

# Regent's Park

## 2008-10 Ward Budget Monitoring Report

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### Summary:

Ward Members identified 7 key priorities for how to allocate their ward budget from April 2008 – March 2010.

A total of 28 projects were allocated funding over the 2 years to meet these priorities.

The key outputs and achievements of each project funded have been highlighted under the priority headings in this document. Any problems experienced and lessons to be learnt have also been highlighted.

Ward Members were given £200,000 ward budget funding to allocate over the 2 year pilot programme.

£187,816.96 of this budget was allocated, however following under-spend on some of the projects, the final actual expenditure for the 2 year period was £142,203.83. The remaining unspent budget has been returned to the councils reserves.

### Key Highlights of Projects Funded:

#### **Priority 1. Every Older Person Matters – providing additional activities that encourage older residents to remain socially, physically and mentally active:**

- **Tea dances for older residents in Regent's Park**  
**(St John's Wood Church in partnership with Neighbourcare);**  
**Total ward budget funding: £855**
  - 3 tea parties took place – First on October 5<sup>th</sup> 2008, the second on 14<sup>th</sup> February 2009 and the third on 18<sup>th</sup> April 2009
  - Approximately 40 people attended each tea dance
  - Afternoon tea and live music was provided at each event and the feedback from attendees was very positive.
  - The events were delivered under budget due to a number of donations in-kind, in addition to the venue hire and administration costs provided free of charge by the church.
  - Additional funding was allocated to the same provider to continue the tea parties into 2009-10. Unfortunately due to staff shortages, the provider was unable to continue with the delivery.
- **Weekly Silver Surfer sessions at St John's Wood Library**  
**WCC Library Services; Total ward budget funding 08-09: £3,000,**  
**additional £3,400 to extend service into 09-10**
  - Over 65's were offered free computer courses. Sessions were delivered in blocks of six weeks at 2 hours a week in St John's Wood library.

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- During the first year of the project, 63 places were available and 55 people completed the 6 week course.
- Due to popularity of the course, the Library team built up a long waiting list. Councillors therefore allocated additional funding to enable courses to run again from September 2009 – March 2010.
- A further 9 seniors online courses (6 Beginner courses and 3 intermediate level) were delivered from September to March in conjunction with Abbey Road ward.
- 72 free places were available during this period to both residents of Abbey Road and Regent's Park. 64 places on the course were filled, with 48 people completed the full 6 week course.
- The courses have been extremely popular and well received. Some feedback from residents include: 'I was bought a machine for Christmas, but didn't even know how to turn it on. The tutor has taught me so much, I feel a dab hand now'
- Staff have also commented that Seniors Online is bringing learners back into the library to take full advantage of all library services. Learners are meeting new people from the area and consider the library as a social and learning hub of the community.
- There continues to be a waiting list for the courses, particularly now for more advanced courses as people are keen to develop their new skills.
- A celebration tea party was held on 17th April in the library to celebrate the achievement of those completing the course.
- Some small problems were experience during the delivery of the project during 09-10, including a 3 week teaching gap over Christmas and the poor weather in January preventing a number of people from attending the course. As a result there were lower attendance and completion rates during the winter period.

- **Weekly coffee mornings**

***Open Age; Total ward budget funding 08-09: £8,000, additional £4,731.18 to extend service into 09-10***

- 31 coffee mornings were run between 20<sup>th</sup> February and 2<sup>nd</sup> October 2009
- The coffee club took place on Friday mornings between 10.30am and 12pm at the Liberal Jewish Synagogue on St John's Wood Road.
- Throughout the initial stage of the project attendance at the coffee club steadily increased, with an average weekly attendance of 9 in the first few months of the project, increasing to 12.5 during the later months.
- Additional funding was allocated in September 09, to allow the coffee club to continue to the end of March 2010.
- A further 23 weekly coffee clubs were delivered between 9<sup>th</sup> October and 26<sup>th</sup> March 2010 with an average attendance of 10 people a week. Attendance was slightly down on the target figures due to the poor weather over the winter months.
- Feedback from attendees was very positive throughout the duration of the funding.
- Future plans: A weekly coffee morning was also funded for Abbey Road residents, and Open Age have invited the two groups to join together and run their own coffee club. The manager of Barabara Brosnan Court has offered residents the opportunity to continue using the facilities there free of charge, and a number of attendees from both clubs have shown interest in continuing the weekly meetings.

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- **Additional Adult Education classes**

- **Westminster Adult Education Service (WAES);**

- **Total ward budget funding: £11,614**

- A range of adult education classes were funded between January and July 2009 including:
  - Complementary therapies – 2 course over 10 weeks at Pinner Court and Ada Court.
  - Visual art classes – 20 week course held at Wharncliffe Gardens
  - Silk Painting – 20 week course held at the New Village Club
  - Beginners computing course – two sessions at Dora House and one at St Johns Wood Library
  - Yoga Lattes – 20 week course
  - Mosaics – 12 week course at Ada Court
  - Ballroom tea dance at Dora House
- During the course of the project over 110 residents participated in one of the courses or attended the tea dance.
- All residents taking part were over the age of 50, with 60% over the age of 70.
- The feedback to all the courses was extremely positive with a positive social impact on elderly residents as well as educational.

- **Arts project with older residents in sheltered housing**

- **Westminster Arts; Total ward budget funding: £15,000**

- Westminster Arts delivered a successful participatory arts project with a core group of 7 residents (aged 60-90 yrs old) of Dora House. 15 residents were initially involved in the project.
- The participatory arts project was based around the theme of fairy tales and incorporated creative writing, poetry, photography and movement and dance. Participants stories were pulled together into a final publication 'A pocketful of Magic' and a DVD which was shown at the final showcase event.
- There was a total of 24 half day sessions delivered throughout the project including:
  - 16 participatory workshop sessions
  - 2 off-site excursions to the Wallace Collection on the 7<sup>th</sup> July 2009 and Peter Pan at Kensington Gardens on the 21<sup>st</sup> July 2009.
  - 6 one-on-one sessions.
- In addition to this, Westminster Arts held a progress event at the Dora House Christmas Party on the 17<sup>th</sup> December 2009, as well as a final project showcase on the 24<sup>th</sup> March 2010. Both events were attended by approximately 50 people.
- The feedback from the participants was extremely positive, for example: '*I learnt a lot on this project. The sessions were different every week. Where else do you get such variety and entertainment? I miss it! As far as I am concerned, it could have gone on forever.*'

- **Installation of new benches in Regent's Park**

- **Royal Parks; Total ward budget funding: £5,259.64**

- 10 new 'catchcart' style benches were installed in the northern parkland area of the Park during July 2009. A brass plaque was fixed to each of these benches and the feedback to date has been very positive.
- 3 new stump seats were installed in the park during October 2009.

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- Between January – March 2010, a further 4 new stump seats and 13 replacement stump seats were installed in the park.
  - All timber was sourced as green oak from sustainable woodland at Richmond Park. Being a natural, strong, resilient timber, no treatment was required to the benches and these should last for a number of years.
- **Bridge classes**  
**WAES; Total ward budget funding: £150**
    - A weekly Bridge club was suggested by residents at one of the Area Forums in 2009.. Despite extensive advertising and the delivery of 3 taster sessions in December 2009, there was insufficient take up to make the classes feasible.
    - The unspent funds originally allocated to the project were subsequently reallocated to art activities.
- **Continuation of painting and drawing classes (started under the adult education project funded in 08—09)**  
**WAES; Total ward budget funding: £2,250**
    - The project was delivered over two terms (September - December 2009 and January - March 2010); a 2 hour class was held weekly at the Wharncliffe Gardens community hall.
    - There was a showcase/exhibition at the end of March 2010, at St John's Wood Library, where all the work was mounted and displayed.
    - Over 15 residents attended the classes with 12 attending on a regular basis. Some of the feedback received included "art class in the highlight of my week", "my work is constantly improving" and a "truly inspirational tutor".

## **Priority 2. Every Child Matters - providing extra-curricular educational and recreational activities and services for young people**

- **Various youth activities**  
**WCC Youth Service via Crypt Youth Club; Total ward budget funding: £8,056.50**
  - The Crypt Youth Club supports a large number of young people in the ward to enjoy a wide range of activities.
  - To support the work of the club, funding was provided to enable staff to attend a staff conference from 13<sup>th</sup>-15<sup>th</sup> March 2009 in Birmingham. 15 staff attended and found the conference very helpful to their work.
  - Two trips to the country were organised for young members of the club. The first taking place from 8-10<sup>th</sup> August 2008 at Maidencroft Farm in Glastonbury. The second took place from 15<sup>th</sup>-17<sup>th</sup> August 2008 at Acorn Adventure in the West Midlands. At least 13 people attended each trip.
  - From the 20<sup>th</sup> July- 7<sup>th</sup> August 2009 the Crypt delivered daily workshops for young people in script writing, filming, editing and production of DVDs.
  - The workshops were very popular with up to 17 people attending daily.
  - A DVD titled 'Guilty by Association' was produced at the end of the project.
- **Increased sports activities in Regent's Park**  
**Royal Parks; Total ward budget funding: £510.64**
  - A wide range of sports activities were offered to young people at the Hub in Regent's Park during February Half term and Easter 2009.

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- Queen's Park Rangers football club delivered football coaching courses during both holiday periods, offering free places to 6 -14 year olds from Regent's Park.
  - 12 young people from Regents Park took part in the February half term course and 3 attended the one in the Easter holidays.
  - A general Easter activity programme was also offered at the Hub (covering activities such as dodgeball, cricket, rounders, quizzes, and athletics) for children aged 8-12. Although 73 young people attended the activities over the holiday period, only 2 young people were from the Regents Park ward.
  - Due to a condition of the funding being that free places were only available to Regent's Park residents, the small fraction of the funding claimed reflects the lower take up from local residents than expected.
- **Extended School service at Barrow Hill School**  
**WCC Extended Schools; Total ward budget funding: £7,500**
    - Barrow Hill School was opened for a range of after school activities during the spring and summer terms 2009.
    - A range of activities were offered including orchestra, dance, football and drama.
    - Attendance figures are not currently available however these will be supplied shortly.
- **A new minibus for the Crypt Youth Club**  
**WCC Transportation on behalf of Crypt Youth Club;**  
**Total ward budget funding: £12,160**
    - The Crypt Youth Club's minibus was over 17 years old, and a more modern bus was required in order to comply with the new Central London Low Emission Zone.
    - A range of buses were researched to establish one that met the necessary requirements.
    - A 12 month old, LDV Maxus, 15 seater minibus was purchased under budget in March 2010.
    - The bus will be of great benefit to the young people attending the local youth club.
- **Outreach cricket activities at Lords (Joint funded with Abbey Road)**  
**(Capital Kids Cricket, via the Sports Unit); Total ward budget funding: £2,660**
    - The course was delivered over a 10 week period, between 6<sup>th</sup> January and 12<sup>th</sup> March 2010. The activities took place twice weekly, at Lord's Cricket Ground indoor school on Wednesday and Friday evenings between 5pm and 6 pm.
    - Up to 29 young people (aged 12-16) took part in the weekly Friday evening sessions
    - 16 young people (aged 8-12) took part in the weekly Wednesday evening sessions
    - A community cricket festival was held at Lord's cricket ground on Tuesday 16<sup>th</sup> March from 10-4pm, with 100 young people attending the day. The participants were given a tour of Lord's cricket ground as well being taught a variety of different cricket skills. The day ended with games.
    - Following the end of the project, participants were signposted to Regents Park Cricket Club, and a large number of the young people attending, said they would be joining the club.

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### **Priority 3. Community Safety**

- **Improvements to lighting in Scott Ellis Gardens and Wharncliffe Gardens Estate City West Homes; Total ward budget funding: £10,760**

- Lighting improvements requested in order to reduce the fear of crime in these areas, and reduce anti-social behaviour.
- Ward budget funding was used to install new lighting in the following locations:
  - The side of each of the 11 blocks in Scott Ellis Gardens
  - Two lights at the south-west end of the road facing into the two currently unlit alcoves next to the wall that runs along Hamilton Close.
  - Two new lights at the entrance to Scott Ellis Gardens, on each side of the road on Bronwen Court, blocks 2 and 3.
  - New lighting at Pennyford Court in the covered parking area and corridor between the car park and flats.
  - New lighting around Birch Vale Court - the covered corridor adjacent to the Court and the disused playground area on the side of the canal.
- The work was completed in January 2009.
- City West Homes will be responsible for the ongoing maintenance of the lighting.

### **Priority 4. Increasing Recycling Rates in the Ward:**

- **Ward-wide door-to-door recycling promotional campaign**

**WCC Recycling Team; Total ward budget funding: £9,690**

- Engagement activity took place between June and August 2009.
- The purpose of the scheme was to inform residents of the current service, provide literature and free promotional items to encourage participation in the recycling service and also to record resident's participation in and opinions.
- Of the 1,109 street level properties in Regents Park visited, door-stepping staff spoke to a total of **357** residents. This represents a contact rate of 32.2%.
- Of the 90 Mansion blocks located in the Regents Park Ward door-stepping staff spoke to porters at 71 blocks. This represents a contact rate of 79%. Door-stepping staff spoke to a total of **974** Mansion block residents.
- During the campaign all residents were asked the question "are you currently recycling". Residents in Mansion blocks were less likely to carry out any form of recycling at all (30%) when compared to residents in street level properties (12%). As a result of feedback gained on the doorstep this can be attributed to Mansion Blocks often being used as second homes and barriers being put in place by porters in certain blocks.
- The key barriers to residents recycling identified across both Street level properties and mansion blocks, was that people were unclear about the scheme (i.e. what could and could not be recycled). This issue was directly addressed by the door-knocking staff who were able to advise residents of the scheme directly.

### **Priority 5. 'Making Life Fun'**

- **Culture for All: Group trips to cultural attractions across the City**

**WAES; Total ward budget funding: £6,203**

- WAES delivered a programme of group trips, incorporating guided tours and talks, to cultural attractions across the capital for local residents throughout the early months of 2010.

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- In total 6 trips were delivered to various attractions including the Opera, Ballet, William Morris Gallery, Henry Moore Exhibition and 2 theatre trips.
  - A total of 138 people attended the trips.
  - The trips were very popular and feedback was very positive, for example: *'There should be more things like this; it was informative sociable and fun!'*
  - The provider found that the exceptionally bad weather over the winter months stopped people from signing up to attend the trips. This meant most of the trips were delivered in March when the weather had improved slightly. The provider also found that due to the free nature of the trips, some people who booked to attend did not turn up on the day, leaving the place unfilled.
- **4 Day Sports Leaders UK Level 2 Award in Community Sports Leadership  
WCC Sports Unit; Total ward budget funding: £2,000**
    - The Level 2 Award in Community Sports Leadership is a nationally recognised qualification that enables successful candidates to independently lead small groups of people in sport and recreational activities.
    - A four day course was run from the 15<sup>th</sup> – 20<sup>th</sup> February 2010 for residents over the age of 16 to achieve the level 2 award.
    - The course was well attended with 10 local residents completing the course and achieving the level 2 award. 9 of those attending also completed the emergency first aid qualification.
    - Feedback from those attending was very positive, including: *'this course has inspired me to find a job in sports and recognise the value of volunteering within my community'*.
- **Historical Film Project  
St Marylebone Society; Total ward budget funding: £1,000**
    - A contribution of £1,000 was made to a larger pot of £10,000 raised for this project; the funding covered the professional editing of one short film including the costs of the music copyright.
    - The film was 5 minutes long and concerned history of the Marylebone area; it was produced using archive footage from WW2.
    - The film was shown at The Old Aeroworks on 25th March 2010 along with four other short films
- **Reallocation of unspent funds for Bridge classes to family art activities  
WAES; Total ward budget funding: £1,992**
    - A proportion of the funds were used to fund a life model to attend the weekly visual art class also funded by the ward budget. Attendees of the art class had requested the opportunity to draw from a life model and due to the popularity five 2 hour sessions were funded during February and March 2010.
    - The remaining funds were used to deliver 2 family art workshops during March 2010 to engage children and families to work together.
    - The first workshop was held at the Village Club on the Barrow Hill Estate on Saturday 27<sup>th</sup> March from 2-5.30pm. Activities on offer included gift box making, making recycled toys, and making play dough.
    - The second workshop was held at Barrow Hill Junior School on Tuesday 30<sup>th</sup> March from 2.30-4.30pm. Activities on offer included gift box making and windmill hat making.
    - 51 parents and their children attended the two events, though a number of the families came from neighbouring wards.

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- 21 of those attending lived in the Regents Park ward.
  - Feedback from the workshops was very positive with families requesting more such sessions. Barrow Hill School enjoyed being involved in the workshops and hope to deliver more workshops in the future.
- **Festive lighting on St John's Wood High Street – December 2009 (Joint funded with Abbey Road)**  
**(WCC Transerv and contractor Abbraxus);**  
**Total ward budget funding: £6,945.62**
    - Planning permission was sought for the installation of Christmas lights on St Johns Wood High Street in November 2009.
    - Planning permission was granted on the 3<sup>rd</sup> December 2009, and lights were installed on 26 lamp columns the following day.
    - The majority of the lights were installed along St John's Wood High Street, however some also extended round onto Circus Road and St John's Wood Terrace.
    - Lights came on from 3pm each afternoon until 6<sup>th</sup> January 2010.

### **Priority 6. The Environment**

- **Improvements to existing canalside lighting under railway bridge over Regent's Canal**  
**British Waterways; Total ward budget funding: £9,200**
  - The existing footpath lighting along the Lisson wide moorings and under the Park Road Bridge was not performing efficiently. Lights were frequently out of order due to power loss.
  - British Waterways, responsible for the lighting under the Bridge, hired a contractor to rectify the problem through maintenance, repair and modification of the existing lighting in March 2010.
- **Intergenerational community gardening project (Joint funded with Abbey Road)**  
**(Groundwork); Total ward budget funding: £3,872.25**
  - Delivery of the project was affected by some delays in the commissioning process, and the provider being let down by some initial positive contact with community groups. Final outputs are subsequently lower than targeted at the start of the project. This is reflected in the reduced cost of the project.
  - 2 main partners were keen to commit to the project: Quintin Kynaston School in Abbey Road and Dora House residents in Regent's Park.
  - A total of 9 gardening sessions were delivered between February and March 2010 with the 2 groups working together on gardening projects at Dora House.
  - 38 young people were involved in the gardening sessions and 20 older people.
  - A film, showcasing the project has been produced and will be available shortly.

### **Priority 7. Economic Recovery**

- **Teach young people a skill: vocational taster courses for young residents**  
**City of Westminster College; Total ward budget funding: £0**
  - Project unsuccessful
  - Despite wide advertising there was no take up from young people for the courses. No funding was claimed.

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- **Weekly debt advice sessions for Regent's Park residents**

**WCC Adult Services, via Westminster CAB;**

**Total ward budget funding: £5,489**

- Westminster Citizens Advice provided two drop in sessions weekly for a period of 10 weeks from January – March 2010.
- Sessions were held at the St John's Wood Library on Tuesdays and City West Homes Estate Office in Wellington Road on Wednesdays.
- Extensive marketing was undertaken to increase awareness of the project, from leafleting, posters and flyers and a door knocking campaign, however the level of take up was not what had been envisaged.
- Only 9 residents attended the drop in service, however the benefit of this service to those clients was very positive.
- Debt presented by all clients seen by the Regents Park Surgery totalled approximately £94,437. The adviser took the clients through the Money Advice Trust Debt Packs in order to help them to manage their debts. The adviser was able to stop Bailiff action on one case, debt of £2,630, and the debt was recalled by the creditor. A further three clients were referred to the Specialist Debt team at Westminster CAB Service for applications for Debt Relief Orders; a client with £7,000 debt was subsequently approved for the DRO.

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