52 bags of rubbish from 7 community litter picks
- removed 14 full flatbed tipper vans of bulky items
- planted 1200 trees and whips in our communities
- scattered wildflowers seed bombs
- cleared two local becks
- held 3 recycling education events
- hosted 2 market stall events offering employment advice, credit union support and information about loan sharks and how to report them
- worked with the police to seize 3 untaxed vehicles
- reported 4 vehicles to the DVLA for no tax

"It's something that we've wanted to happen for a long time, and I just can't believe its really happening. Thirteen have been absolutely amazing. My road, its never looked so good its amazing. I'm just so pleased, I've actually lived here for over fifty years and seen quite a lot of changes, but this is really amazing."
Sandra, Primrose Hill resident

Bullring bonfires phase one



About this case study

Pallister Park in Middlesbrough has an area which locals call ‘the bullring’. The bullring is a grassy area in the neighbourhood, which was regularly used as a space for bonfires by the community, and a place that generally generated anti-social behaviour.

Over the past 35 years, several huge bonfires were erected and lit on the bullring for bonfire night. The size and frequency of the fires was a very costly tradition and put a lot of pressure on the emergency and environmental services.

When speaking to members of the community, most did not support the bonfires and were intimidated by those who were causing them.

There was also a rise in fly-tipping and anti-social behaviour in the area which was cause for concern for many members of the community.

What did we do?

- worked with partners to provide more activities for children in the area to divert them from acts of anti-social behaviour and give them a place to go
- supported the community to enhance the land with planters, flowers and shrubs to generate a sense of pride in the area amongst residents
- helped the community to apply for grants to fund neighbourhood improvements

What was the outcome of our support?

- more people have started to take pride in their area
- bonfires have been smaller and less frequent, resulting in no emergency call outs on Bonfire Night in 2022 for the first time in years
- residents were empowered and came together the day after Bonfire Night in 2022 to clean up the bonfire area
- reduction in fly-tipping, with reports dropping from 164 in 2021 to 66 in 2022

“What can I say, Thirteen have been amazing. Can Jill work on this estate forever!”

Pallister Park resident

Providing activities for children in Pallister Park



About this case study

Residents in Pallister Park told us they were concerned by the lack of activities for young people in the area and they felt this was having an impact on crime and anti-social behaviour. Although there were some existing opportunities in the area, residents were largely unaware of what was available for their children.

To improve crime and anti-social behaviour in Pallister Park, we wanted to introduce more activities for young people in the area. We worked with Ann Hanratty, local resident, to setup activities for children during the summer.

What did we do?

- got residents involved in the project from the outset to ensure we provided a service that met the needs of the community and could provide support long-term
- provided funding to local children's charity, Kids Kabin, from our locality plan budget, to ensure the sessions could be a long-term solution for the community

What was the outcome of our support?

- Kids Kabin has started to provide regular sessions for children in Pallister Park to play games and socialise
- since September 2022, children in Pallister Park, aged between 7 and 10, have accessed over 351 hours of Kids Kabin sessions
- 45 children from 27 families used the Kids Kabin service over the winter, which is around 31 hours of positive interaction per child
- residents have started to hold sessions on weekends and during school holidays to help ensure local children can access support all year round
- the community has set up a walking bus to help children get to the sessions safely and as a group
- we've created more community-led initiatives in Pallister Park, and will continue to support volunteers, residents and partners with these



Social Action Project with MFC Foundation



About this case study

Residents in Gresham told us they wanted to be more involved in their community but did not feel confident in what to do and how to do it.

They also wanted to find a way to keep the community up to date and get neighbours talking to each other, to find out what's going on more easily.

What did we do?

- partnered with MFC Foundation to develop an 18-week programme, called the Social Action Project
- improved resident confidence and helped them to get more involved in their community
- supported residents to set up their own 'Neighbourhood Watch Scheme' group on Facebook
- helped residents to promote the group to get more members, which included distributing over 1000 leaflets within the community

What was the outcome of our support?

- we reached more of our hard-to-reach residents and got them involved in the project with the help of MFC Foundation and local schools
- 12 people took part in the Social Action Project sessions
- residents in Gresham feel better connected to their neighbours and local services
- the families who took part in the 18-week programme feel more confident to get involved with things in their community

"I wasn't even aware of the activities that were happening. I feel better connected now, which helped to raise awareness of the activities available to us."

Gresham resident

Building relationships in Central Mews



About this case study

Central Mews is a residential building in central Middlesbrough. It was facing high levels of anti-social behaviour, debt and empty properties, with very little engagement from customers.

To create a place where people want to live, it was important that we first build a better sense of community among those living in Central Mews. We also wanted to develop meaningful relationships with local partner organisations to benefit customers.

However, the community centre in Central Mews was closed and there was nowhere for young people to go. There was also no central area for customers to come together to speak to one another, or to meet with Thirteen colleagues and partner organisations.

What did we do?

- hosted an event for those living in Central Mews, with 50 residents getting involved to share their views
- supported customers to access £2600 in grant funding to organise community activities
- worked alongside residents to re-open the community centre to give young people a place to go and create a hub for community discussion

What was the outcome of our support?

- 2 of the customers who joined us at the community event are now actively involved customers who support Thirteen
- more customers living in Central Mews are getting involved in activities and there is a much stronger sense of community among those living in the building
- a large-scale investment programme is now going ahead, as a result of the increased community involvement in Central Mews

“Jill is unique. I’ve never met anyone like her before. It still upsets me to know that she’ll be leaving this estate in January as I feel her role here has been vital and won’t know what I’ll do without her support. If I had my way, I’d have her come to us permanently. I can’t speak for everyone, but from a personal point of view a lot of what has happened (and will happen) on this estate is down to her.”

Central Mews resident

A new approach to tackling loan sharks



About this case study

Primrose Hill in Stockton is a UK hot spot for illegal money lending. To help reduce the number of people falling victim to loan sharks, we have been working with the community to provide support and signposting for those in need.

We wanted to engage more residents and empower them to get involved by using a creative and innovative approach to delivering support with local partners.

What did we do?

- partnered with local community group, EPIC Teesside, and England Illegal Money Lending Team (IMLT) to deliver the project
- staged a play about the dangers of loan sharks, which was performed by local children
- worked with the community to access funding needed for the performance, which covered the cost of props and costumes

What was the outcome of our support?

- 8 young people took part in the performance
- those involved learned more about the dangers of loan sharks, as well as receiving an evening meal and a warm space to go while the project was running
- the young people who performed the play now have a greater understanding of the career opportunities available in arts
- 40 residents attended the play and are now more aware of the dangers of loan sharks
- residents were connected with local services, so they could get access to advice and support if needed
- England IMLT produced a video of the performance, which is now being used to teach others about the dangers of loan sharks

Creating a warm space at The Annexe



About this case study

Dyke House in Hartlepool is in the top 10% of the most deprived areas in the UK, with much higher than average unemployment rates. During the winter months, the cost of living crisis hit the area hard. This is also an inequality in the provision of local services, with many in the area.

We knew through our relationships with local voluntary and community sector organisations, The Wharton Trust, a community organisation based in the area, was looking for funding to help improve a community hub for residents.

The Annexe, a community and resource centre ran by the trust, and a central hub in Dyke House, aims to support local people and families who may be struggling to get by. It aims to connect people to local services who may be in need of support - but not already connected. We wanted to support the development of The Annexe and help the trust make sure it was a warm place for local people to visit in the long term.

The Wharton Trust has found it challenging to cope with the rising cost of electricity and gas. We worked with The Annexe to identify the potential for the installation of solar PV panels to the roof of the building.

What did we do?

- supported the development of The Annexe into a local resource hub to provide support
- this included a new ‘drying space’ for members of the local community to dry their clothes
- donated 10 slow cookers to The Annexe to support the setup of a community oven
- host regular drop in sessions in The Annexe to provide housing and employability support
- carried out a feasibility study on the installation of solar PV panels
- donated £4,000 to the trust to support with the installation of solar panels

What was the outcome of our support?

- the Dyke House community now has a dedicated and established community hub where they can visit to help with advice and the cost of living
- we have 7 people from the local community using the drying space on a weekly basis
- we have on average 25 people from the local community visiting The Annexe each week to cook and eat hot meals
- The Annexe now has a full array of 16 solar panels on the roof, which is helping the trust to reduce its energy bill
- The Annexe is now on a journey to become Net Zero

Supporting customers with the cost of living in winter



About this case study

Last year, we listened to the feedback lots of customers gave us about the main things they were concerned about. Many told us they were really worried about the cost of living, and particularly how it would affect them in the winter, with a choice between feeding the family, or heating the home.

So we created our Winter Warmer campaign to support our customers with the cost of living during the winter months – a 2 month campaign aimed at giving customers greater access to suitable resources within their community. We wanted to level up our winter support and give customers things to help them cope better.

What did we do?

- launched a campaign within Thirteen to collect items from colleagues that may be able to help customers – with things like coats, hats, scarfs, gloves, and blankets
- worked with colleagues in our Recycling Centre to setup 8 community hubs across our operating areas
- created 8 community hubs where people could make clothing donations for local people
- collected more than 10,000 tonnes of clothing

What was the outcome of our support?

- hundreds of families were able to benefit from warm clothing
- 250 warm coats were delivered to The Genesis Project in Middlesbrough
- developed stronger relationships with partners, to better identify and tackle issues that are most important to the local community

Our outcomes 2022/23

£725,651

of additional funding generated for community investment



1372

residents engaged with us on community projects



£87,000

of funding provided through our community fund



£310,000

invested in physical improvements in our neighbourhoods



356

people volunteering in our communities



7

schools engaged in community projects



35

cost of living services created and supported



31.2

tonnes of rubbish removed



10

new customers recruited to our involvement framework



75

refurbished computers, smart phones, printers and tablets donated to our communities



47

projects we have developed to help communities



52

bags of rubbish filled from community litter picks



9

new community groups established



34

projects funded



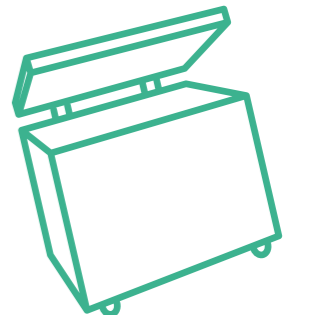
10

eco shops supported



14

full flat bed tipper vans of bulky items removed



Getting the best social impact out of our environmental investment



About this case study

Owton Manor in Hartlepool, is one of our five locality plan areas. It's an area of focus that we have been working hard to improve, in a number of ways, for both customers and the community.

Our contracting partner, Equans, delivered a retrofit scheme in the area that involved upgrading upgrading windows and doors, installing wall and loft insulation, and improving ventilation to customers' existing homes. The retrofit scheme has helped customers to reduce energy demand, made homes warmer and reduced carbon emissions.

As part of the scheme, Equans committed to deliver £200,000 in social value in the area. This was through creating jobs, hosting educational activities, carrying out environmental projects, and supporting the local community to become stronger.

Our teams worked closely together to make sure social value investment was delivered through existing projects and activities, which were already underway, or had been identified in Owton Manor through our locality plan work. This helped to maximise the social impact of our environmental investment in the retrofit scheme.

What did we do?

- identified projects where social value could have the biggest impact for customers and the community
- increased engagement with local primary schools
- helped local people build a better understanding of retrofit improvements to homes
- connected our employability team with Equans to make sure local people were offered employment opportunities on the scheme
- strengthened our relationships with local communities centres and increased our presence in them to both increase and improve customer engagement

What was the outcome of our support?

- Equans delivered more than £300,000 of social value activities in the area – which is an amazing 150% of what it committed to do at the start of the project
- the project was a pilot for the way social value tendering will be completed moving forward, and has created a blueprint for future contracts of this nature
- we have demonstrated the benefit of aligning social value investment with existing locality plan activity

Bringing empty homes back to life with South Bank Community Land Trust



About this case study

Our contracting partner, Esh, recently developed 28 new affordable bungalows to rent for us, in the South Bank area of Middlesbrough. As part of its work, it committed to deliver £28,500 of social value in the local community.

Our teams worked closely to come up with ideas on how the social value commitment could be delivered, to have the best possible positive impact on the South Bank community.

Through our relationships with local voluntary and community groups in the area, we knew South Bank Community Land Trust (SBCLT) was looking for some support.

SBCLT is a community owned organisation dedicated to creating affordable housing, employment, and training opportunities for residents in South Bank. It was looking for funding to bring empty homes back to life in the area.

What did we do?

- created a community-led partnership with the South Bank Community Land Trust to benefit local residents
- identified empty homes in the area that could be brought back to life
- worked alongside the SBCLT to identify improvements to the homes
- utilised our supply chains to help with the work
- funded the installation of new boilers, insulation, and solar PV panels on the roofs
- helped to bring 2 empty properties back into use for the local community

What was the outcome of our support?

- improved the local community-owned housing offer
- 2 families now have amazing new homes they would never have had without our support
- solar panels are estimated to save the households combined £1000 per year on their energy bills
- overall cost of refurbishing the properties to the SBCLT reduced by £16,000 as a result of our funding

**a
big
thanks!**

To all of our colleagues, customers, communities and partners who have helped us deliver all of these fantastic projects.

Contact us

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