



OUR LEGACY PLAN

update from our chair, Chris Wild

Firstly, a quick word of introduction. My name's Chris Wild. I'm a local resident and Chair of the Whitley Bay Big Local Partnership and Trustee Board. Although I'm a relatively new Chair, I wanted to reflect on and share our priorities as we come to the end of the 'Big Local Programme' and develop the basis of a sustainable future for the charity.

11 years ago Whitley Bay was chosen as one of 150 areas to receive an innovative community led grant from the National Lottery Community Fund in partnership with Local Trust. The unique selling point of the programme was that it gave the grant directly to the community, for local people to make decisions on how it should be spent. After an initial period of consultation and development, Whitley Bay Big Local launched its first three year 'plan' in what eventually became a total of ten years of programmed activity to end in 2024. Ongoing community consultation allowed us to identify different initiatives that have made Whitley Bay an even better place to live, work and visit. A great example of this is the re-establishment of Whitley Bay Carnival, which was identified as a strong priority during initial public consultation and has been a great focus of community activity and civic pride. I'm delighted to see that the tenth carnival in the modern era will take place at the end of the month.

As the National Big Local programme enters its final stages, we are encouraged to consider what the legacy will be for our communities. For some Big Locals, this will be the end of the road and their legacy will be the impact of the projects they've delivered over the ten-year period. Others, like Whitley Bay have chosen to continue community led approaches to support their areas for another ten years or more. Our 'legacy' will be achieved through the achievement of financial and environmental sustainability at the 'Whitley Bay Hub', which we bought in 2021.



OUR LEGACY PLAN

Without ongoing funding from the Big Local programme, achieving sustainability is going to be challenging and will require big changes in approach. We're already starting to see big changes to the fabric of the building, with solar panels, efficient lighting and heating systems already installed and work on the ground floor well under way. When we're finished in July our doors will open more frequently, for longer and at different times of the day & week. We will be developing different activities with broad appeal. We want to see more people visiting the building, taking part in activities and by doing so, contributing to our future sustainability.

But even with big change, our vision remains the same. We will continue to offer a range of activities that support vulnerable people. We hope that in the fullness of time, the building becomes a true 'place for everyone'. For that to happen, we need you to come, engage, support and help lead the charity into the future.

Yours sincerely,

Chris Wild

Whitley Bay Big Local Chair

