

Case study: community cohesion team

What did we do?

Community cohesion is an important part of building good community relations. We identified that some areas in Kirklees had lower levels of community cohesion and higher levels of tension than others. The potential for this situation to worsen locally was increased by international events. We saw the need to increase levels of awareness and understanding and build strong and positive relationships amongst people from different backgrounds in Kirklees. We wanted to create a stronger sense of belonging and a common vision for all communities.

Over three years ago we developed a community cohesion action plan. This was a practical programme which delivered a wide range of projects, activities and initiatives to bring communities together as well as developing tools for ensuring that mainstream services work better to have a positive effect on community relations.

A team of specialist community cohesion project officers have been appointed to drive forward cohesion work across all our localities and communities.

What difference did we make

Kirklees has avoided major disturbances and problems between communities despite experiencing a number of events over the past two years which may have been expected to provide a high risk of community tension.

The team has been able to forge better links across all sectors and improve connectivity and communication between them. Partnership working has resulted in an array of joint projects which are being delivered within communities.

Initiatives include:

- School twinning programmes
- A Belonging to Dewsbury programme
- Media training sessions for community representatives
- Community arts festivals to help people share what they have in common and value diversity
- An intergenerational mobile technology share.
- Mosque Open Day supported by community development workers.
- Women's twinning event
- Interfaith friendship group
- Over 30 cross-community activities at a local level



Shaping our future Together
Kirklees community cohesion strategy