



INTRODUCTION

Our strategy is to:

- **Make Byker an estate of choice**
- **Contribute to a thriving Byker**
- **Ensure that the Byker Community Trust (BCT) community ethos is sustained**

The Thriving Byker Strategy (TBS) provides a framework for strategic partnership working. Its objectives and priorities are based on what our customers asked for and how they will impact positively on customers in the Byker Estate.

During 2023/24 the TBS has been refreshed in collaboration with BCT Committee and our strategic partners to ensure the themes remain relevant and align with their strategic priorities for the Byker Estate.

To achieve the TBS priorities and increase community activities, we work in collaboration with key strategic partners, stakeholders and our community and voluntary organisations.

Our strategic partners are:

- Newcastle City Council (NCC)
- Local Ward Councillors
- Northumbria Police
- Tyne and Wear Fire and Rescue
- Local schools in Byker
- Byker Sands Family Centre

The TBS is widely influenced by the views of customers over the following key themes:



Pride and ownership in the area



Extending our reach



Health, wellbeing and mindfulness



Community training and employment



Income maximisation



Digital connectivity



A cleaner and greener Byker



A safe place to live



Children and young people

All projects and initiatives delivered through the TBS are subject to review, to understand the potential value for money from the investment, and the positive impact on our customers in delivering the TBS.

This supplement highlights our progress during 2023/2024, delivering against our key themes and highlights some of the fantastic outcomes achieved.

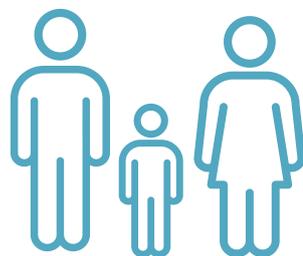
IN SUMMARY (DURING 2023/2024)

Place



34

community events held



1,343

BCT Customers engaged through these events

Customer



389

customers supported through Household Support Fund



882

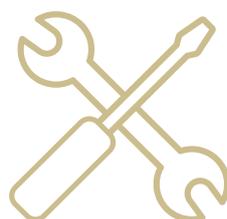
customers signed up to MyKarbon Portal

Costs



£804,253

additional money gained for customers



£2.8M

spent on improvements to our homes

£77,800

secured from NCC Household Support Fund



£60,428

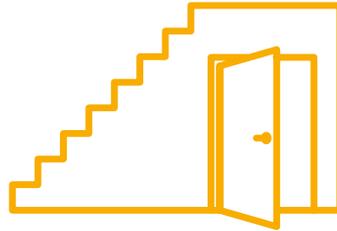
spent on community activities and programmes

Homes

This year we have installed:



60
new kitchens



61
new cloakrooms



209
new bathrooms
and showers



230
homes benefitted
from new internal
doors

Since April 2021 we have installed:



232
new kitchens



999
homes benefitted
from new internal
doors



880
bathrooms and
showers



21 customers
re-engaged with
upgrade works and
were added back
into the programme

PRIDE AND OWNERSHIP



Empowering and enabling customers and community groups to take responsibility for the estate and be proud of the area.

Byker history workshops

Pupils from Byker Primary and St. Lawrence's RC Primary schools participated in workshops to learn about the history of the Byker Estate hosted by Northern Cultural Projects.

They also created artwork for a special guest – Vernon Gracie. Vernon was one of the lead architects to work on the regeneration and rebuild of the Byker Estate and celebrated his 90th birthday whilst visiting the estate.

BCT provided Northern Cultural Projects with £500 of funding to contribute towards the costs of materials for the workshops and treats for the children.



photo credit: BBC

BBC photos

We were approached by the BBC to have photos taken of the Newcastle Quayside from our very own Byker Wall. A customer living in Tom Collins House was kind enough to let the BBC take this amazing photo from their balcony.



Byker Sands art competition

The Byker Sands Family Hub ran a competition to invite people to paint a picture with a Byker/Newcastle theme.

The prize for the winner Justina (15) was to paint their design on a large canvas in the centre with a professional artist.



Remembrance Day 2023

Staff from veterans' charity Launchpad invited Year 6 pupils from Byker Primary School and St Lawrence's RC Primary School to decorate clay poppies as part of the preparations for Remembrance Day.

BCT provided a grant of £400 through the BCT Community Partnership Fund to contribute towards the materials for the activity.

Launchpad celebrate 10 years in the Byker Estate

We celebrated Launchpad's 10-year anniversary at Avondale House, with a celebratory dinner at the Discovery Museum in Newcastle upon Tyne. The dinner, attended by 130 people including Launchpad staff, Karbon colleagues and customers and corporate partners, was very well received and guests enjoyed an evening of entertainment, and an auction and raffle to raise £6000 for the Charity.



Penny – British Empire Medal

Byker customer, Penny Walters, was awarded a British Empire Medal (BEM) in the King's New Year's Honours list in recognition of services to the Byker community, in particular for her support during Covid-19. What an amazing achievement, congratulations Penny and thank you for all your support.

Upgrade works to kitchens and bathrooms have continued throughout the estate, with customer satisfaction results sitting at:

97.4%

Transformation of the Environment



During this year we have carried out extensive consultation with our customers living in the Dunn Terrace neighbourhood to inform the development of environment designs for their neighbourhood.

Focus groups and workshops were held and attended by 89 customers to discuss plans including refuse collection locations, fencing, play areas, CCTV, landscaping and communal squares.

Following the consultation events, six customers attended a focus group and 12 attended a workshop to discuss the designs in detail, with plans shared on an online platform which customers were able to comment directly on.

Designs were then amended to incorporate our customer views, to ensure the final designs meet their aspirations for their homes and community.

After consultation the final plans for the improvement works at Dunn Terrace were submitted for planning permission and listed building consent in July 2023.

In May 2024 we secured the necessary permissions and are seeking a contractor to deliver these works. We will be updating our customers in Dunn Terrace on timescales for the roll-out of the project.

45 customers in total informed the decisions for final planning submission.

We have now moved on to the Ayton neighbourhood where we have held two customer consultations and received lots of positive feedback.

The Lighthouse Project

Work has started on the transformation of St. Michael's Church into a state-of-the-art youth and community facility.

The Lighthouse Project, funded by a £4.2 million government grant alongside other generous funders, will provide a safe and central meeting place where young people and the community can meet, alongside a reimagined worship space. The project aims to open in 2025.

Hobby rooms

We have secured £25k funding from Karbon's Place Programme to carry out external works to refurbish a boarded-up hobby room on Raby Street. RE:GEN will be carrying out the internal works as part of its social value programme to bring the room back into use as a community building and a place to host Karbon 'pop up' sessions for housing advice, employment, skills, money matters and mental health to support our customers.

Bolam Street



Newcastle City Council has approved plans to build 24 new affordable homes for rent in Byker. As part of our Community Pledge commitment to providing new homes on the estate, the development near Bolam Street will include a mix of bungalows, houses and apartments. Works start on site in 2024.

Our end of year customer feedback and satisfaction with services

Overall satisfaction with the service provided by Karbon Homes:

84.07%

Satisfaction that homes are well maintained:

87.50%

Customers very or fairly satisfied with the repairs service:

92%

Satisfaction that the landlord makes a positive contribution to their neighbourhood:

82.19%

660

Customer care visits were carried out throughout the year

Valued Customer Status



Evelyn Quinn from Whickham Gardens was the winner of the 2023 Valued Customer Status prize draw, winning **£500** worth of vouchers just before Christmas.

HEALTH, WELLBEING AND MINDFULNESS



Addressing the links between housing and health, both physical and mental. This theme will address food poverty, promote the value of a healthy lifestyle and improved physical and mental wellbeing.



Easter activities with Nourish Food

BCT provided £1,049 to Nourish Food School through the Community Partnership Fund to enable them to run some hands-on practical cookery classes for children during the Easter half term holidays. Over two classes, 20 children made hot cross buns with homemade jam and chicken tikka masala (as requested by the children!).



Byker Mutual Aid at Christmas

BCT supported Byker Mutual Aid over Christmas, delivering food items to our community, with 150 people benefitting.

Kids Kabin repair workshops

Kids Kabin hosted three bike repair workshops throughout the summer.



The Bread and Butter Thing

The Bread and Butter Thing successfully launched at Byker in 2023. The affordable food hub offers customers weekly groceries at a fraction of high street prices.

The award-winning mobile food club is open every Friday afternoon at 2pm, from the ACANE Community Centre at Raby Cross.

With £25,000 of funding from Karbon Homes, the hub is giving customers the opportunity to sign up and gain access to an average of £35 worth of items, including fresh fruit and vegetables, fridge favourites and cupboard staples, for £8.50 per week. There is no joining criteria and initial sign up is free. Around 40-50 customers per week benefit from the service.

We want to say a huge thank you to volunteers around the estate who help run the food club, making sure customers receive their shopping. Your support is greatly appreciated.

IDOS

We funded a project from IDOS Health to deliver a series of health talks at the Pantry between February and March 2024, we provided £150 for flyers to promote the talks.

Big Brew Time

The Bread and Butter Thing are now hosting "Big Brew Time" at the Byker Hub at Raby Cross, its campaign to combat social isolation and build new friendships. Customers are invited to sit and chat, as well as being provided with hot drinks and snacks before collecting their shopping.



The Byker Pantry

The Byker Pantry is a "half price shop" set up to serve people living in Byker, not only providing half price food but offering a warm and welcoming space for locals to enjoy a hot drink and access additional advice and support.

The Pantry currently has 249 members (households) with 107 members shopping monthly. Members save on average a total of £23,000 per annum (£92 per active member).

Debt counselling services are provided to members and 114 sessions have been held. Members have been supported through house cleaning, moving home, court appearances and general pastoral care.

Free Trips

394

customers were provided with meals on our free holiday trips.

Mental Health Allies

We currently have four BCT colleagues who have taken on the role as Mental Health Allies - Craig Cross, Hannah McClean, George Surrey and Jenny Johnson.

Newcastle United Foundation Partnership



£23,500

allows Newcastle United Foundation to deliver educational programmes and provide lifechanging opportunities for children in Byker

Programmes delivered were:

- Once-in-a-lifetime Matchday Experience for eight pupils from Byker Primary School and St Lawrence's RC Primary School – Newcastle United Foundation welcomed schoolchildren to St. James' Park for Newcastle United v Manchester City earlier this season. The schoolchildren kicked off their day with a fun-filled football session led by Foundation coaches at the charity's community hub, NUCASTLE, before enjoying lunch at the stadium. The children joined 52,000 supporters to cheer on the Magpies at the 2-3 thriller.
- Three children saw Newcastle United games pitchside this season, enjoying a unique ball assistant opportunity. Responsible for collecting footballs that go out of play during matches, these school children were as close to the action as it gets. Each child enjoyed their role at Premier League games and were provided with an accompanying ticket for their parent/guardian to watch them ensure play continues at the stadium.

This year, Newcastle United Foundation and Byker Community Trust's partnership:

150 children engaged in Primary Learning at Byker Primary School

150 children engaged in Primary Learning at St Lawrence Primary School

100 children engaged in Financial Maths session at Byker Primary School

- Newcastle United Foundation provided eight pairs of Newcastle United home tickets which were shared between lucky pupils at Byker Primary School and St Lawrence's RC Primary School.
- A six-week programme for primary school aged children, funded by Liontrust is helping young people build their mathematics and financial skills. Financial Maths is delivered by Foundation staff in weekly, one-hour sessions, introducing children to real life money matters using football as a way of bringing learning to life. Sessions explore problem-solving through football-based scenarios including budgeting for kit and playing equipment, managing spending and borrowing for player salaries, how to set up a bank account and more.
- Children at Byker Primary School and St Lawrence's RC Primary School have also enjoyed Newcastle United Foundation's Primary Learning programme. Primary Learning allows pupils to enjoy more physical education and helps teachers to gain knowledge, skills and confidence to teach PE.

INCOME MAXIMISATION



Providing opportunities for customers to access training and employment as well as increasing the range of financial products and services available, which will improve the economic activity of customers and the community.



RE:GEN Christmas Toy Appeal

BCT hosted a Christmas toy appeal, with RE:GEN donating **200 gifts**. BCT made referrals for **29 families**, with **63 children** receiving a toy just in time for the big day.

Tenancy Sustainment and Welfare Support

Our Tenancy Sustainment and Welfare Reform Officer secured total gains (benefit income, charity payments and Household Support Fund) of

£804,253

for our customers

Household Support Fund (HSF)



BCT identified 389 households which were successful in receiving **£200** each in additional income – a total of **£77,800** additional income to support our customers throughout the estate.

“

“Thank you very much Aneta, can't tell you how grateful I am for your help. I think the job that you do is so important, and it must be very rewarding.”

“I'd like to thank Aneta for helping with the benefits claim. She explained things clearly and I'm very grateful for all the support I have been given. She always does an amazing job.”

”

Additional Karbon support to maximise income collection

93

Food provision

4

Money Matters to Newcastle City Council

164

Grant applications

16

Employment referrals

160

Pre-tenancy checks



A CLEANER AND GREENER BYKER



Educating and enabling customers to take responsibility and support waste management improvements to ensure the results are meaningful and have a lasting impact on our community.



Skips

We have provided 12 skips, costing £4400, throughout the estate to help our customers dispose of their household waste and help keep the estate tidy.



Litter picks

BCT hold regular litter picks for customers to join in and help keep the estate tidy.

Best Summer Ever garden club

Northern Cultural Projects held a Best Summer Ever garden club. Activities included growing food and a trip to the Life Science Centre. Sessions were held for children with educational needs and 31 children took part.



Byker in Bloom

BCT delivered the annual Byker in Bloom competition in partnership with Newcastle City Council. An event to announce the winners of the competition was held at Byker Sands Family Centre and was attended by Councillor Nick Kemp, Leader of the Council and former Lord Mayor Veronica Dunn.

Kids Kabin

Kids Kabin hosted a community gardening event with Northumberland Wildlife Trust.

Partnership with NCC



BCT work in partnership with enforcement officers from NCC to issue Fixed Penalty Notices for environmental offences including fly tipping on the estate, which are of a criminal offence.

24

Fixed Penalty Notices issued for offences throughout the estate

“

I got involved as I don't think the grounds maintenance team get enough accolade and should get more praise, they are a great bunch of lads, always cheerful and hardworking.

”

**David Forest
Grounds Maintenance Inspector**

Bonfire weekend

BCT repairs operatives worked with Tyne and Wear Fire and Rescue Service to collect materials over the weekend that could be used for bonfires. We received confirmation that there was a 25% reduction in Byker on Bonfire Night compared to the previous year. A total of 1.1 tons of fly tipping was collected over the whole weekend.

Estate walkabouts

We hold monthly estate walkabouts, encouraging customers to join our housing team to get involved and share any suggestions or feedback about their neighbourhood.

Grounds Maintenance Inspectors (GMIs)



71.23%

Grounds Maintenance Inspector satisfaction score

13 customers participated in being grounds maintenance and cleaning inspectors. These roles allow customers to scrutinise and give feedback directly on the services we provide.

“

I have been doing this for 7 or 8 years, you can tell straight away they have been, they do a really good job considering size of the estate.

”

**Gordon Rushford
Grounds Maintenance Inspector**

A SAFE PLACE TO LIVE



Working with customers, the police and partners to tackle crime and the fear of crime in Byker, BCT will take a preventative approach to anti social behaviour, working in partnership through education, diversion and empowerment.



CCTV

Working closely with the police, we have replaced the majority of the external cameras across the estate, to provide better high-definition visuals and film 360 degrees. There are further plans to replace the final cameras around Raby Cross. We hope that this will help us to deter and capture incidents that both the Police and Karbon can then use to support action against perpetrators of crime including anti social behaviour and fly tipping.

Injunctions

Working in partnership with the police, we have been successful in obtaining interim injunctions against three individuals.

The injunctions prevent the individuals from entering the estate, due to repeated anti social and criminal behaviour.

Weekly patrols

G&A, our security contractor, carry out weekly patrols throughout the estate and monitor the CCTV cameras and door entry system on the Byker Wall. We are funding the installation of a new fob entry system to heighten customer safety throughout our blocks. This will overcome the challenges of managing the system and allow colleagues to effectively manage all fobs moving forward, improving security arrangements and providing peace of mind to our customers. This project will be delivered in 2024/25.

Partnership working with Northumbria Police, we have implemented:



1

Acceptable Behaviour Agreements (ABAs)

3

ABA breach meetings

7

Community protection warnings and notices

2

Injunctions

0

Closure order

0

Criminal behaviour orders

8

Notices seeking possession

4

ASB related evictions

Improving safety



Tom Collins House consultation

We held a customer consultation at Tom Collins house, giving customers from across the Dunn Terrace neighbourhood the opportunity to provide feedback on designs for new fencing, including gaps between fencing, higher fencing around the MUGA and communal spaces.

Valued customer feedback regarding their security and defensible space formed part of the planning application and listed building.

CHILDREN AND YOUNG PEOPLE



Working with partners to create opportunities for the young people of Byker to widen their educational attainment and raise aspirations. We aim to create meaningful experiences which will enhance their outlook on life and encourage them to be the best they can be.

Free Trips

Nine trips were organised for BCT customers over the half term school breaks.

Two family trips to Adventure Valley, Seaton Delaval for our **over 55 residents**.

Two family trips to Hall Hill Farm and Wallington Hall.

Washington Wetlands Centre for **over 55 residents**.

Two family trips to Holmeside Park



Byker Sands

Byker Sands supported 132 individual young people during 2023/24 who made 346 visits to the Byker Youth Hub nights.

Food was available during every session, which included planning, preparing and cooking hot meals for all attendees, plus they were supported to take food home to their families. The Youth Hub night is hosted by Street Wise, who provided the data below.

87%

of young people who attended the Byker Hub stated that overall, the help and support they received met their needs.

97%

said they received the right information, guidance or support needed

83%

said they would change their behaviour as a result of taking part in sessions

93%

would recommend a friend

96%

felt their views, opinions or worries were taken seriously

80%

felt able to reduce any risk taking activities

100%

felt listened to

95%

felt more confident and able to make positive choices for themselves

89%

felt able to assert their own wishes

AND

97%

felt their rights and confidentiality were respected

92%

felt better able to cope with any difficulties

71%

felt reduced stress, worries and/or anxiety.

Stepney Bank Stables

42 children benefitted from activities at Stepney Bank Stables funded by BCT.

The children took part in horse care, cooking and crafts.

Byker Pantry – Kings Coronation street party

BCT provided The Byker Pantry with £1000 in funding to host a street party, attended by 250 residents, to celebrate the King's Coronation. Guests were treated to fairground games, giant Jenga, crafts, food and a climbing wall.



Sports sessions

Acane hosted four weeks of activities over the summer holidays including table tennis, dance and trips to the beach, benefitting 68 children.

Northern Stage

Northern Stage hosted theatre shows on Wednesday afternoons throughout summer, including travel for customers.

Acane half-term activities

We provided funding of £650 for ACANE to provide food to young people during their activities during the February half term, the project supported a total of 53 people.



Eden

We funded an application from Eden for £150 to provide lunch and activities for 90 young people during the February half term.

XP Gateshead visit

We hosted a visit from 50 Year 9 students from XP Gateshead to help them study how the social environment can impact on the way we live our lives.



Foundation Futures

We allocated £1,000 of funding for Foundation Futures to deliver youth work session. The sessions aimed to divert young people away from anti social behaviour and crime by providing positive activities and trips away from the estate. These sessions were held between February and March 2024 for 15 young people.

Recyke Y' Bike

We provided funding to Recyke Y' Bike to host workshops, with 114 children benefitting.

Edge NE

Edge NE carried out six weeks of outreach work on the estate. They engaged with 63 young people, providing support and advice in order to prevent crime and anti social behaviour.



Christmas card competition

We held a competition with pupils from St Lawrence RC Primary School to design our annual Christmas card, with the winner receiving a prize.

EXTENDING OUR REACH



To understand our community and the people within it by identifying and extending our reach to work with underrepresented groups, ensuring everyone's voice in the community is heard.

Launchpad at Avondale House



Lord Mayor's visit

The then Lord Mayor Veronica Dunn visited Launchpad to hear about their work and support to homeless veterans.



Bell Group

Bell Group helped to transform the inside of Avondale House, with materials provided by Dulux Paint. They also delivered a two-day upskilling and volunteering course where residents were taught the basics of painting techniques to improve their skills and knowledge.

Crime Commissioner Kim McGuinness

Avondale House hosted a visit from, the then, Northumbria Police and Crime Commissioner Kim McGuinness, who was able to speak directly with residents and staff to understand the work Launchpad does to support veterans and their mental health and wellbeing.



Christmas

Launchpad staff and residents at Launchpad presented one of our customers living in Mount Pleasant with a Christmas hamper, after learning about his military career.

RE:GEN

RE:GEN purchased and donated a welcome pack to veterans, including various essentials to help them settle into their new home.

Summer Free Trip



We hosted a free trip to Washington Wetlands for over 55's customers.

Memorial bench

BCT supported our customers by funding the installation of a memorial bench at Tom Collins House.

Tom Collins House Consultation

We held a consultation about planned environmental works in the Dunn Terrace neighbourhood at Tom Collins house, to bring our older customers together to hear their views on the proposed improvements surrounding their scheme and listen to any concerns.

Byker Sands Family Centre

We provided funding for Byker Sands Family Centre cultural exchange programme.

The family centre also helps to deliver Barnardo's "Fathers and Male Carers Enhanced Service", which offers a focus on embedding Father and Male Carer inclusive practice throughout the city.

The service aims to improve support access with Fathers and Male carers through effective reach and engagement.

COMMUNITY TRAINING AND EMPLOYMENT



Working with our contractors and partners to maximise opportunities for customers and their families to access meaningful training and employment support.

Foundations for Life



Since January 2024, we have appointed a Foundations for Life Colleague dedicated to Byker.

44

customers have engaged with our training and employment services.

21

customers moved into work, education or training.

47.73%

of engaged customers move into work, education or training



In addition,

4

customers were provided wellbeing support through our mental health support pilot.

3

Byker residents were also successful starting a New Start placement with Karbon Homes.

DIGITAL CONNECTIVITY



Working to improve community access to digital services.

Social Media



Our following on social media is:



2481



1984



407



882

BCT customers are now signed up to the My Karbon Portal.



Next Steps

As we continue to delivery our Community Pledge to our customers and support Karbon's refreshed approach to Placeshaping, our next steps in offering long term growth and prosperity to our communities in Byker are:

- Progressing with the new development of 24 new homes at Bolam Street, after securing planning permission, contributing to achieve our overall target of 150 new homes.
- Continuing environmental works, delivering works on the first of 11 neighbourhoods, and consultation/designs progressing on the second.
- Exploring potential uses and improvements for various buildings throughout the estate. We commissioned architects JDDK to carry out high level feasibility studies to explore potential conversion and improvement options for the Byker Community Centre, Raby Cross and larger hobby rooms. We are now looking to further explore these recommendations to potentially inform improvement plans that will benefit our customers and wider community.
- Working with Newcastle City Council to develop pipeline projects for three land sites, to meet the housing need for the area.
- Continuing to work with Newcastle City Council to support the High Street Project.
- Work in collaboration with Newcastle City Council to develop a joint action plan to tackle the ongoing litter, waste and fly tipping challenges in Byker.
- Work in collaboration with Newcastle City Council to develop sustainable options for the decarbonisation and upgrade of the Byker District Heating System.
- Continuing to work with community and voluntary partners to deliver projects and initiatives aligned to the TBS.





Call: **0800 533 5442**

enquiries@bykerct.co.uk

www.bykercommunitytrust.org

bykercommunitytrust

@bykertrust

17 Raby Cross, Byker, Newcastle upon Tyne, NE6 2FF

BYKER
community trust

Part of **Karbon Homes**