



Community Plan

October 2021 - September 2024



CONTENTS

Welcome & Chair's introduction 3
William Morris Big Local area map

The Plan 2018 - 2021
• What We Did 4
• Our Impact (Social) 5
• Our Impact (Physical)

WMBL New Plan 2021-2024
• Vision, Legacy, Values 6
• Our Themes & Projects 7 - 9
• Young People 10
• Outreach
• Urban By Nature 11
• Partner Organisations 12
• Budgets 13 - 15

Get Involved 16
Contact Us



"The past is not dead, it is living in us, and will be alive in the future which we are now helping to make" – William Morris

WELCOME

by Chrys Christy, WMBL Chair

It is with great pleasure and excitement that WMBL is presenting a new 3 year plan. This has been a truly collaborative plan led by William Morris residents and builds on our work from the last 2 plans.

Over the last 3 years, we have grown our collaborative work and have made many exciting partnerships with Unltd, East End Trades Guild, Big Creative Academy as well as many grassroots local organisations.

Our new plan sees us concentrating on growing these partnerships and empowering more residents to get involved in volunteering, setting up their own projects and becoming more connected within the community with a view to creating a sustainable WMBL legacy beyond 2024.

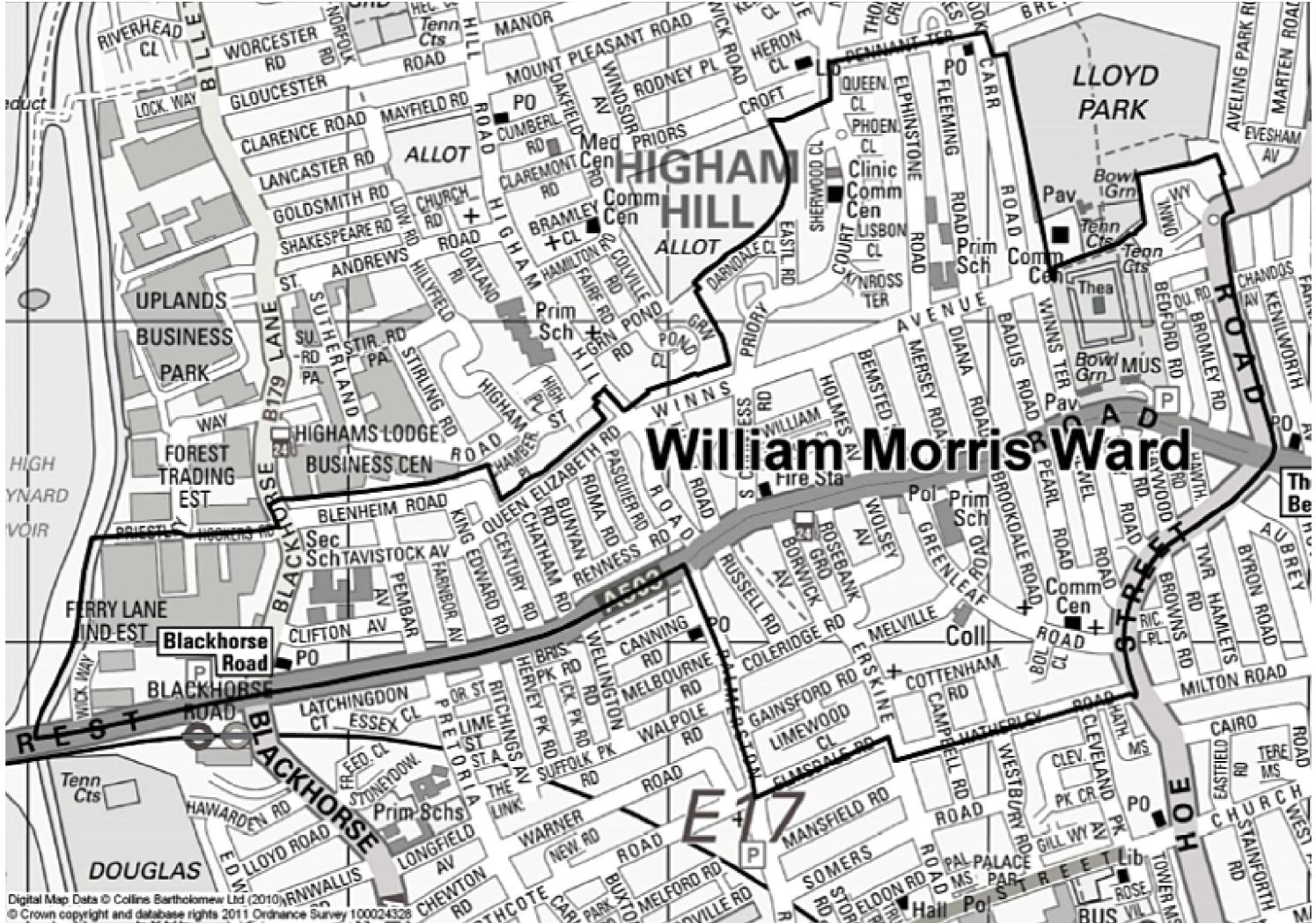
The WMBL Partnership is very excited to be at the beginning of this new phase and is looking forward to be able to accomplish all that we have set out.



Chrys (right) speaking with local residents at the Lloyd Park Picnic in summer 2019

THE WILLIAM MORRIS BIG LOCAL AREA

Situated in Walthamstow, East London, our Big Local area aligns with the William Morris Ward. This covers Blackhorse Lane (west) to Bell Corner (east) and Priory Court (north) to the Erskine Road area (south).



THE 2018 - 2021 PLAN : WHAT WE DID

Over the course of 2018–2021 we undertook an ambitious community plan that included 25 projects across three themes as well as community outreach and events. 17 of the 25 projects were undertaken and included grant schemes, pilot projects and partnerships with local organisations. When the coronavirus pandemic struck in March 2020 we had to suspend many of our community activities and switched our focus to supporting the community-led response to the pandemic.



Project highlights from our 2018 - 2021 plan include:

- 3 x Community Chest grant schemes (funding a total of 43 local activities and projects from arts and crafts to sports clubs and street parties)
- Established a Green Grants scheme encouraging community led enhancements to neglected outdoor spaces (17 projects in total)
- Created a ward-wide residents association which continues to now operate autonomously and addresses neighbourhood issues including safety, crime, pollution, housing developments and traffic.
- Piloted a front gardens and balcony project
- Piloted a Tool Lending Library which has grown from strength to strength in 2021 with now over 100 members
- Invested £150,000 in a community theatre with a full package of financial and social returns on investment that will provide a core foundation for the work we do under the new plan
- Invested in 14 social entrepreneurs through our partnership work with Unltd that have gone on to develop their own social enterprises
- Established resident working groups for our themes to allow more hands on participation from residents in WMBL projects
- Doubled the size of our quarterly newsletter and distributed them to all 4,500 properties in the area



THE 2018 - 2021 PLAN : OUR IMPACT

SOCIAL IMPACT

Overall the impact of WMBL is best captured through the response to the question asked in our May 2021 community consultation ahead of putting together this new plan. The question was "*What do you think has been the biggest impact of WMBL?*"

40% of people expressed that the community feels more connected with more going on and more opportunities for people to get to know each other. A further 21% of people said that the community is now more involved in making things happen in the area. One respondent in particular said that they now "*realise as local residents we can make positive changes.*"

The responses cited numerous WMBL projects that people know about which shows the many different ways in which people have connected and got involved with WMBL.

Our grassroots led approach through community events, seed funding, regular newsletters and outreach has meant we have been reaching the 17,000 residents in our area. Of those reached, 2500+ residents have been actively involved in WMBL whether as participants in projects or attending our events and activities, with 200+ volunteers helping make those happen.

There are also signs of the immeasurable impact that has been achieved when listening to the anecdotal evidence we receive. Our staff members and Partnership members are often contacted having heard about us saying "*I was told WMBL knows what's going on in the area and can help make things happen.*"

A resident on Bedford Road completing our consultation said, "*It certainly contributed to me feeling much more connected to my neighbours following a small £500 grant for the street - we now do regular play streets, have a Whatsapp group and help each other out.*"

PHYSICAL IMPACT

We enhanced 11 corners of our Big Local area through:

- 8 x greening projects in streets, estates, outside community buildings with residents and volunteers taking the lead and continuing to maintain them
- 2 x sports area improvements (basketball court and skate park improvements in Lloyd Park)
- a mural on our Tool Lending Library that has enhanced the space and helped make it a community hub
- championing improvements to Palmerston Junction and working with the council and residents to co-design the improvements. Creation of the "The Palmerston Planters" residents group to look after them



NEW PLAN : VISION

Every good plan starts with a vision. Here's ours.

"Our vision is to create a happy, healthy and more connected community for all who live, work and play in the William Morris area. We aim to bring together the diverse ambitions, skills and energy from individuals, groups and organisations around us to help make the area an even better place to be."

WMBL LEGACY

When Big Local finishes, what will it leave behind?

What will be the WMBL legacy?

By the end of 2024 local residents will be able to see and feel the William Morris Big Local legacy. Big Local investment will enhance outdoor spaces while building a dynamic, energised community and commercial areas thriving with entrepreneurship and social enterprise. People will feel more connected to their neighbours and proud of where they live.



VALUES

These four values are at the heart of the way we work, communicate and run William Morris Big Local

Inclusivity

People from all ages, abilities and backgrounds are able to participate and benefit from WMBL



Community Focus

We will continue to grow the ways in which all residents can be involved in WMBL and seek views from across the community in making decisions



Integrity

We will always be respectful, open and honest in all we do so that everyone has trust and confidence in WMBL



Sustainable Change

We will build in ways to make positive change financially and environmentally sustainable



THEME 1 - STRENGTHENING THE COMMUNITY



We will continue to create opportunities that bring people together, encourage community activism, and unite our diverse community.

1. Community Grants

Two funding rounds per year will take place to support and nurture grassroots activities. These grants will bring people together, encourage multicultural projects and develop people's skills, talents and confidence.

2. Hyper Local Events

We have found there to be more value in putting on small local events rather than large central ones. A calendar of events will be put together by the Community Theme Group (which anyone can join) and will be delivered in partnership with local groups, venues and organisations.

3. Digital Inclusion Work

We want to play our part in helping everyone get digitally connected. We will:

- continue our laptop donation scheme and get the technology to those who don't have it
- work with organisations to provide more digital workshops that are useful and supportive to those needing help
- work on getting free wifi access points in the area and affordable ways for people to access the internet

4. Capacity Building

It's a really tough time to be a small organisation right now. Working in partnership with supporting agencies we want to help small groups and organisations in the area to develop, get funding and be able to sustain the activities they do.

Expected Outcomes from the Community Theme

- People feel more connected to the area and to their neighbours and therefore safer, happier and prouder of where they live
- More residents are involved and empowered in shaping what goes on locally
- Noticeable improvements in people's physical and mental wellbeing
- More people are digitally connected
- Local knowledge and skills within the community are enhanced and the ability to continue responding to local need is maintained

Half of residents completing our survey said the biggest impact of WMBL so far is that they feel more connected to the area and more involved in the community

THEME 2 - IMPROVING OUTDOOR SPACES



Outdoor spaces are vital to people's mental and physical wellbeing. We will continue with projects to enhance them and ensure everyone can benefit from their outdoor spaces.

1. Tool Lending Library

Following a successful pilot phase the Tool Library will be established as a firm feature of the community during this plan and will be developed as a sustainable project by 2024. The Tool Library will be able to host workshops and volunteer programmes as well as continue to offer affordable membership for the borrowing of gardening and DIY tools.

2. Green Grants

Our Green grants will help residents enhance neighbourhoods and improve neglected spaces whether through making Living Benches, planting trees or community planting and growing projects.

3. Greening the Grey

We aim to create at least one Pocket Park and one Parklet during this plan and have already begun conversations with the council over two possible sites. We will further develop our relationship with the council to broker more greenery into the local area and bring residents' voices to the forefront of public realm planning and design.

4. Events and Workshops

As with our community theme events, we will focus on hyper-local events and workshops and will be led by the community in deciding what, when and where. We will work in partnership with residents, gardening groups and local organisations to put on a really interesting and useful programme of activities that enhances outdoor spaces.

Expected Outcomes from the Open Spaces Theme

- The Tool Library becomes a permanent addition to the local landscape with a sustainable business model
- Noticeable improvements in people's physical and mental wellbeing
- Local knowledge and skills within the community are enhanced and the ability to carry on community-led outdoor space improvements is maintained
- The community is able to better shape and influence local authority public realm work
- The William Morris ward is greener and wilder

96% of residents completing our survey agreed that improving outdoor spaces remains as important as ever.

THEME 3 SUPPORTING THE LOCAL ECONOMY



We live in uncertain times with the effects of Brexit and the Covid 19 pandemic yet to be fully realised. The community can play an important part in supporting a strong local economy and we have identified the following areas that WMBL can focus on.

1. Employability Programme & Enterprise Hub

The pathways into work are as challenging as ever for young people as is finding rewarding work experience. We have learned that there is willingness from local independent businesses to provide placements for young people to develop their skills. WMBL will work with employability services and organisations to establish a scheme that can match people to placements. We will help establish an enterprise hub in partnership with Big Creative Academy at Cafe Works that will provide the foundation for this work.

2. Visibility Campaign for independent local businesses

Feedback from residents and local businesses has echoed the desire for stronger visibility of local independent businesses to help them thrive and be a firm part of the community. We will undertake a visibility raising campaign that promotes a strong "Why Local" message as well as a programme of initiatives that encourages the whole community to "Spend Local".

3. Enterprise Seed Grants to champion a Green Recovery

Our seed grants have worked well for the Community and Open Spaces themes and we will establish an equivalent for independent businesses. The purpose of the grants will be to help businesses try out new approaches that can help them be more environmentally and socially responsive or tap into the potential of new green markets.

4. Partnership work with East End Trade Guild

Following a successful six month pilot partnership with EETG we will extend the partnership for a least a further six months into delivery phase. The core of this partnership will support our Employability programme and Visibility campaign but also strengthen the relationship between businesses and the wider community for mutual gain.

Expected Outcomes from the Local Economy Theme

- Residents are benefiting from an increase in work-related opportunities with increased skills, confidence and pathways to employment
- Local independent businesses are better connected to business support-networks and services and better equipped to face economic challenges
- Local independent businesses are more visible and engaged in the community, creating mutual benefit and an economic boost for independent shops
- Innovative seed grants have led to finding new ways for businesses to embrace a green recovery

93% of residents completing our survey agreed that supporting the local economy is as important as ever.

YOUNG PEOPLE

25% of local residents are under 18 years old. So that they can be a core part of WMBL and benefit from it just as much as the adult population we will:

- Give them their own youth budget and provide support to enable them to put on their own events and activities
- Work with two age groups, 10-14 year olds and 15+, and develop a meaningful programme of activities for them
- Set aside money to pay for sessional youth workers to enable all this to happen
- Build partnerships with local schools and colleges to maximise the offer of extra curricular activities available in the area
- Integrate young people into all of the projects happening through our 3 main themes



COMMUNICATION & OUTREACH

We have conducted an analysis on our communication and outreach to date. This has looked at our strengths, weaknesses and communication goals and we have renewed our communication strategy and plan that our Project Engagement Officer will help deliver.

Our communication goals are:

- Reach everyone in the WMBL area and let people know who we are
- Communicate the ways in which local residents, organisations, community groups and other stakeholders can join up with us and be part of the WMBL movement
- Increase resident involvement in WMBL initiatives, in particular those from ethnic minorities
- Reduce social isolation by connecting people in our community
- Strengthen our community spirit and show how we can empower residents to do more
- Give a voice to our young residents
- Celebrate our successes, as this shows what we can achieve and helps us fundraise for future projects
- To relate the above messages to all our stakeholders in the William Morris Ward through a diverse range of communication channels that are clear and consistent

BIG LOCAL
NEWS

URBAN BY NATURE

After being chosen as a Creative Civic Change area, Urban by Nature was created in 2018 out of a partnership between William Morris Big Local and Wood Street Walls. The mission of the project is to grow creative connections across neighbourhoods and use the vibrant community to create projects that respond to local challenges. Urban by Nature has an exciting programme that builds on WMBL's core themes and projects and brings in creative design elements and fresh approaches to the work we do.

Some of the collaborations for the year ahead include:

William Morris Design Line

Following a successful launch in 2020 the "Design Line" takes inspiration from William Morris's ethos of "Art for All", connecting two areas of Walthamstow using public art and design to activate the main roads of Wood Street, all the way down Forest Road to Blackhorse Road. The route is punctuated with community workshops and hands-on ways for the community to shape the fabric of their local area.



Community partnership with Walthamstow FC



A strong partnership with local non-league club Walthamstow FC is being developed with multiple community projects lined up including mascot design, flag and banner making workshops, football training for kids and charity matches.

Creative Design that brings people together

Walthamstow is blessed with a diverse range of creative people and organisations. Working in partnership with these many creatives we will be rolling out a number of projects in outdoor and indoor spaces that bring people together and strengthens the community. One example is "The Bridge", designed by local residents Sam Griffiths and Karl Toomey. It's a simple but effective concept, creating a small table top from reclaimed scaffold boards that sits on a shared front wall and encourages neighbours to get to know each other.



For more information about Creative Civic Change check out:
www.localtrust.org.uk/other-programmes/creative-civic-change/



1. Creative Collaboration & Youth Participation



Locus of Walthamstow has been a hub of UBN activity from music mentoring and magazine making to art workshops and exhibitions

2. Public Space & Outdoor Activities



The Staircase of Dreams was a bold takeover of the Waltham Forest College steps and designed by The Fandango Kid through workshops with young people in the area who created the theme. It was installed by Wood Street Walls for the 2020 Design Line.

3. Community Wellbeing & Mental Health



The Useful & Beautiful project by artist Vasu Sellamuthu invited residents to write reflections on the subject of home. People's poems and musings were turned into storyboxes and exhibited at the William Morris Gallery.

PARTNER ORGANISATIONS

Working in partnership with local organisations is fundamental to the way we can realise the projects and aspirations of this plan. Since WMBL began we have worked with over 30 different partners, from small community groups like Priory Court Lunch Club to national organisations such as Unltd. Each partnership offers the chance to work with the right people with the right skills, knowledge and shared aims to deliver WMBL projects to their fullest potential. Our Project Lead helps develop and manage our partnerships with oversight and direction provided by the WMBL Partnership.

Our core partners for the 2021 – 2024 Plan are:

Big Creative Academy (bigcreative.education) is a further education college based in the William Morris Ward offering a range of creative courses for 16-19 year olds across East London. Our office is based in their newly built campus which boasts a theatre, dance studio and sound studios as well as flexible indoor and outdoor spaces for community projects. This partnership follows WMBL's investment to equip the theatre into a state of the art community facility and is built on a shared vision to have a community offer of activities and opportunities for the benefit of local residents.



East End Trades Guild (eastendtradesguild.org.uk) is a membership organisation that builds the collective strength and voice of small-scale enterprise to act together for the common good of local neighbourhoods. Their membership includes over 340 manufacturers, cafes, independent shops, creative freelancers, social enterprises, charities and many more vibrant businesses. They are a key partner in our *Supporting Local Economy Theme*.



Forest Recycling Project (frpuk.org) is a local Waltham Forest charity that promotes a greener, more inclusive local community. They will continue to be our delivery partner for the Tool Lending Library as well as working on community workshops and events related to nature, growing and outdoor spaces.



Wood Street Walls (woodstreetwalls.co.uk) is an organisation that brings outdoor spaces to life with street art and is passionate about building relationships between artists and the local community and making art accessible. They have been an important partner ever since WMBL worked with them on the William Morris mural in 2016 and continue to help us unlock the potential of the creative community to do social good.



Other key partners include:

St James Street Big Local – our neighbouring Big Local with mutual aims for supporting the local economy and providing more opportunities for young people to benefit from and shape their local area
The Blair Academy has been a great champion of WMBL by helping at events, hosting dance workshops and advancing our community engagement and outreach to younger residents.

Waltham Forest Housing is an important partner in making things happen at Priory Court from outdoor space improvements and community engagement to the advancement of activities at Priory Court Community Centre.



BUDGETS

The following is our budget for the three themes and our resources and communications needed to deliver the programme.

These figures represent the remaining allocation of WMBL's funding. Despite a healthy looking £450k total budget we recognise that in order to realise the full potential of our plans and provide long term sustainability, external fund raising will be key. Our Project Lead will be tasked with bringing in additional funding, something that has already begun in 2021 with £19.5k being brought in for the Blackhorse Roundel Mosaic project. The Project Lead will work alongside the Chair and a fundraising lead on the Partnership to ensure we succeed.

The budget will be monitored monthly and reviewed every three months by the Partnership.



OVERALL BUDGET

Community	£ 63,000
Open Spaces	£ 64,500
Local Economy	£ 63,500
Communication	£ 30,100
Resources	£ 230,985
Total	£ 452,085

Community Theme Budget

Community Theme Project	Year 1	Year 2	Year 3	Total
Community Chest Grants	£15,000	£15,000	£10,000	£40,000
Digital Inclusion Work	£0	£6,000	£6,000	£12,000
Community Events	£3,000	£3,000	£3,000	£9,000
Marketing for Community Theme	£1,000	£500	£500	£2,000
Capacity Building	Staff Time	Staff Time	Staff Time	£0
TOTAL				£63,000

BUDGETS

Outdoor Spaces Theme Budget

Open Space Themed Project	Year 1	Year 2	Year 3	Total
Tool Lending Library	£12,500	£8,500	£5,000	£26,000
NEW Green Grants	£10,000	£10,000	£5,000	£25,000
Pocket Parks (development)	£5,000	funding bids	funding bids	£5,000
Parklets (pilots & development)	£5,000	funding bids	funding bids	£5,000
Green Benches	<i>(Through Green Grants)</i>			£0
Events and Workshops	£0	£1,000	£1,000	£2,000
Marketing for Open Spaces Theme	£500	£500	£500	£1,500
TOTAL				£64,500

Local Economy Theme Budget

Local Economy Theme Project	Year 1	Year 2	Year 3	Total Budget
Employability Programme and Creation of Enterprise Hub at Cafe Works	£5,000	£10,000	£10,000	£25,000
Visibility Raising for Independent Businesses	£4,000	£4,000	£4,000	£12,000
Green Economy	<i>Through Seed Grants (below)</i>			£0
Enterprise Seed Grants	£7,000	£7,000	£7,000	£21,000
Marketing for Enterprise Theme	£1,000	£500	£500	£2,000
Community Organiser Role	£3,500	£0	£0	£3,500
TOTAL				£63,500

Communications Budget

Communication Work	Year 1	Year 2	Year 3	Total Budget
Diversity & Inclusion Communications	Staff	Staff	Staff	£0
WMBL Merchandise	£2,000	£1,000	£500	£3,500
Newsletters x 4 a year	£4,000	£4,000	£4,000	£12,000
Events	£3,000	£3,000	£2,000	£8,000
Posters, Flyers and marketing for Core WMBL messaging	£500	£500	£500	£1,500
Website update and maintenance	£2,000	£500	£500	£3,000
Outreach / Event attendance	£400	£400	£400	£1,200
Social media	£100	£100	£100	£300
Comms Tools & Software	£200	£200	£200	£600
TOTAL				£30,100

Resources Budget

Resource Costs	Year 1	Year 2	Year 3 (11 months)	TOTAL
Staff - Project Lead 28hrs a week (inclusive of on-costs)	£33,000	£33,000	£30,250	£96,250
Staff - Project Engagement Officer 28hrs a week (inclusive of all on-costs)	£24,000	£24,000	£21,984	£69,984
Staff - Youth Worker Sessional Staff (2 sessional workers working 5hrs per week on youth activites and events)	£10,000	£10,000	£4,580	£24,580
Youth Project Budget (activites and events costs)	£10,000	£10,000	£4,580	£24,580
Office Equipment - Stationery	£500	£500	£250	£1,250
Office Equipment - Contingency for replacement laptops, phone etc	£750	£750	£500	£2,000
Meetings Costs - Room Hire, refreshments etc	£500	£500	£500	£1,500
Office Rent	£0	£0	£0	£0
Training (Staff & Partnership)	£2,000	£2,000	£1,000	£5,000
Volunteer Expenses	£1,000	£1,000	£500	£2,500
Telephone / Internet	£150	£150	£150	£450
Professional Fees and additional LTO fees (legal advice, expert advice)	£1,000	£1,000	£891	£2,891
Total				£230,985

GETTING INVOLVED

Big Local is 100% resident-led and there are many ways that people can get involved and help make the area better.

- Ad Hoc volunteering. e.g. events, fun days, hands on activities, leaflet distribution
- Help with specific projects: e.g. Tool Lending library, Games Club, College Lunches, our newsletter, our website and social media
- Join a Theme Group. Theme Groups help move our projects forward for Strengthening the Community, Improving Outdoor Spaces and Supporting the Local Economy
- Join fellow residents on the Partnership. The Partnership steers the work we do, makes key strategic decisions and has overall responsibility for the success of WMBL.



CONTACT US

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