



## Inner East Preston Big Local Partnership Annual Review 2015/16

Our Vision: To make Fishwick and St Matthew's a **cleaner, safer and healthier** place to live



Local Trust | Big Local

## WHAT HAVE YOU DONE AGAINST WHAT IS IN THE PLAN?

The Partnership has found 2015 to be challenging, rewarding and frustrating in equal measure and we have had much to celebrate, adjust to and learn. We always intended to use the Big Local £1million wisely and invest in community activities, projects and schemes that will have a lasting impact for years to come and that hasn't changed. We were delighted that we could celebrate the launch of four very interesting and diverse projects last year but disappointed that a couple of our projects have been met by delays. We provide brief details about our progress against our goals using a simple **red**, **amber**, **green** format here and will provide further details in the impact section of this report.

<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li><b>To develop local skills and job opportunities</b></li> </ul>					
<p><b>Access to Work</b> is a project that works with local employers and local people seeking work</p>					
Year 1 allocation:	£10,135	Estimated Expenditure to 31/8/16	£10,135	Progress	<b>Green</b>
<p><b>Barriers to Employment</b> provide crèche facilities for women accessing training and employment support.</p>					
Year 1 allocation:	£10,000	Estimated Expenditure to 31/8/16	£10,000	Progress	<b>Green</b>
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li><b>To enhance green space and play facilities</b></li> </ul>					
<p><b>Paul's Pad</b> - Our main project relating to this priority involves renovating a piece of derelict land known locally as Paul's Pad. There have been delays around the transfer of land ownership from a social housing provider and the local authority. We are delighted that this process is now complete and we are talking with local organisations and residents to take this project forward into year 2.</p>					
Year 1 allocation:	£70,000	Estimated Expenditure to 31/8/16	Nil	Progress	<b>Red</b>

- **To create social and recreational opportunities for the whole community**

**Artfull** started a project delivering traditional arts and craft sessions, music and community events targeting young children and their parents and older people in the first year

Year 1 allocation: £15,000      Estimated Expenditure to 31/8/16      £15,000      Progress      **Green**

- **To improve the image and environmental features**

We have been talking with our local authority about the feasibility and opportunity to develop a housing renovation project and we have made little progress. We intend to establish a sub group from the partnership to review this area of work this year.

Year 1 allocation: £5,000      Estimated Expenditure to 31/8/16      Nil      Progress      **Red**

- **To address financial exclusion and poverty issues**

**Loans for Local People** - We commissioned a local community finance company to develop a low interest loan product for our residents as an alternative to high interest

Year 1 allocation: £15,000      Estimated Expenditure to 31/8/16      £25,000      Progress      **Green**

**Management costs** - In addition to the above projects we allocated a £5,000 budget for our own running costs for public meetings, community events, competitions and newsletters

Year 1 allocation: £5,000      Estimated Expenditure to 31/8/16      £5,000      Progress      **Green**

This allocation has helped us to attract four new residents on the Partnership after receiving our newsletter and we have expanded our partners to include Surestart, Emmaus, New Brook House, Community Gateway and City Deal Partnership (public realm improvements team).

As Friends of Fishwick and St Matthews, an existing community group, we have evolved into a functioning Big Local Partnership. We have been fortunate to have received much support from our LTO – Preston City Council’s Community Engagement and Finance teams have worked with us to establish project funding paperwork and processes. We also formulated sub-groups around each priority theme to ensure added value where possible in each area and to give a wider opportunity for local people and local organisations to influence decision making.

## WHAT MONEY HAVE YOU SPENT?

<b>2015/16 ALLOCATION</b>	<b>TOTAL ESTIMATED EXPENDITURE</b>
<b>£130,000</b>	<b>£65,135</b>

In terms of added value, we believe that our projects and our own reputation and credibility have drawn in significant investment into the area that has both economic and social impacts.

The City Deal development is bringing in a £1m improvement scheme into the Big Local area that will have a lasting impact and we are a key consultee within that programme. In addition, the local council and health authority have piloted a housing standards scheme in the area that will help to improve the private rented sector properties and the associated poor health consequences.

Our training and employment projects bring considerable mainstream services into the community by way of education, training and employment support via Lancashire Adult College and Job Centre Plus. The development of local employment opportunities and the financial inclusion project will impact upon the local economy by alleviating poverty and debt.

## WHAT IMPACT HAVE YOU HAD?

We have endeavoured to raise our profile even further in the community this year through direct partnership activity and the work of the projects we support. The partnership has successfully distributed three newsletters to every household this year and we have maximised our social media presence by way of Twitter and Facebook. We now have a Twitter following of 504 and 172 Facebook members.

We held a community clean up, fruit tasting competition and planting session in partnership with Heritage Church at Paul's Pad followed by a Halloween themed-event / consultation event later in the year. Our traditional Christmas event, support of Fishwick Nature Reserve and our community garden sessions continue to generate interest and support from new people and partners.



Our Partnership meetings continue to attract good numbers and we now hold them within the local community. We have moved out of the Town Hall after securing a base at the local Surestart office for our monthly meetings and we hold every third meeting in other community venues.

### Project Progress:

We had specific outcomes in our year one plan that we have developed projects to deliver. This section summarises their progress in terms of outputs and outcomes as of April 2016 – a further monitoring return is due in July.

### Training and Employment Outcome: More people accessing skills training and job opportunities

**Barriers to Employment** project is run by Sahara in Preston, a BME women's organisation. The project has facilitated 22 courses for women in the community resulting in 122 women completing training in functional skills, community interpreting and classroom assistants

. The numbers of women passing through this organisation is quite impressive and the local skills base is improved as a result but it is too early to determine numbers of women securing employment at this stage.



**Access to Work** project is run by local group Fishwick Rangers who have a track record of working predominately with young people. This project hosts a Work Club open to all age ranges at their centre and works proactively with local employers to match their skills needs with local people. The project makes innovative use of planning applications to determine potential employment opportunities within development plans. To date 4 local employers have been engaged, weekly work club sessions and 2 jobs fairs have resulted in 16 people securing interviews.

**Financial Inclusion Outcome:** More people accessing financial services: affordable credit, savings and enterprise opportunities

**Loans for Local People** project is facilitated by Lancashire Community Finance (LCF), which has developed a bespoke loan product for residents in our area. It offers low cost loans, business support and financial education and to date 29 residents (from 39 applications) have accessed more affordable credit through this scheme with those not meeting the threshold receiving advice and guidance. This project was over-subscribed and LCF used some of its own capital reserves to meet demand. The Partnership has now agreed a further investment of £10,000 to meet demand – it is expected that this project will then be self-financing to the end of the programme as loans are repaid.



**Social and Recreational Activities Outcome:** More people of all ages engaged in social activities, learning new skills



**Big Local Arts** is a project being delivered by Artfull, a community arts company in partnership with Cacophany Arkestra musicians. We have asked Artfull to target two population groups in the first year based upon community data that emerged as part of our review. The project has engaged with partners and residents in planning activities and has pulled together a programme to meet interest and need. The first of these events have just launched with 14 people taking part in a photography course, 5 on a textile course and 4 residents have joined a music group, which will perform at community events in the summer and at a city festival in September. Further creative and arts based opportunities are planned with a target of 40 local residents taking part. The group has just submitted its first self-generated funding bid (Awards for All) to continue the work initially funded by

FOFS.

**Green Space and Safe Play Outcome:** Local people developing and managing a green space

Although this project has not yet got off the ground, considerable work has been undertaken this year and it will get off to a flying start in year two. Partnership members have been in detailed discussions with Preston City Council and Emmaus (the LTO for this project) and have put in considerable effort to achieve the transfer of land ownership on behalf of the local community. A consultation event was held on Pauls Pad on how the community wanted the space to be used. The Partnership has also been involved in addressing anti-social behaviour on Waverley Park and a significant funding bid for this park was unfortunately unsuccessful – work will continue into year two. FOFS also has its own community garden which it established before Big Local and it uses this resource effectively in engaging adults and children in developing green spaces.



Pauls Pad

## Addressing Image and Environmental Features Outcome: Improved image and housing offer in private sector

Whilst the planned housing improvement project has been deferred to year two, the Partnership has recently extended its relationship with Lancashire Community Finance to look at an interest free loan to improve shopfronts in its residential area. This was in direct response to continuing community concern about the visual impact of the area they live in and is planned to complement the City Deal investment.

## WHAT HAVE YOU LEARNT?



The partnership undertook a number of exercises as part of the review. We looked at local demographic and quantitative data that threw up a few surprises; mental health and infant mortality are significant issues, the largest population group by age is under 4 and the area is a lot more diverse than we fully appreciated in terms of more recent immigration. This directly influenced the focus of our social activities project in the first year.

We completed a comprehensive survey to self-assess our performance as a partnership, progress so far and lessons learned and held a workshop to discuss the results. The majority of the partnership members are local residents who regularly attend meetings and feel that they make useful contributions. However, a small number don't believe that the decision making is entirely inclusive.

This has led us to reviewing our existing constitution and training needs. This is on-going and is one of our action points going forward.

In general, we are happy with the projects currently being delivered but this area has been one of our biggest learning curves. We have learnt the importance of being clear about project monitoring, reporting and financial evidence needs from the outset. We will be working much more closely with the LTO when we are developing any projects in the future.

We recognise that we need to be more representative of our diverse community and the need to recruit more residents to our partnership and sub-groups. We will develop a community events programme in partnership with Artfull.

We need to be realistic about our future plans and in developing new project ideas. We lost our community development support this year due to public sector funding reviews and will be exploring alternative options. Some of the issues and project ideas emerging from our review include ideas around community cohesion events, the need for new members and small projects that could all be facilitated by a small grants / quick wins scheme.

## HAVE YOU PROGRESSED ON YOUR VISION AND PRIORITIES? DO YOU NEED TO REFRESH THEM?

As reported earlier in this document, we have made mixed levels of progress on our priorities and we aim to give more focus to the two areas where we have made the least progress: Green Space and Play and Image and Environment.

We are still committed to our vision and the existing priorities and will continuously review their relevance as we move through year two, planning activities and potential projects.

We do know from our review outcomes that we need to:

- Recruit new members and volunteers
- Better represent the diversity of our local community
- Establish a partnership development plan improving members' confidence / contributions / decision making
- Explore options for community development and admin support
- Work with the LTO at the project development stage to ensure monitoring needs are made clear and met
- Focus upon our flagship Green Space project at Paul's Pad
- Consider a small grants pot to facilitate community cohesion and environmental projects
- Talk to the LTO about the feasibility of a housing project in year 3 or 4
- Gather evidence and ideas to help us develop new areas of concern identified through consultation and partnership working

## HOW DOES YOUR PROGRESS RELATE TO THE ACHIEVEMENT OF THE BIG LOCAL OUTCOMES?

- **Communities better able to identify local needs and take action in response to them**

The Partnership is generally satisfied that we have made some progress here as we have learned a lot on the Big Local journey. We are all local residents and in a good position to hear about and experience local issues as they emerge. Our confidence has grown and we feel that we can respond to other local people appropriately. However, we need to continue to build our knowledge of what others are doing and how we can add value.

- **People feeling that their area is an even better place to live**

There is a definite shift in perceptions locally that aren't entirely as a result of Big Local activities and projects. The area is receiving a lot of attention and government investment and whilst there is some optimism, there is also cynicism and a 'we'll believe it when we see it' attitude. It is too early to say whether our projects are impacting upon people's views about where they live but we anticipate that through our focus on environment and green space next year, that we can develop a high profile, flagship project at Paul's Pad that will give people a boost. We also need to consider how we will measure an improvement in mood as we move forward.

- **The community making a difference to the needs it prioritises**

We are an almost exclusively resident, community led partnership, so in that respect we are doing quite well. However, it is too early in the process to be able to measure the difference we are making at this stage.

- **People having increased skills and confidence so that they can continue to identify and respond to local needs**

There were some differences of opinion around this in the partnership survey, which we will address as part of our development plan.

## **DO YOU NEED A REVISED PLAN OR EXTEND THE EXISTING ONE?**

We will not be revising our vision, priorities or plan at this stage but we will refocus upon areas of the existing plan where we are under performing: Green Space and Environment. The current active projects are part way through their first delivery year and will be rolled into year two. We will monitor and review their progress as part of our quarterly monitoring process.

## HOW DO WE KNOW THIS IS WHAT OUR COMMUNITY WANTS?

Our community consultations and contact is considerable and on-going. We have had lots of project ideas but the overall priorities and vision remain the same. We held an away-day for local residents, partnership members and partner agencies in January this year as part of our review and most attendees signed up for one or more of our sub-groups that relate to our priority themes.

This event attracted new partners in our Community Beat Manager and Sergeant from Lancashire Police, the Community Safety and Engagement Manager at Preston City Council, Business in the Community and an Environment Officer from Lancashire County Council along with our local residents and Elected Members.

With our community, we reflected upon things that had gone well for us and things that we would do differently. Moving forward we concluded the following:

### 1. The thing we most want to achieve is:

- Match funding
- Increased networking
- Neighbourhood cohesion – e.g. street party
- Support existing projects – monitor carefully
- Encourage participation – new recruits
- High profile projects/events – things that people will see
- Empty properties, build on highway scheme, improve image
- Communication e.g. Freshers Fair, using speakers of other languages

### 2. We'd like to make more progress with:

- Pauls Pad
- Understanding need to inform new projects
- Getting more residents to make a hands on contribution to projects e.g. Pauls Pad, planters project

3. The thing we want to get better at is:

- Image and reputation of area
- Promoting membership to other age groups and ethnicities
- IT skills – both partnership and wider community
- More projects that are clear about how work will be supported in to the future

4. We'd most like to learn:

- About project management
- Other services and organisations working on the themes of our plan especially health

5. The thing to stop or do differently:

- Better communication with Partnership members
- Devolve more responsibility to sub groups
- Be more self-sufficient as a Partnership

6. Ensuring that residents are leading what we do:

- Being clear about membership – review constitution
- Meet and talk to residents more often – fun day?
- More activities rather than meetings – employ someone to arrange?
- Get beneficiaries from the projects involved in other ways

In addition, lots of issues, concerns, solutions and project ideas were generated on the day, which we have merged with existing and on-going consultation results and we will use these as we develop new projects and partnerships in the coming years.

Residents and partners routinely post ideas and requests on our website and our on-line consultation survey remains open as an on-going process. This has further influenced our idea to consider a small grants scheme.

We appreciate that there is always more we can do to better communicate and encourage wider involvement. We are committed to raising our profile more by organising community events, producing newsletters and making progress on our flagship Paul's Pad project.

E-mail [fofspreston@gmail.com](mailto:fofspreston@gmail.com)

By Post  
c/o St Matthew's Mission  
Acregate Lane Preston PR1 5QQ

### **FURTHER INFORMATION**

Website: [www.friendsoffishwickandstmatthews.co.uk](http://www.friendsoffishwickandstmatthews.co.uk)

**Join our Facebook page for further updates or follow us on twitter**

<https://twitter.com/FishwickStMatts>

<https://www.facebook.com/fofspreston>