



Vincent Square

2008-10 Ward Budget Monitoring Report

Councillors: Danny Chalkley, Duncan Sandys, Steve Summers

Summary

Ward Members identified 5 priorities to allocate their ward budget from April 2008-March 2010.

A total of 11 of projects were funded over the two years in the Vincent Square ward. The key outputs/achievements of each project funded have been highlighted under the priority headings in this document.

Ward Members were given £200,000 ward budget funding to allocate over the two year pilot programme. £196,045.61 of this budget was allocated, with the remaining budget being returned to the council's reserves.

Key Highlights of Projects Funded

Priority: Improving Provision of Activities for Children and Young People

Kickboxing Classes for Young People

Provider: Westminster Muslim Welfare Trust

Total ward budget funding: £9,370

- Ward budget funding was used to deliver 30 kick-boxing/martial arts classes to children and young people aged between 6 and 19 from Vincent Square ward. By the end of the sessions 23 young people were at yellow belt level or above. One participant said: "I feel more confident and energetic after attending the classes" and a parent commented: "My children used to loiter around estates during weekends, but the kick boxing classes have now helped them utilise their time more effectively."
- In addition, a summer trip to Thorpe Park was funded for 144 Vincent Square residents. The families enjoyed the trip immensely as it gave them an opportunity to get to know other members of the community. One participant said "I could not have afforded going to this trip with my family unless it was subsidised by the council."
- Finally, ward budget funding allowed a celebration of the 38th Independence Day of Bangladesh with a cultural event. There were two singers, two tobla (drum) players, one harmonium player (similar to pianist) and one dancer. They presented Bengali songs and traditional Bengali dances during the event. One participant said: "I enjoyed the cultural event as it was a great way to socialise with the whole community" and another said "The performances by the singers and dancers were excellent."

Priority: Supporting Education, Training, Careers and Employment Advice for Young People

Education, Training, Career and Employment Advice for Young People

Provider: Westminster Bangladeshi Association

Total ward budget funding: £8,717



- This project provided practical advice and support on careers, training, education and employment to young people between the ages of 13 to 20, with particular focus on difficult to reach and disadvantaged young people within the SW1 community.
- Two 2-hour advice sessions per week were held over the course of the project except in the last quarter when it was decided to discontinue the Tuesday session and extend the Wednesday session from 2 hours to 4 hours as the Wednesday session was much more popular, providing assistance with cv's and job-hunting and offering free computer, printer and internet access.
- 78 young people engaged with the project (the target was 60) and feedback was very good: comments included "Thanks for the help WBA, I am really enjoying my first part-time job" and "The advice and help with preparing for my interview made the difference in me getting my job".

Media Training Programme for Young People

Provider: Point Blank

Total ward budget funding: £30,967.65

- This project aimed to encourage young people aged 14 to 19 to remain in education and training, gain ICT skills, interpersonal skills, numeracy and literacy skills and confidence by giving them the opportunity to complete courses in exciting new media activities.
- Two taster sessions were held to allow the young people determine their interests. Following these, two blocks of three 10-week courses were held in subjects such as graffiti art, music production and DJ skills. The target was for 75 young people to attend the courses (15 at each) and the final attendance figure was 76.



- The project's aim was that 45 young people would achieve OCN accreditation but this figure was ultimately only 10. The reasons for this were that some participants were too young (the minimum age for accreditation is 14) and some could not fulfil the attendance requirement of 75% due to other commitments at the club.
- Feedback from the participants included: "I learnt a lot and it was fun" and "it was good, high-class equipment".

Priority: Community Safety

City Inspector

Provider: Street Management

Total ward budget funding: £44,000 (£13,000 plus an extension of £31,000)

- This funding provided a uniformed City Inspector within the ward between 7.00am and 10.00pm Monday to Sunday for the period of one year.
- Regular monitoring reports were provided and gave details of the work done. This included work with rough sleepers and street drinkers around the Cathedral Piazza, along with the Police Homeless Unit (and Veolia, to keep the area clean). Other examples are assisting with the identification of sites for new litter bins and monitoring Vincent Square for dog fouling on a daily basis, distributing dog fouling bags to dog owners, reminding them that it is also important placing the bags in the bin after using them.
- An anti-graffiti project in the perimeter wall around Hide Tower in Chapter Street/Esterbrooke Street/Hide Place was finished. The wall was painted over three Wednesdays; many local residents came during the painting sections to offer thanks for the job that was being done. The job was an excellent team work involving Civic Watch, Community Payback, City Inspectors, City Guardians and Veolia.

Before



After



Repairs to Door-Entry Systems at Millbank Estate

Provider: Millbank Estate Management Organisation

Total ward budget funding: £9,219.92

- The project funded repairs to the door entry systems on at Millbank Estate, in order to bring them up to good working order and therefore improve the security of Vincent Square residents who live in the estate.
- A survey of the properties was carried out in June 2009 and in total, 37 needed a repair to the door locking system.
- Repairs were carried out and completed by November 2009.

Priority: Supporting Older People

Trips for Older People and Families

Provider: Westminster Adult Education Service

Total ward budget funding: £5,319

- Ward budget funding was used to put on a trip for older people and a trip for families for ward residents, to improve health and wellbeing and promote community cohesion.
- A trip to Eltham Palace took place in March 2010 which 37 older people attended. The target was 50 older people, and 50 did sign up for the trip, but due to poor weather conditions the drop out rate was high. WAES have stated that they would like to run future trips for older people in the summer. However, the feedback from the trip was very good, comment including “appreciated the day trip paid for, also very friendly company and interesting venue” and “well organised , cheerful at all times, safe driving , good company, very nice venue, enjoyable day all round”.
- A family trip to Thorpe Park took place in March 2010, which 99 residents went on. Demand was high, with around 200 people wishing to attend, so participants were chosen by lottery. Feedback was excellent, with comments such as “it was the best trip of my life” and “these trips are great and should be arranged more often”.

Computer Classes for Older People

Provider: Westminster Bangladeshi Association

Total ward budget funding: £2,544.11

- The WBA ran eight weeks worth of two 2-hour sessions per week (to allow for separate sessions for men and women) aimed at older ward residents. This was 1 week less than the original target of 9 weeks.
- The sessions were attended by 8 men and 7 women, which hit the target of 7-10 participants for each class. As well as members from the Bangladeshi community, the sessions attracted interest from others who were also encouraged to attend. Topics covered started with turning the computer on and off and using the keyboard and mouse through to Microsoft Office, especially Word, the internet and email.
- Participants spoke highly of the courses with comments such as “thank you for your best support to help me learn IT” and “I am very happy with the lessons”. A regular attendee of the women’s session recently wrote a letter to the council regarding to her housing situation which was seen as a big accomplishment and a member of the men’s session is able to bid for houses from his home computer after becoming familiar with the procedure.



Breakfast Clubs for Older People

Provider: In-Deep

Total ward budget funding: £1,191.93

- Funding was allocated to pay for the weekly breakfast club for older people at Gretra Hall, Vincent Street, for 12 weeks between January and March 2010. The target was for 25 to 30 older people to attend each breakfast and on average, 28 people attended each breakfast.
- Funding provided the food for the breakfast but also allowed for the purchase of new breakfast equipment such as pans, toasters, plates and cups to replace old equipment and cater for growing needs.
- The project was free to older people and was successful in tackling the social exclusion often experienced by older people. Comments included “a great way to meet others” and “a beautiful breakfast”.

Millbank Estate Intergenerational Local History Project

Provider: Millbank Estate Management Organisation

Total ward budget funding: £9,666

- This project aimed to encourage local residents to participate in bringing local history to life by creating a history of the lives of people of all ages and of the area as a whole.
- Ten day’s training at the Young Film Academy for 10 people (a mix of children and adults) was funded in skills such as interviewing, filming, editing and post-production for people involved in the project. A DVD containing a video story of the area is in production and a CD of the memories and knowledge of those interviewed will also be produced.
- A launch exhibition was held on Monday 29 March 2010 where first official screening of the film ‘A History of Millbank Estate’, a short documentary made by children of Millbank Primary School, was showed.



Priority: Improvements to the Public Realm in Vincent Square

Improvements to Vincent Square

Provider: Transportation Commissioning

Total ward budget funding: £19,050

- To support the bi-centenary celebrations for Vincent Square, ward budget funding was used to support two elements of improvements to the square, the installation of benches and tree planting in the square and on Hatherley Street.



- To facilitate the tree planting in Hatherley Street, the pavement was built out into the carriageway. A mature Liquidambar (Sweet Gum) tree was planted at the end of the street and once the soil has settled around the new tree in prior to finishing off the tree pit with resin-bonded gravel.
- In addition, 3 Cherry trees were planted on Elverton Street and two Plane trees were planted on Greycoat Street.
- Two benches have been installed in the area. One has been situated outside Westminster Kingsway College, facing across the Square and the second has been situated on Hatherley Street.

Design Brief for Cathedral Piazza and Wilcox Place

Provider: Built Environment

Total ward budget funding: £50,000

- The ward budget funded the development of design briefs for Westminster Cathedral Piazza as per the action plan adopted by the Council in July 2009.
- A concept design for the Piazza is now being produced that will be consulted upon with local stakeholders, to show how the space could be developed to enhance its use as a calm, ecclesiastical space that is safe for people to use and can be enjoyed by everyone. The brief will be used to run a design competition through the Royal Institute of British Architects for both the Cathedral Piazza and for Wilcox Place.
- The final brief is not yet available but will be obtained as soon as it is completed.

Installation of a Plaque in Vincent Square

Provider: Vincent Square Residents' Association

Total ward budget funding: £6,000

- Ward budget funding had paid for the design work and maquette undertaken for this plaque, to commemorate the bicentenary of the founding of Vincent Square.
- The sculptor Karen Newman was commissioned to produce the bicentenary commemorative wall plaque from terracotta or bronze and it will be sited at the corner of 56 Vincent Square. The design contains a sculptured relief of the head of Dean William Vincent and the proposed text reads: "Vincent Square is named after William Vincent, once Headmaster of Westminster School. In 1810, to protect the school playing fields, he arranged for 10 acres of Tothill Fields to be marked out by a ploughman."
- Work is underway and photographs will be obtained once the work is completed.

Anne Yates, Neighbourhood Officer
020 7641 4754
ayates@westminster.gov.uk