

Summary

Fit Together is the project led by Childrens Quarter and delivered cooperatively by community groups, schools and local organisations in Birmingham and North Solihull that will mean:

500 disabled children will achieve something new for themselves in 2024

Building on our existing inclusive summer activities for children and young people, Fit Together will enable 500 additional children who are on waiting lists to take part. That includes 150 children with complex needs who need extra care.

Through a programme of arts and cultural enrichment led by local artists, technology and craft workers, Fit Together will work with existing CQ projects to ensure:

3000 vulnerable and disabled young people will tell their story through art

Young people from the most deprived areas will give their view alongside perspectives from disabled and vulnerable children across Birmingham and North Solihull.

Fit Together training and development will mean that:

More than 200 volunteers, staff and parents will have their skills upgraded

in essential skills taught in ways that are relevant to community provision. We will make space for peer-learning skill-sharing and cooperative working at a Get Together event in June 2024 bringing together hundreds of volunteers, parents and staff with public policy makers and commissioners.

Our Common Wealth is the title we've given to a community event which will showcase the arts, achievements, stories and perspectives of SEND and vulnerable children. As well as reminding ourselves of the connection to the Games (and the links many of our families and communities have with Commonwealth countries), we mean children and young people are, literally, our common wealth. Supporting them to do better is a cooperative endeavour. In Birmingham and North Solihull 1 in 4 citizens is under 18: compare that to the London boroughs where families can no longer afford to live - making the capital increasingly a city without children. Fit Together, in contrast, demonstrates that:

Our City will Celebrate its Children

In early November we will draw together children, families, community groups and the wider public including decision makers in the public sector, business and charity to celebrate and see what Birmingham and North Solihull's SEND and vulnerable children have achieved through Fit Together.

We have another purpose besides supporting children and young people: we want to show how community groups and local organisations can cooperate in practice to deliver public policy in care and health and regeneration. That's important not just for children and families, but also for older people, for mental health, for issues affecting disabled people and for the future prosperity of our neighbourhoods.

We will show how community groups cooperate to make City life better

Finally, Fit Together will match the £291,000 ask from the Commonwealth Inclusive Communities Fund with around £350,000 other grant funding. We estimate local partners match delivery funding pound for pound with local donations, small business support, gifts-in-kind and volunteer time. Which makes Fit Together a:

£1m match-up for SEND kids in Brum

It will make quite an impact in 2024; but the key thing is that Fit Together will go on working beyond the end of December. The improvements and developments in cooperative capacity; the training and development of our people; the wellbeing ways of working and new connections with funders, commissioners and policy-makers will strengthen community action to support SEND children and families in future.