



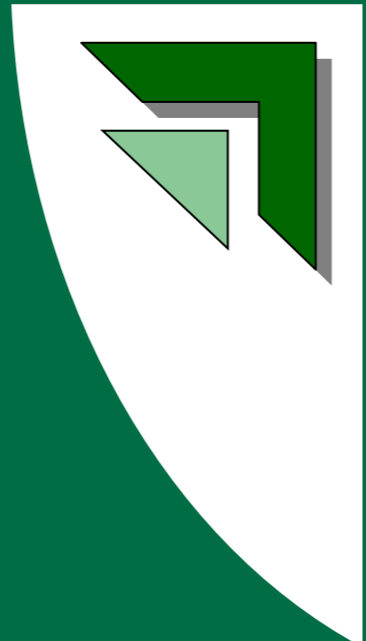
COMMUNITY ACTION NORTHUMBERLAND

COMMUNITY ACTION NORTHUMBERLAND

REGISTERED CHARITY NUMBER 224798

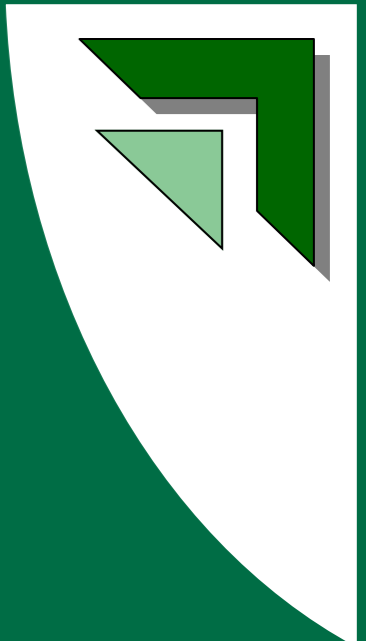


A member of the
Community Action Network
Supporting voluntary action
and communities
throughout Northumberland



ANNUAL REPORT

2010 / 2011



About Us ...

April 2010 - March 2011

Community Action Northumberland (CAN), previously known as the Community Council of Northumberland, is an unincorporated voluntary association, established for general charitable purposes in 1951.

It is a registered charity (No.224798) which serves as a voluntary and community sector (VCS) infrastructure body to support and develop community groups, charities and voluntary bodies throughout the county of Northumberland.

Community Action
Northumberland



CAN is both a Rural Community Council (RCC) and a Council of Voluntary Service (CVS).

Constitutionally, CAN is a body whose members are drawn from the major local voluntary and statutory organisations, the chief officers of public bodies, and individual Associate Members.

The full Council meets twice a year and elects, on a 3 year rolling basis, an Executive Committee of 15 members, who are the charity's trustees.

CAN owns one piece of property:

Tower Buildings in Morpeth, of which the holding trustee is the Official Custodian for Charities. Other properties are occupied on leases or licences.

In accordance with our Performance Management system, we review our Business Plan every year, on a rolling 3-year basis. The Plan defines our governance, roles, strategic priorities, and the broad deployment of our resources. Greater detail of our activities and intended outcomes are specified in our annual Action Plan which accompanies the Business Plan.

The current business plan covers the 3-year period April 2010 to March 2013



For reasons of brevity, this annual report contains only a financial summary. These summarised accounts may not contain sufficient information to allow for a full understanding of the financial affairs of the charity. For further information, the Trustees' Annual Report and Financial Statements should be consulted, these are available from our Morpeth Office, on request.

How you can help ...

Community Action Northumberland exists through the goodwill and participation of a large number of individuals, groups and organisations. We have a well-established reputation, which we have built for almost the last sixty years. If you are attracted by what we do, and would like to help us further, one or more of the following possibilities should be of interest:

If you are an individual, you can apply to become an Associate Member. Associate Members receive our regular newsletter CAN News and electronic CANNY News, participate in our periodic meetings and other activities, and keep us in touch with life around the county. Three places on our Executive Committee are reserved for Associate Members. There is no subscription fee. Instead, Associate Members are invited to make a personal contribution to CAN, if they so wish.

If you are a group, agency or business, you can make a financial contribution. We are supported by hundreds of contributions each year. These donations not only contribute to our income: they also demonstrate to Government and other large funders the strength of local support for our work. We are a registered charity, (no. 224798), and taxpaying businesses and individuals are able to make tax efficient donations to us.

If you have other things which you can offer to community groups (e.g. a specialist skill, on a voluntary basis, or resources such as free or cheap materials or transport), please let us know so that we can pass this offer to groups for their benefit.

Donate via www.justtextgiving.co.uk - by mobile phone. Text CANN01 and either 1, 2, 3, 4, 5 or 10 to 70070. (the number is the value of your donation in £). The text message is free and the value of your donation will be deducted from your credit or added to your next bill. You can add Gift Aid to your donation by responding to the return text.

For more information, or to discuss ways in which you would like to help, please contact HQ at **Tower Buildings, 9 Oldgate, Morpeth, Northumberland, NE61 1PY**

HEADQUARTERS:	Tel: 01670 517178 Email: info@ca-north.org.uk	Fax: 01670 511400 Website: www.ca-north.org.uk
David Francis:	Director	Email: davidfrancis@ca-north.org.uk
Louise Currie:	Community initiatives Officer	Email: louisecurrie@ca-north.org.uk
Finance:	Carol Megson Margaret Tweddell	Email: carolmegson@ca-north.org.uk Email: margarettweddell@ca-north.org.uk
Administration:	Sue Andrew	Email: sueandrew@ca-north.org.uk
ALNWICK :	The Centre, 27 Fenkle Street, Alnwick, NE66 1HW Marc Johnson - Community Development Officer Tel: 01665 605540 Email: marcjohnson@ca-north.org.uk	
BERWICK	Berwick Voluntary Forum, 5 Tweed Street, Berwick upon Tweed. TD15 1NG Christine Nicholls - Community Development Officer Tel: 01289 304141 Email: christinenicholls@ca-north.org.uk	
HEXHAM	Hexham Community Centre, Gilesgate, Hexham, NE46 3NP Melanie Hall - Community Development Officer Tel: 01434 607871 Email: melaniehall@ca-north.org.uk	

Thanks and acknowledgements...

Local people, groups, trusts, businesses and parish councils make important contributions to us - whether in money, expertise or volunteer time - which adds to the substantial grant-aid which we receive from a number of public bodies. Almost all of the services which we offer to voluntary and community groups is available free-of-charge as a result, it is particularly warming to note the donations which we receive from such a diversity of sources, even from some of the smallest and least-wealthy of groups. We also appreciate the help which comes from some large and strategic supporters, even though at times we are (constructively, we hope) challenging and seeking to change their policies and practices on behalf of communities and voluntary bodies.

Particular thanks are due to:

- ▶ Our major strategic funders, including the Big Lottery, the County Council, Capacity Builders, and DEFRA (via ACRE's Rural Community Action Network contract).
- ▶ The professional advisory services of the County Council, arranged through our Honorary Treasurer, Steven Mason, which include financial management advice and purchasing.
- ▶ Our members and trustees, who put in so much time for no recompense to the running of our organisation and activities
- ▶ Our 'specialist volunteers', including Norman Dunn (organisational development) and John Nixon (surveyor, for community buildings and Alan Chapman (accountant/treasurer—Hexham area)
- ▶ Those bodies who have given us the free use of premises for our events, including the County Council, Natural England and various village halls/community buildings
- ▶ Grant-making bodies: not only those such as Vinson, Rothley, Knott and Joicey which have supported us year after year, but also those which have made exceptional efforts to ensure the success of particular projects, such as the Community Foundation serving Tyne & Wear and Northumberland
- ▶ Our colleagues in ACRE (Action with Communities in Rural England), the Rural Community Action Network and in neighbouring councils of voluntary service, who form part of our mutual support network
- ▶ The groups, voluntary bodies, public authorities and agencies who continue to respond to and co-operate enthusiastically in our activities and work.



The year in headlines

Meet The Funders ...

Morpeth Town Hall, Bellingham Town Hall and Berwick Rugby Club opened their doors to 107 voluntary and community groups from across rural Northumberland who came to get valuable one-to-one advice from a range of funders in summer 2010.. and ...at a **first ever joint Northumberland Funding event** for VCS groups covering the whole of the county, organised by CAN; Wansbeck CVS and CVA Blyth Valley in March 2011, eighty four groups got personal, invaluable advice on potential funding for their projects.....



Almost 180 voluntary and community sector groups and organisations were supported by CAN last year....
... with issues ranging from setting up new groups, legal status, governing documents, policies and procedures; project development; funding advice, information, guidance and support with funding applications; monitoring and evaluation; accounting and reporting, financial administration and management

Five Village Halls in Northumberland were awarded Hallmark 1 status last year. Hallmark is a quality standard scheme for the management of community buildings/village halls and is awarded at three different stages of accreditation. Beadnell WI Hall, Longhorsley Village Hall, Middleton and Todridge Village Hall, Ovingham Reading Room and the Jubilee Institute in Rothbury were the award winners!.

Netherton Memorial Hall was awarded £9,300 from COMMA to carry out small scale energy efficiency measures, reduce the risk of flood damage, reduce dust and noise entering

Twenty village hall treasurers mastered BOSS training in less than 2 hours; walking away with computer software that produces annual statements of accounts, periodic reports, income and expenditure and everything charity law requires in annual accounting

Crookham, south of Berwick, may only have a population of just over 1,000 but it punches above its weight when it comes to local community activity! Crookham Village Hall, Crookham Art Club and Crookham Cuckoos were all successful in securing Grassroots funding for their organisations - being awarded over £7,000 in total.

Wooler Young Peoples Association, with the help of CAN to understand and complete an application to the Big Lottery's Reaching Communities Programme, has been awarded £90,654 over 5 years to develop a Youth Drop In service in the town.

Full details on all these stories ... and much more ... inside...

Honorary Officers and Trustees ...

As at 31 March 2011

PRESIDENT

His Grace the Duke of Northumberland

VICE PRESIDENTS

Rt. Hon Sir Alan Beith MP
Mrs S E Black MBE
Rev Canon R Burston

Rt. Hon Lord Vinson LVO DL
Ven. R Langley
Lady Sutherland

Mr J A Trotter OBE
Mrs S Walker

EXECUTIVE COMMITTEE

CHAIRMAN

Mr G Scott

VICE CHAIRMEN

Mrs S Richardson
Mrs S Ashmore

Mrs L Allen
Mr R Poppleton
Cllr R Arckless
Ven. P Robinson
Mr A Gooding
Mr J Rudd
Cllr I Lindley
Ms H Talbot
Mr J McGough
Miss H Tucknott
Cllr A Murray



George Scott



Sue Richardson



Sue Ashmore



Lesley Allen



Richard Poppleton



Robert Arckless



Ven. Peter Robinson



Andrew Gooding



Jim Rudd



Ian Lindley



Dr. Hilary Talbot



John McGough

HONORARY TREASURER

S P Mason FCCA

ASSISTANT HONORARY TREASURER

Miss B McKie



Hilarie Tucknott



Anthony Murray

Associate members and other contributors ...

ACRE
Mrs L Allen
Aon Ltd
Bamburgh Parish Council
Barclays Bank plc
Big Lottery Fund Grant
Birtley Parish Council
Mrs S E Black MBE
Blyth Town Council
Broomhaugh & Riding Parish Council
Rev Canon R B S Burston
Calor
Capacity Builders
Capheaton Parish Council
Cartington Parish Council
Community Foundation
Corbridge Parish Council
Dept of Environment, Food & Rural Affairs
Elsdon Parish Council
Featherstone Parish Council
W H Foakes
Ford Parish Council
M Gibbs
Mrs R Gibbs
Gilsland Village Hall
Glanton Parish Council
Greenhead Parish Council
Hadrian Trust
Hartleyburn Parish Council
Hauxley Parish Council
Healey Parish Council
Heddon on the Wall Parish Council
Hedgeley Parish Council
Hexham Town Council
Horsley Parish Council
W D Johnson
The Joicey Trust
Sir James Knott Trust
Langley Village Hall
J F Lewis
Longhoughton Parish Council
Matfen Parish Council
NALC
Newbrough Parish Council
Newton & Bywell Community Hall
Duke of Northumberland
Northumberland County Council
Ponteland Town Council
Mr R Poppleton
Rev Canon S V Prins
Rennington Parish Council
Mrs S Richardson
The Rothley Trust
Christopher Rowbotham Trust
Mr G Scott
Slaley Commemoration Hall
Slaley Parish Council
Lady Margaret Sutherland
Thropton War Memorial Hall
Togston Parish Council
Miss H Tucknott
Wall Parish Council
Warden Parish Council
Wark Parish Council
Whittington Parish Council
Wylam Parish Council

Members of Council appointed by Authorities and Organisations: March 2011

(a) Schedule A, Representatives

Northumberland County Council	Cllr A Murray; Cllr R Arckless; Cllr I Lindley
Age Concern Northumberland	Mr G Brown
Ass ⁿ of Northumberland Local History Societies	Dr E Ashton
Business & Professional Women	Mrs S Ashmore
Campaign to Protect Rural England	Mr B Harwood
Church of England	Ven P Robinson
Coal Industry Social Welfare Organisation	Mr V B Clements
Community Foundation	Mr R Williamson
Community and Voluntary Action Blyth Valley	Mr T Bradley
Country Land & Business Association	Mr A Collingwood-Cameron
Development Trusts Association	Mr A Gooding
Forestry Commission	Mr J G S Gill
National Farmers Union	Vacancy
National Trust Northumbria Region	Mr T Crump
Newcastle District of the Methodist Church	Rev L Mann
Northumberland Ass ⁿ of Clubs for Young People	Mr N G Voules
Northumberland Ass ⁿ of Local Councils	Mr J Rudd; Cllr R Butler, Cllr P Cowey, Cllr D Parker
Northumberland Business Service Ltd	Ms B Fairbairn
Northumberland Care Trust	Mr C Reed
Northumberland CAB	Mr P Rickard
Northumberland College	Ms R Ellis-Jones
Northumberland Community Forums	3 member vacancies
Northumberland disability organisations	Vacancy
Northumberland Federation-Women's Institutes	Mrs J Arthur
Northumberland Federation-Young Farmers' Clubs	Mrs C Watson
Northumberland, Tyne & Wear NHS Trust	Mrs C Pannell
Northumberland National Park Authority	Mr S Evans
Northumberland & Newcastle Society	Mrs R Hall
Northumberland Playing Fields Association	Mr I Kingsland
Northumberland Strategic Partnership	Ms J Rose
Northumberland Village Halls	Vacancy
Northumbria Healthcare NHS Foundation Trust	Ms J Christer
Roman Catholic Diocese of Hexham & Newcastle	Rev D Tanner
TGWU - Agricultural National Trade Group	Mr N Halton
United Reformed Church	Miss J Turner
University of Newcastle upon Tyne	Dr H Talbot
University of Northumbria	Mrs H Manns
Voluntary Organisations' Network North East	Mrs J Curry
Wansbeck Centre for Voluntary Service	Mrs A Lyall
Workers Educational Association (NE District)	Mrs D Dobbinson

(b) Schedule B, Ex Officio Members of Council

Chief Executive, Northumberland County Council	Mr S Stewart
Chief Fire Officer	
Director: Public Health, Northumberland Care Trust	Dr S Milner
Chief Executive, Northumberland Care Trust	Mr C Reed

CAN's Vision ...

Our strategy, and the way we operate, is inspired by our vision and core values, guided by our mission and delivered through our roles.

Vision and core values

CAN's vision is of communities in Northumberland that are vibrant, inclusive, confident, effective and capable of sustaining themselves.

CAN's core values are based on a commitment to:

- ▶ Enabling local communities to shape their own future
- ▶ Ensuring that all sections of society have an opportunity to be involved in decision affecting their lives
- ▶ Giving special attention to those most disadvantaged, either as a result of material circumstances and/or through exclusion from the opportunities enjoyed by the wider population

Mission

Our mission is to work in partnership to support communities in Northumberland, through influencing decision-makers, promoting collaboration and networking and local community development.

Roles

Our key roles as a support organisation to new and existing community and voluntary sector organisations in Northumberland are:

- ▶ **Seeking to influence and work with decision-makers.**
To provide, with partners, conduits for the diverse views of the local voluntary and community sector to be voiced and heard within the decision making structures, regionally and nationally
- ▶ **Promoting collaboration and networking.**
To work in partnership to facilitate the development of new, and to support existing networks of, local voluntary and community groups, in order to enable them to be a mechanism for developing collaborative work across the sector
- ▶ **Local community development.**
To develop the capacity of local voluntary and community groups to identify unmet need and to work with others to build up the necessary skills base to address that need.

Staff - Organisational Chart ...

As at 31 March 2011



DAVID FRANCIS: Director:
Joined CAN in 1986



Groups Assisted ...

- Howick Church
- Howick Village Hall
- Humshaugh Village Hall Committee
- Ingram Village Hall
- Kielder Water Sailing Club
- Kirkharle Courtyard
- Kirkley Cricket Club
- Kirknewton Village Hall
- LGBT Group
- Lanehead Residents Group
- Lesbury Pre-school
- Lionheart Radio
- Longhorsley Church
- Longhoughton Westfield Park
- (The) Maltings Festival
- (The) Manors, Prudhoe.
- Milfield Allotment Group
- Milfield Reading Room
- Morpeth Golf Club
- Morpeth International (SNAP)
- Netherton Memorial Hall
- Netherwitton Village Hall
- Newton on the Moor & Swarland Parish
- Plan Group
- North Country Leisure
- North N'berland Cricket Development Group
- North Tyne & Redesdale Churches
- Northumberland Carpet Bowls Association
- North Tyne & Redewater Choral Society
- Northumberland Guides
- Northumberland Renewable Energy Group
- Northumbria Hedgehog Rescue
- Ord Parish Council
- Ovingham Reading Room
- Ovington Village Hall project
- Palace Green Pavilion
- Ponteland Memorial Hall
- Ponteland Sure Start Children's Centre
- Prudhoe East Nursery
- Prudhoe High School
- Prudhoe Local History Society
- Riding Mill PC
- Rothbury Accordion & Fiddle Club
- Rothbury & Coquetdale History Society
- Rothbury Jubilee Hall
- Rothbury Parish Hall
- Seahouses Bowling Club
- Seahouses Development Trust
- Seahouses Youth Hostel
- Seahouses Youth Project
- Selefest (Hexham)
- Shilbottle Community Hall
- Shilbottle Parent & Toddlers Group
- Shilbottle Residents' Association
- Shotley Low Quarter PC
- SixtyEightyThirty
- South Charlton Village Hall
- Spittal Improvement Trust
- St Cuthbert's Church, Greenhead
- Steel Quake Wooler
- Stocksfield Cricket Club
- Swarland Drama Group
- Taking Part Workshops
- Tees Active
- Thropton Memorial Hall
- Tillside Cricket Club
- Turnabout Pegasus project
- Tweedmouth Salmon Queen Festival
- Tynedale West Girl Guides Division
- Tynedale Women's Training Group
- Tynedale Youth Link (Children NEast)
- University of the Third Age
- U3A Gardening Group
- Useful Vision
- Volunteering Northumberland
- Wark Village Hall
- Warkworth Memorial Hall
- West Tyne Cricket Development Forum
- West Tynedale Children's Centre
- Whalton Village Hall
- Wingates Village Hall
- Wooler Cricket Club
- Wooler Tennis Club
- Wooler youth Drop-in
- Workers Education Authority
- Wylam Community Orchard
- Wylam Green Streets
- Wylam Institute
- Wylam Methodist Church
- Young & Sweet, Haltwhistle

Groups Assisted ...

1st Flodden Baden Powell Scouts	Crookham Cuckoos
Age Concern Northumberland	Crookham Village Hall
Age UK (North East)	Diocese of Newcastle – Rural Affairs
Alnmouth & Lesbury CC	East Chevington Parish Plan Group
Alnwick Cricket Club	Ellington Village hall
Antiphon	Elsdon Village Hall
Athol House Residents Association	Embleton Cricket Club
Bamburgh Cricket Club	Embleton Parish Church Room
Bamburgh Research Project	Etal Church
Barrasford Village Hall Committee	Fourth Action
Beadnell WI Hall	Friends in Focus (formerly Parents Together)
Belford Development Trust	Friends of Berwick & Dist. Museum & Archives
Belford Lights Committee	Friends of the Bullfield
Belford Local Heritage Group	Friends of Thropton Playfield
Bell View	Gateway Into the Community
Berwick and Borders Environmental Improvement Group	Gilsland Village Hall
Berwick Community Trust	Glanton Heritage Group
Berwick Events Group	Glendale Accordion & Fiddle Club
Berwick Green Festival	Glendale Gateway Trust
Berwick Hospice Care	Great Whittington Village Hall
Berwick Rugby Club	Greenhead Young Farmers Club
Berwick Safe Steps	Greenhead Youth Club
Berwick Voluntary Forum	Hadrian Singers
Borders Gliding Club	Hadston Children's Centre
Branton Wildlife Club	Hadston House
Branxton Parish Council	Hadston Parents Group
Breamish Hall	Haltwhistle Social Welfare Centre
Business and Professional Women	Halty Kidz 2Gether
CAB Berwick	Hands on Help
Café Connect Berwick	Harbottle Parish Council
Calvert Trust	Harmony
Capheaton Village Hall Committee	Hauxley Parish Plan Group
Carers Northumberland	Healthy Goals Project
Carham Parish Council	Hepple Village Hall
Catton Village Hall	Herdley Bank Under 5s
Chrysalis	Hexham & Tynedale Community Trust
Corbridge Cricket Club	Hexham East Residents Association
Corbridge Heritage Trust	Hexham East Out Of School Club
Corbridge Youth Initiative	Hexham Town Council
Core Music	Hexham West End Methodist Church
Corsenside Village Hall	Hexham Youth Initiative
Crafty Women	High Forest Community Association
Crafty Allsorts	Holy Cross Church, Haltwhistle
Crookham Art Group	Holy Island Village Hall Committee
	Horncliffe Film Club

Chairman's Foreword ...

The nicest job a Chairman has - is to say **Thank you.**

For the year 2010-2011 there are a lot of people to thank.

First of all there is that large number of people and organisations throughout Northumberland who support and value CAN's work and contribute to its success in communities in all parts of the county.

We are particularly happy to have worked closely with Wansbeck CVS and CVA Blyth Valley.

Then there is the staff of CAN who always go the extra mile. This year three long-serving and dedicated workers, Linda Frater, Jane Hart and George Courtice left us and we are most grateful for their outstanding contribution to CAN's work.

Our hard-working and dedicated Director David Francis celebrated 25 years with CAN. His ability and commitment is

appreciated by all connected with us.

I know that CAN could not survive without its volunteers. Many people help us in an unpaid capacity.



The Executive committee have worked hard and made some tough decisions to move the organisation on. Their willingness to give of their time and experience deserves thanks and praise.

The world for the voluntary sector and rural communities is changing rapidly. CAN has been part of the picture since 1951 - so we will be celebrating our 60th birthday later in 2011.

The work recorded in this report shows how CAN expects to be a partner in this work for many years to come.



Our E-bulletin enables CAN to circulate information in a timely and effective manner. Feedback has been very positive. In a further development, the February 2011 edition of the e-bulletin was sent out using the website. This was a much quicker process and gives the e-bulletin a stronger branding. It also enabled the collection of statistics ...

- ▶ 8 editions in 2010/11
- ▶ Sent to 820 contacts
- ▶ Opened 907 times in total including forwarded emails
- ▶ Many of those contacts who opened the bulletin, returned a number of times. This would seem to indicate that they found it of interest.

Setting the scene ...

CAN exists to promote and support communities, the voluntary sector and rural life in Northumberland.

For all of these 'constituencies' the past year was particularly challenging. The economic recession began to impact on the vitality and viability of local groups and organisations. The General Election, in May 2010, returned a Coalition Government which took a particularly tough line on public spending and on reforming its departments, agencies and programmes. A range of support-mechanisms, including funding streams, were either closed down, or substantially reduced.

More positively, the Coalition Government also took the first steps to introduce a radical programme of 'localism', building upon the previous Government's initiatives, putting more power and responsibility in the hands of local communities, councils and voluntary bodies.

Within Northumberland, the County Council continued with its programme of restructuring and of harmonising policies and practices across the county, now with the added challenge of making further significant reductions in expenditure.

This provides the context for our 2010-11 Annual Report.

Rural issues

With the ending of the NSP (Northumberland Strategic Partnership) Rural Group in 2009, there has been something of a vacuum in our collective ability, with partners, to monitor, co-ordinate and improve the delivery of support for rural areas. However, in collaboration with our neighbouring RCCs (rural community councils) in Durham and Tees Valley, we helped to stage a region-wide **Rural Summit** at Slaley Hall in November 2010. The Summit achieved a great deal:



- ▶ endorsement of the value of undertaking networking and mutual support across the region.

At the summit's end, RuCANNE, the RCC network for our region, was encouraged to take-forward ideas and conclusions which emerged, in partnership with other interested players.

Affordable housing for local people continues to be a key factor in sustaining rural communities. The Government had responded

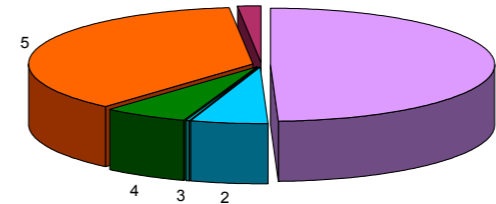
very positively to the conclusions and proposals of the Matthew Taylor Review 'Living Working Countryside', on the rural economy and affordable housing.

We began discussions with the HCA (Homes and Communities Agency) and NHF (National Housing Federation) to put in place a 'rural housing enabler' scheme: a means of pro-actively working with local communities, land-owners, RSLs (registered social landlords) and housing authorities to bring new housing projects to fruition. This would have been the re-introduction of a tried-and-tested mechanism which had existed previously in Northumberland for 15 years or so. Regrettably, the HCA budget suffered significantly in government financial cutbacks, and so the idea has yet to be implemented.

Finance ...

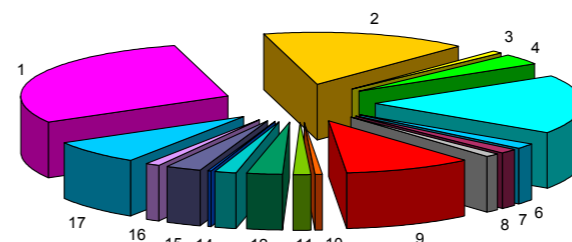
INCOMING RESOURCES

	£	£522,528
1 Grant Income	£ 258,517	
2 Fees & Charges	£ 28,502	
3 Other Income	£ 1,747	
4 Transfer from Funds	£ 32,133	
5 Special Projects	£ 192,280	
6 Other Grants to Local Groups	£ 9,350	



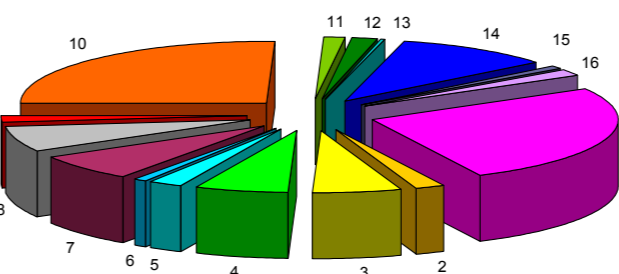
ANALYSIS OF INCOME: Charitable Activities

	£	£522,528
1 Northumberland County Council	£ 152,819	
2 DEFRA	£ 83,771	
3 ACRE	£ 4,150	
4 Charitable trusts -CALOR,OCSI,RCAN	£ 17,375	
5 Big Lottery Fund- Basis 2 programme	£ 96,625	
6 Big Lottery Fund- Back Office Services	£ 8,103	
7 Community Foundation	£ 7,500	
8 NNPA	£ 5,944	
9 Capacity Builders	£ 52,259	
10 NCDN	£ 2,100	
11 Regional Development Officer	£ 7,126	
12 Agency Fees - NALC	£ 15,000	
13 Other Grants to Local Groups	£ 9,350	
14 Sundry Income	£ 1,197	
15 Activities for generating Income	£ 13,502	
16 Voluntary Income - Community Donations	£ 6,640	
17 Income inc investment income & internal transfers	£ 39,069	



RESOURCES EXPENDED

	£	£522,528
1 Salaries	£ 136,506	
2 Employers National Insurance	£ 9,956	
3 Employers Superannuation	£ 30,910	
4 Superannuation early retirement	£ 31,615	
5 Redundancy	£ 11,236	
6 External Contracts	£ 4,872	
7 Premises Running Costs	£ 35,728	
8 Administration	£ 35,103	
9 Contribution to Repairs & Maint Fund	£ 8,314	
10 CORE-Community Development Work	£ 134,296	
11 Regional Development Officer	£ 6,996	
12 Compact and Contracts Officer	£ 8,992	
13 CAN Franking Machine	£ 985	
14 Voice for the Sector	£ 53,411	
15 VCS RS Project	£ 4,259	
16 Other Grants to Local Groups	£ 9,350	



FINANCIAL REPORT :

The Charity had an overall income and expenditure deficit of £3753.15 in 2010-11. The overall financial result for 2010/11 is an increase in total funds of £304,202 which includes a pension deficit decrease of £200,000 and an increase in Fixed Assets value of £125,000. These changes result in a net asset value on the balance sheet of £41,488.

- The actuary has calculated the net pension deficit due from CAN at 31 March 2011 as £466,000.
- The balance of restricted funds, in respect of identified projects, increased to £2689 and will be carried forward into the following year.
- Unrestricted designated funds, decreased by £23,448. This includes a decrease in the Projects Fund of £5,881 to £23,546. £8,312 was added to the Repair & Maintenance Fund from which £25,879 was used to fund planned maintenance during the year, taking end of year total to £6,253. Total remaining balance on unrestricted designated funds is £29,799.
- General reserve remained at £100,000 in line with the reserves policy.

INCOME & EXPENDITURE

Compared with 2009/10, expenditure has decreased due to completion of hosted projects and an almost parallel response to income received, which fell by approx 11%. Represented by:

- Significant reduction in hosted Projects totalling £80K
- Northumberland County Council increased funding by £6,228; although subsequently reduced by 50% for 2011-12
- Big Lottery Fund Grant of £8,103 and Yr 2 BASIS 2 £89,397 was received;
- Regional Development Officer Project commenced approx £7K
- Funding stream changes resulted in a total income reduction of £62,847. General reserve and unrestricted designated funds now stand at £129,799 which, relative to financial turnover, is considered reasonable in aiming to provide CAN with the prospect of continuing financial stability in the short term. With continuing uncertainty relating to future funding streams, the position is being closely monitored and relevant action plans are in place should funding not materialise.

Internal matters ...

Further farewells and welcomes

Farewell and thank-you to Julia and Lynda.....and welcome to Christine ...

Julia Plinston, CAN's Community Development Officer in Alnwick, left CAN in May 2010 to become a full-time carer for her family. We are grateful for the support which Julia provided to a wide range of community initiatives, both across the former Alnwick district and in much of former Eastern Central Morpeth. Julia's place in Alnwick has been taken by Marc Johnson, who has moved there from our Berwick office.

To fill Marc's place in Berwick, we welcomed **Christine Nicholls** - who is already familiar to a number of communities in the area, through her previous work in Seahouses, Belford and Wooler, in a variety of community development and youth work roles.

In addition, we have also lost the services of **Lynda Watson**, who had been CAN's Compact and Contract's Officer. Lynda had been providing a service to and on behalf of the Voluntary and Community Sector, for the past three years. Regrettably, her post was made redundant as a consequence of a reduction in funding from the County Council.

We wish both Lynda and Julia well for the future.

Jane's 'retirement reflections' ... a CDOs tale

At the end of March 2011 I retired as Senior Community Development Officer (CDO) with CAN - and from paid employment. For the last few years, I have spent much of my time gathering evidence of the impact that CAN's work makes on groups and communities in Northumberland. This is very important for our management committee, our beneficiaries and for the funders who support our work, but doesn't make for exciting reading in an Annual Report! So instead, I have reflected more on the journey I, and CAN, would take,



after more than 12 years of service. My background was in libraries, but I had spent some years as a parish clerk and as secretary of a small charity. I had a great deal of experience of delivering training, and I have put both of these specialisms to good use working for CAN. However, I really had little idea what I had got myself into. Working as a CDO means that you have to quickly acquire knowledge on a wide range of subjects. This doesn't mean that you become an expert with all the answers. Most of the time, all you need is enough to help groups to ask the right questions or put them in touch with someone with the detailed knowledge. Over the years I have acquired a smattering of, in no particular order

- ▶ Ground-source heat pumps
- ▶ Allotments
- ▶ Constitutions
- ▶ Wind turbines
- ▶ Neighbourhood nurseries (children, not plants)
- ▶ Modular buildings
- ▶ Field drainage
- ▶ Public multi-face clocks
- ▶ Sheep's wool (as insulation)
- ▶ Leases
- ▶ Listed building consent
- ▶ Children's play areas
- ▶ Table tennis

I have 😊 learned what a "faculty" is, other than aptitude or part of a university; 😊 learned not to call meetings when England or Newcastle are playing or during lambing time!; 😊 intervened in disputes, which put the little unpleasantness between the Montagues and the Capulets to shame; 😊 encouraged, cajoled, spoken plainly and threatened 😊 read constitutions, accounts, policies and, on occasion, the riot act; and 😊 gone through snow and flood, up farm tracks and round the bend - and I have enjoyed every minute! 😊

Much is talked of the Big Society, as if it is a completely new concept. As a CDO, I've been able to provide communities with knowledge, support and advice. The one thing I've been unable to give them is enthusiasm. Most have this in abundance - if the right project comes along.

In my opinion Societies rarely come Bigger than Northumberland.

Setting the scene ...

Over the years, we have taken action to address shortcomings in **the provision of what has become accepted as basic public utilities**, but which mainstream providers do not always supply to the deeper rural areas. Past examples include mains electricity supply, 625-line television, mobile phone networks and mains water. Several years ago, the NSP took the initiative to get ICT Broadband into



telephone exchanges throughout Northumberland, which enabled all but the remotest of residences and businesses to benefit. However, by 2010 the system was overloaded, slow and at times unavailable. We therefore joined with partner organisations to find ways of **improving Broadband provision**. We researched and highlighted case-studies of community-led Broadband solutions. We have been helping to make 'the Northumberland case' for funding for a capital Broadband Improvement Programme.

Supporting local councils

CAN has provided support services to NALC (the Northumberland Association of Local Councils) since its formation in 1951. NALC supports individual local (i.e. parish and town) councils with their statutory functions: legal matters, procedures, management etc. CAN supports local councils with their wider community projects, such as the compilation of a community-led plan, building refurbishments, volunteering projects etc. The CAN NALC relationship is both cost-effective and a means of ensuring a co-ordinated approach to supporting communities.

In due course, we will need to work with rural communities located beyond the Broadband core, to enable them to benefit through innovative solutions.



We also continued to work via the **Northumberland Community Flooding Partnership**, which CAN's Director chairs, to help communities to become more resilient: making adjustments to reduce flooding risk, having a clear plan of what to do when flooding happens, and also coping with the aftermath.

In the light of two severe winters in succession, and increasing evidence of **fuel poverty** (which is more significant in rural than in urban areas) we also began to explore and promote community responses to the problems of rising fuel prices and dependence on tankered-in heating fuel.

Setting the scene ...

Supporting local councils..... contd

The problem was compounded by significantly inaccurate baseline information and by exaggerated costings, which would have required a four-fold increase in parish precepts. The proposal was subsequently withdrawn, but it will take time to restore confidence and relationships again. The 'NALC connection' also enabled us to be alert to a number of proposals which could

adversely have affected local communities. We made representations and suggestions on a new Street Trading Policy, which would have regulated and stifled activities such as charity fund-raising stalls, farmers' markets, mobile shops, fast-food outlets and garden-gate sales of produce. We tried to avert the introduction of almost unenforceable Dog Control Orders.

We were partly successful in our attempts to prevent the Government from banning local councils' support for community newsletters. However, the Government was still intent on trying to prevent the inclusion of material such as competitions, recipes and local history stories.

Overall, local councils figure significantly in the Government's big society thinking, and it will be important for CAN and NALC jointly to support their future development.

The 2010-11 NALC annual report is available, on request, from our Tower Buildings' office.

CAN Website ...



Our website, completely redesigned and now using Joomla! as its Content Management System and Website Engine, was launched in February 2011. It is now a lot easier to navigate and has a host of new features including an online Forum which increases the flow of information from CAN and other groups. People can sign up to receive email bulletins from CAN through the website and are able to manage their subscription. The site is easier for CAN staff to manage. News items are automatically added to the front-page news box.

Website facts and figures

- ▶ From 1st April 10 to 31st March 11 there were 6,337 visits by 3,814 visitors (21,040 page views)
- ▶ including from - 11th February to the date of the launch of the new website - 1,495 (24%) visits by 855 (22%) visitors with
- ▶ 7116 (34%) page views. (% annual visits in brackets)

Internal matters ...

Executive

Following our AGM in 2010, we saw some changes on our Executive Committee. Our Chairman George Scott paid tribute to those trustees who were standing-down from the Executive Committee: **Anne James** (Wark on Tyne), **Sonja Bailes** (Haydon Bridge) and **Bob Langley** (ex-Diocese of Newcastle).

During the year we welcomed three new trustees. Joining us from the local councils' sector was NALC President **Jim Rudd**. Jim has supported our work for a long time, and is a frequent visitor to our offices in Morpeth. He has a particular interest in health and social

welfare issues.

We have also been joined by two County Councillors. **Anthony Murray** represents the Wooler area on NCC and sits on the National Park Authority; he is well-known to local communities in the Glendale area; and is a long-serving member of the Glendale Gateway Trust. **Ian Lindley** represents the Morpeth Stobhill division and is actively involved in a range of local initiatives; he is the portfolio holder for neighbourhood services on the NCC Executive, and has a special interest in the fire and rescue services.

Staff: Comings and Goings

All organisations change when a staff member leaves, but CAN will notice a much bigger loss with the retirement of three long-serving and senior members of staff at the end of March.

Linda Frater: Finance Officer, joined us in 1988, initially single-handedly as our sole 'finance person' but eventually growing to be part of a team of three. Linda's creativity, attention to detail and meticulous organisation, meant that we have always had a clear handle on our financial position, and have been able to satisfy and impress the full range of auditors: not only our own external auditor, but also those associated with external funding sources such as Europe, GONE and OneNE. Linda has nurtured and developed her two team colleagues, Carol Megson and Margaret Tweddell, who will continue to handle CAN's and NALC's finances.



Jane Hart: Senior Community Development Officer, joined us in 1998, following a career in the County Council's Library Service. When she joined us, she already had a good grasp of the



geography and communities of Tynedale, having organised the mobile library services in these areas. She also had had experience as a parish council clerk and as organiser of the local Talking Newspaper for the Blind. Over the years, she has supported numerous community projects through to fruition, as well as defusing some internal difficulties within local communities and latterly taking charge of CAN's monitoring and reporting procedures.

George Courtice, Sector Development Officer for the Northumberland VCS Consortium, joined us in 2005, after a career in television and latterly in supporting new micro-businesses. George has brought intelligence, patience, diplomacy, tenacity and wit to the task of developing a united voice for voluntary organisations, engaging with the County Council and other decision-makers, and promoting Northumberland's VCS interests on the regional and national stage. He managed the delivery of the Capacity Builders Change-Up incentive programme in Northumberland, and also assisted the County Council with their investment programme.



Linda, Jane and George will be hugely missed, and we thank them all for their contributions, commitment and companionship.

Measuring the impact of our work ...

User Groups Survey - Autumn/Winter 2010

For some time CAN has been looking at ways by which to improve its internal monitoring and evaluation. A 'paper' based questionnaire, used in the past, proved a staff-intensive exercise, both in posting out and in the analysis of results. The last survey, conducted two years ago yielded a very poor response rate - 3% - despite a £50 prize being offered to increase responses. So a decision was made in 2010 to look at how new 'web-based' survey methods could make the task easier, more effective and more efficient. An email 'pilot' run took place - in autumn 2010 - to assess the impact of the work of the Community Development Officers (CDOs) across 17 groups. A larger and more comprehensive survey was undertaken using the web-based tool "Survey Monkey" in December 2010 with email invitations being sent to the 95% of our beneficiary groups who have internet facilities.

Background

Respondents were asked to rate a series of statements and comments on CAN's advice and support, graded from (1) **strongly disagreeing** to (5) **strongly agreeing**. The questions covered topics such as charitable status, funding, business plans, staff /trustee training, recruitment/employment issues, management committees, financial management /accounts and identifying / responding to community needs. Because their experience was varied, not all groups answered all questions. To counter this, additional "General" questions were included to be answered by all groups. Respondents were also able to add their own comments, although only 14 took the opportunity. It is interesting to note that the only one negative comment related to continuity of staff: "Continuity of CAN personnel is important as knowledge and impetus is lost when there is a high turnover of staff". Future uncertainty about funding is likely to continue to have an impact on staff turnover.

Results

The results gained in the initial 'pilot' exercise were incorporated into the fuller survey - bringing the number of groups surveyed to 105 with a response rate of 54%.

The main results are as follows:

- ▶ 39% of respondents rated CAN's support at 5 and another 39% were rated 4.
- ▶ This aggregated total (78%) compares to **68.6%** in the 'paper' survey in 2008.
- ▶ Looking at the "General" questions alone, **96%** of respondents rated CAN's support at 4 or 5. This compares to **85.7%** in 2008.
- ▶ 30 respondents reported that they had successfully gained grant aid as a result of CAN's help.
- ▶ The full survey gauged the level of funding that CAN had helped to attract - which was £108,068 - an average of just under £10,000 for each of 11 groups. As CAN regularly works with more than 150 groups annually, a large amount of inward investment could be construed.

Conclusion

The response rate to the survey was extremely high, perhaps because of the ease of completing the web-based form. One respondent commented: "Survey very well laid out and easy to follow and complete. (About 10 minutes in all including checking)"

This exercise goes some way to demonstrate that the advice and support, which CAN provides, is valued by the groups we work with. One respondent commented: "We have been very impressed with the speed of response and the knowledge and skill base of the contacts within CAN. We have been given a huge amount of help that would have been very difficult to source anywhere else." Also, for the first time, we can make a direct link to inward investment for Northumberland "The "paid" version of the Survey Monkey tool will give a great deal more flexibility and will provide the ability to produce various types of report based on the data gathered.

The full record of responses is available from marcjohanson@ca-north.org.uk

Networking ...

Northumberland VCS Consortium

The remit of the Northumberland VCS Consortium had always been ambitious. Acting in the interests of the sector and promoting what it does, assumes that we all have enough in common to make this collective purpose work. The experience of the last 6 years confirms this to be broadly true. There have, of course, been tensions between the large & small; those organisations which employ staff and those which rely entirely on volunteers; those which wish to enter contractual agreements with public bodies and those which have little desire to do so. More recently there have even been misunderstandings about the essence of the sector. What makes the VCS distinct is that the organisations which make it up are ultimately controlled by people who do not get paid. It is not sufficient only to ensure that any profit that is made, is not distributed. Charitable trustees, by definition, gift their labour. Governments and their agencies, for their own convenience, might prefer different definitions but that is no reason for us to adopt

them. Simple outcomes are often the result of complex systems made up of thousands of organisations beavering away, largely independently. Change and intervention, even with the best intentions, in the absence of full understanding, can create unintended havoc. Perhaps the writing on the wall should have been better read when spending cuts started to bite in 2009. By the end of 2010 it became clear that the County Council was planning massive changes to its proposals to develop community forums and Area Partnerships. The VCS Consortium in Northumberland always relied on central government funding rather than our local government and so its nature too was up for debate. The Northumberland VCS Consortium was never a cabal of support bodies. It had always broadened its membership to involve delivery organisations. It is a relief to learn that its make-up and purpose will probably continue largely unchanged and is a testimony to all those who worked hard to develop it.

So what did the VCS Consortium actually do last year? Well it

- ▶ enabled engagement with the County Council's Executive Committee until autumn 2010.
- ▶ maintained valuable regional links with VONNE
- ▶ facilitated and supported a range of issue and area based VCS networks
- ▶ continuous update of VCS database (1000 organisations active in the county) and website
- ▶ responded to consultation requests when a sector-wide view was sought
- ▶ helped broker an agreement between Wansbeck CVS, CVA Blyth Valley and CAN which set out the circumstances when it was appropriate for them to advise Parish and Town Councils as part of their mainstream community support.

Berwick Network, run by Berwick Voluntary Forum has operated for over 10 years; meetings are held four times a year at the Voluntary Centre. The Network provides a mechanism for sharing information, opinions, concerns and ideas to be fed to the decision making structures. Membership is now over 150, with meetings regularly attended by 15-20 group representatives. "As someone new in post, the Network has been invaluable for close networking and building relationships with community groups in the local area" Linda Sneddon, Dementia Support Worker, Alzheimer's Society.

CAN facilitates the **West Northumberland Community Development Network**, for which we also provide a secretariat service for quarterly meetings, and a well-received email information dissemination service. Cross-sector membership has grown to over 75 members covering more than 50 VCS organisations - including social enterprises - and public sector bodies. One of the key issues that that the Network sought to influence last year was the re-structuring of the county's Youth Service provision.



Local Community Development ...

Community-led planning

Community Led Planning (CLP) - also known as Parish Plans, Village Appraisals, Market Town Action Plans and more recently, Neighbourhood Plans - provides the basis for communities to come together to evidence local needs, explore solutions and implement a plan of action for their future, thereby generating a stronger, more sustainable society that is less reliant on the state to get things done. Last year CAN assisted 10 local communities with either initiating, developing or completing their Plans.

CASE STUDY: Newton on the Moor & Swarland
Developing a **community-led plan** can often be a frustrating and lengthy process, but with assistance from CAN Staff and a determined effort by the community, the Plan, which was initiated in 2007 with a grant from CAN, was finally launched at the end of March 2011 with two events held in the local community. CAN's support included helping to secure funding; designing a questionnaire; advice on writing up the Plan; as well as general advice as and when required by the community.

This parish plan, along with others, is available to download on the CAN website.

CASE STUDY: CROOKHAM COMMUNITY GROUPS

Crookham, south of Berwick, may only have a small population but it punches above its weight when it comes to local community activity! **Crookham Village Hall, Crookham Art Club** and **Crookham Cuckoos** were all successful in securing **Grassroots funding** for their organisations - being awarded over **£7,000** in total. CAN supported all three groups with their funding applications and, crucially, helped the Art Club and the Cuckoos with setting themselves up as a new groups with the appropriate legal status, a constitution and other governance matters.



"It was wonderful for us. We received great help from Community Action Northumberland and their Berwick Community Development Officer, Christine Nicholls, in applying for the grant. Christine has come up trumps with cash for the village hall before and she really pulled out all the stops"

Martin Fisher: Crookham Cuckoos Musical Director .

Grassroots

In 2010/11 **86 community groups** in Northumberland benefitted from receiving Grassroots grants totalling **£147,979**. Over 54% of that amount went to groups in the county's rural areas. A partnership approach between CAN, CVA Blyth Valley and Wansbeck CVS - with the Community Foundation (Tyne & Wear and Northumberland) - has been crucial to ensure groups in all areas of the county have been able to benefit. 2010/11 was the third and final year of the programme, funded by the Office of the Third Sector and delivered in Northumberland and Tyne & Wear by the Community Foundation. The grants are intended to benefit the community and can be very wide ranging, including the purchase of equipment, a local community event, training and staffing costs, local community activities and rent costs.

Joint Working ...

Who - or rather what ... is BOSS?

Back Office Services Support - BOSS

CAN, together with the two other RCCs in the North East - Durham RCC and Tees Valley RCC - were funded by the BIG Lottery to investigate the need for 'back office services' for rural community groups that provide services to others. **The BOSS Project** is all about the support needed to ease the burden of administration for voluntary and community groups. From research undertaken, it was identified that groups primarily wanted help with financial management and accounts.

Two projects were developed - '**Looking after the Money**' and '**Easy Accounts**' training. '**Looking after the Money**' was presented in 2 events to 45 individuals and it led on to two successful '**Easy Accounts**' training sessions for treasurers of community buildings/village

halls. These were arranged with the help and co-operation of North Northumberland Village Halls Consortium and West Northumberland Community Buildings Consortium, and took place in winter 2010 in Chatton and in Newton and Bywell village halls.

Twenty village hall treasurers mastered the training in less than 2 hours - walking away with computer software that produces annual statements of accounts, periodic reports, income and expenditure and everything charity law requires in annual accounting.

The project has been so successful that it is to be rolled out to all voluntary and community sector organisations - and in time, will be adapted to suit the clerks of Parish and Town Councils. The project is, so far, exceeding all the targets set by the Big Lottery.



Community Forums

The level of support to NCC's Community Forums has been as varied as the development of the Forums themselves. **East Tynedale Community Forum (ETCF)** received a great deal of support as part of ACRE's Collaboration Benefits programme (see right). Work with this Community Forum and NCC's Locality Officer, resulted in the ETCF Conference.

The local Parish Councils wished to support youth work in their area. This development was hampered by a lack of knowledge of what already existed and a reluctance to "step on toes". An evening event was held to invite representatives of youth service in the public and voluntary sectors to explain what they provided and how they might see Parish Councils helping. The evening was a success and a number of actions will follow. This is a good example of how adjacent Parish Councils can support each other and increase their voice.

ACRE Collaboration Benefits

This national programme ended in March 2011 with the completion date for support to groups being December 2010. CAN's Senior Community Development Officer produced a series of case studies reporting on the support given under this programme. Final reports were submitted on **East Tynedale Community Forum** and the proposed work in Rothbury which did not, in fact, proceed. The case studies will form part of a national database giving examples of types of collaboration and the lessons learned from the process.

Joint Working ...

First ever - Northumberland-wide Funding Event

Having traditionally arranged events, for a number of years, at which voluntary and community organisations and groups could meet charitable trusts and other funders face-to-face, **CVA Blyth Valley; Community Action Northumberland; and Wansbeck CVS** held their **first joint county-wide initiative** on March 30th 2011. This event was part of a wider CVABV/CAN/WCVS/ joint effort to provide a coordinated pattern of support to voluntary organisations across Northumberland.

Eighty four VCS groups benefitted from the event held at Choppington Social Welfare Centre - which proved extremely popular and bookings for both the face-to-face funders' sessions and the workshops were over-subscribed and the strict booking deadline had to be imposed.

A 'MARKET PLACE' for groups/agencies/organisations linked to the voluntary and community sector was also a feature of the event and, in addition to the 3 VCS event organisers, included:

- ▶ VoiCeS
- ▶ Volunteering Northumberland
- ▶ Northumbria Fire & Rescue
- ▶ Age UK Northumberland
- ▶ Funding Information North East
- ▶ Reaction
- ▶ Social Enterprise



TRAINING WORKSHOPS were also held:-

▶ **What Makes a Good Funding Application** (Community Foundation)

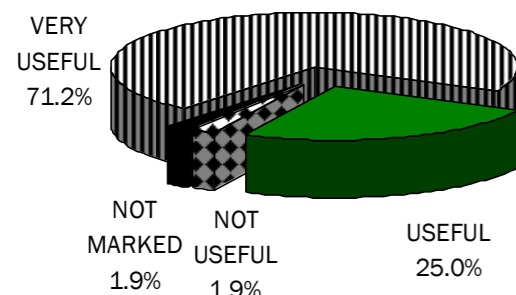
▶ **Outcomes** (Big Lottery)

47% of groups attending the workshops rated the information 'very useful';
42% found the information 'useful'

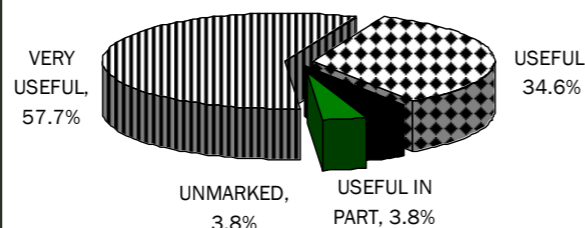
20 FUNDERS attended the event

- | | | |
|--|------------------------|--------------------------------|
| ▶ BBC Children in Need | ▶ Greggs Foundation | ▶ Sherburn House Charity |
| ▶ Comic Relief | ▶ Rothley Trust | ▶ NCC - Community Chest |
| ▶ RW Mann Trust | ▶ Community Foundation | ▶ Sir James Knott Trust |
| ▶ Heritage Lottery Fund | ▶ SITA Trust | ▶ Lloyds TSB Foundation |
| ▶ North'land Coast and Lowlands Leader | ▶ Joicey Trust | ▶ Northumbria Police Authority |
| ▶ Banks Community Fund | ▶ Big Lottery Fund | ▶ Hospital of God at Greatham |
| ▶ Co-operative Community Fund | ▶ Hadrian Trust | |

HOW USEFUL WAS THIS EVENT TO YOUR ORGANISATION / GROUP



HOW USEFUL WAS THE EVENT IN INCREASING YOUR KNOWLEDGE OF POTENTIAL FUNDING OPPORTUNITIES



Local Community Development ...

COMMA

CAN has played a crucial role in ensuring the Community Aggregates (COMMA) Fund is delivered in Northumberland. This has included promotion of the fund, assisting applicants and organising an independent short-listing panel.

The COMMA Fund - a DEFRA programme - arising from the Aggregates Levy Sustainability Fund (ASLF) - focuses on supporting community projects in settlements affected by aggregates quarrying. However in January 2011 the government announced that, following its Spending Review, it was ending the ASLF programme.

"In the face of ever increasing costs whilst trying to run a small voluntary organisation, we are deeply indebted to CAN, especially Julia Plinston and Marc Johnson, for their assistance and expertise when formulating our bids for funding, and for their equally sensible advice when we were successful in our bids, and began to implement our improvements. How we appreciate having this advice "on tap" whenever we need it. Long may it continue."

John Grey: Secretary:Village Hall Committee.

CASE STUDY: COMMA

Netherton Memorial Hall ...

is the focal point for community life in the parish, providing a community space for a range of activities including the Bowls Club, the W.I, Garden Club, Folk Club, Parish Council meetings, regular evenings of Bingo/Domino/Whist Drives and, on two mornings a week, an outreach Post Office service.

The Hall committee continuously assesses the state of the building and prioritises action to maintain and improve the fabric of the building. Through the **COMMA** fund the committee identified the potential to carry out small scale energy efficiency measures, reduce the risk of flood damage, reduce dust and noise entering the building and provide better organised storage. The Hall successfully secured £9,300 from COMMA to implement these improvements.



CASE STUDY: COMMUNITY DEVELOPMENT Spittal Improvement Trust

Spittal Improvement Trust (SIT) was formed in 1998 out of concerns by local community groups with regard to the continuing decline in the Spittal area. SIT aims to carry out projects that try to halt this decline in local facilities and to improve the local environment as well as raising community spirits by holding regular events.

The Trust has been supported by CAN in several ways, including regular funding information, linking directly to SIT activities, one of which includes a £250,000 project to entirely replace and extend a play area and walled park adjacent to the promenade in Spittal.

" By working closely with CAN, their staff became more aware of the projects and events that SIT were trying to undertake in Spittal and we appreciated being advised of funding that was relevant to our aims. SIT have also been trying to become a recognised charity. Our attempt to do this failed due to the Charity Commission's views over what projects SIT undertook that were in fact charitable. CAN has reviewed the aims of SIT's project and have steered us onto a new course of action."

Mike Greener: Secretary Spittal Improvement Trust

Local Community Development ...

"The help offered by CAN was invaluable. We couldn't have worked our way through all these processes without them. How does a new group set itself up properly, from scratch, without this sort of professional guidance? The Community Initiatives Officer from CAN was always friendly and approachable. We are indebted to CAN and we know that we can always go to them again, if we have any organisational problems."

Bridget Gubbins, current chair of SNAP!,



CASE STUDY: SNAP!

In spring 2010, Bridget Gubbins was approached by members of a new group which was forming in Morpeth comprising both local people and new residents from overseas whose purpose was to share knowledge of each other's cultures. They called themselves SNAP! (Sharing Knowledge and Pleasure.)

The group wanted guidance about adopting an appropriate constitution and CAN was contacted and began to work to draft a document suitable for the newly-formed group. An important part of the process was working with the members to draft a constitution that would be understood by all – so interpreters were invaluable to enable members to fully understand the terms used. The constitution was adopted formally at their first general meeting on 14th June. They also later asked for guidance on the responsibilities of a voluntary group, in particular risk assessments, insurance, and child/vulnerable adult protection issues.

New members, of all cultures, are welcome. SNAP! members speak a range of languages, including Arabic, Spanish, Bangla, French, Polish and Mandarin Chinese.

CASE STUDY: £90k success for Wooler Youth Drop-in

Wooler Youth drop-in aims to make a difference to the lives of young people by providing a safe, drug and alcohol free environment for recreation, discussion and advice. The distance to other youth services and poor public transport links make it vital that Wooler has a locally based facility. CAN assisted Wooler Young Peoples Association, the organisation that runs the drop-in, to understand and complete an application to the Big Lottery's Reaching Communities Programme, this resulted in an award over 5 years of £90,654 and gives the drop-in the ability to keep running a much needed service and look to develop a longer term plan.

"Without doubt we should not have succeeded without your advice; the help you gave us was vigilant and thorough, but always supportive. We want to record our grateful thanks."

Noel Roy, Treasurer of Wooler Young Peoples Association

Local Community Development ...

Community Led Spaces

WYLAM COMMUNITY ORCHARD IS BLOSSOMING

Only two years after the idea was first mooted by local environmental group Wylam Greenstreet, the village's community orchard faces a blossoming future. With support from CAN to set up the group with the right legal status; governing document and with funding advice and information – a committed group of local volunteers em-bark-ed on a mission to provide a delicious communal bounty for residents for many years to come, as well as offering an educational, recreational and peaceful social haven. This will benefit not only the local community but also visitors and wildlife alike.

With 80 volunteer helpers signing up at the official 'launch' the next key step was to find an appropriate site. When the group approached the Head Teacher at Wylam First School site the project got enthusiastic backing not just from the school but also from the County Council - who arranged to lease a piece of land in the school grounds which was a brambled area used mainly for lessons on wildlife. Now children will be able to have lessons in the orchard, learning about and seeing new fruits and new insects as well as being more aware of what horticulture and wildlife management is really all about. Initial funding came from the Tree Council and through local efforts. The Soil Association gave essential advice and guidance. Operating on a membership subscription basis helps to ensure its sustainability. Led enthusiastically by Orchard Warden Tom Martin – who is also Chair of Wylam Parish Council and a local businessman who runs his own nursery – local people have regularly turned out in all weathers to create compost bins; clear paths; plant 65 apple, pear, plum, greengage and cherry saplings and have mucked and mulched their way to establishing what – when it comes to fruit-ion in two years time – will be a real community asset.

Crucially, by organically managing the orchard; by creating new hedging and by leaving a tithe when the fruit is finally harvested all manner of bees, wasps, butterflies and other insects will reap the rewards too!

"We couldn't have got the group going without CAN's help in advising us on the right legal status, a constitution and with funding information."

Tom Martin: Warden.



Local Community Development ...

Community Assets

CASE STUDY: Netherwitton Village Hall

Built 150 years ago - but as two separate 'rooms' - the Hall laundry and the 'reading room'- Raleigh Trevelyan of Netherwitton Hall gave the building to the community in 1986, set up in a trust for 30 years. The building was converted into a village hall, funded by grants and donations from charities, the Parish Council and a local trust. A wide range of activities was held - scouts and cubs, whist drive, coffee mornings, village parties and line dancing.

The group of trustees has worked to keep activities going in the Hall and over the last couple of years the dedicated committee has made positive changes and introduced new ideas and activities. Their enthusiasm to maintain and develop the Hall as a social hub has gone from strength to strength. CAN has worked with the trustees on a wide range of topics, including licencing, funding and governance matters. The group's Social Evening which has been running for a year, has been one of their most successful projects - creating a great sense of community spirit that has not existed for many years. It attracts people from the outlying areas - one committee member met someone for the first time at one such event only to discover they had been neighbours for 11 years! With approximately 150 residents and no other place to meet, the Hall is ideally suited to offer somewhere to socialise. These monthly gatherings have brought a new lease of life to the community and the opportunity to bring people together who would otherwise not even know each other. A natural progression has been the setting up of an e-mail system with the local church, informing people of the Hall's activities and the 'services' they have managed to attract to the village - such as the wet fish van from Eyemouth. In the future it is likely the fish and chip van will visit the village. Being 8 or 9 miles from the nearest small town - these are valuable and warmly-welcomed services.

The trustees have longer term plans to improve the Hall by opening up the entranceway and adding a porch -and they would like to extend the kitchen and alter the layout of the building to provide storage, improve the toilets and eventually make a garden to the side.



"This help [from CAN] has been invaluable as it has given the committee specialist help and advice and also, access to the North Northumberland Village Hall Consortium, that has offered us additional expertise"

Local Community Development ...

Fuel Poverty and Energy

CALOR FREE PROJECT

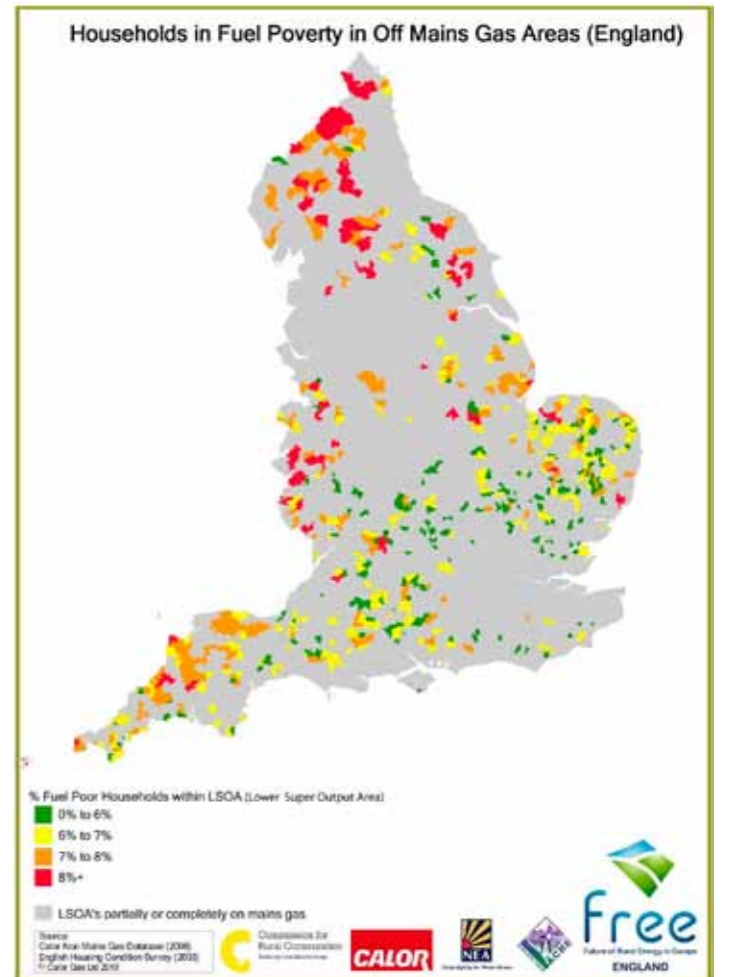
(Future of Rural Energy in England) is a rural energy advisorship programme, aimed at off-grid communities across England. This three-year project is supported by Calor Gas and involves ACRE, the Rural Community Action Network and National Energy Action. It is delivered in this region through the three north-eastern Rural Community Councils, with Durham RCC as the regional 'lead'.

The project brings practical independent advice and information to households on fuel choices, energy efficient technologies, and carbon reduction measures - by working at a local level with communities most at risk of fuel poverty .

A household is usually regarded as being in fuel poverty when it has to spend more than 10% of its income to keep the home heated to 21°C in the living room and 18°C in the rest of the house.

Although not the only determinants, there are **three main factors that contribute to whether a household is fuel poor:-**

- ▶ the cost of energy
- ▶ the household's income, and
- ▶ the energy efficiency of the property.



- ▶ In 2009, there were about 5.5 million fuel poor households in the UK, up from 4.5 million in 2008.
- ▶ In England, there were about 4 million fuel poor households (3.3 million in 2008)
- ▶ Fuel poverty in 2009 amongst vulnerable households (containing elderly people, children or someone disabled or long term sick) was 4.5 million households
- ▶ Almost 1 in 4 households in rural areas suffer from fuel poverty.
- ▶ High levels of fuel poverty are exacerbated in households with no mains gas.

Fuel poverty maps - that include the measure for off mains gas (see above) show that Lower Super Output Area (LSOA) E01027375 in Berwick district (Glendale/Wooler area) and LSOA E01027477 in Tynedale (Hexhamshire; Allen Valleys) are in the worst 8% of the country.

In 2010 the north east had the highest percentage of households in fuel poverty (26%) in England. Fuel poverty is also closely linked with solid wall properties of which there are nearly 35,000 in Northumberland. Such properties make a significant contribution to fuel poverty in rural Northumberland, being extremely energy inefficient and difficult to insulate - and are usually referred to as 'hard-to-treat' homes. Due to the high costs of heating hard to treat homes, families who would cope relatively well in a more energy efficient home might likely find themselves in fuel poverty.

Local Community Development ...

Fuel Poverty and Energy

- ▶ While over 60% of homes in urban areas and rural towns are cavity walled and on mains gas, this is true of only 32% in villages and 21% in hamlets.
- ▶ In villages and hamlets oil is a major source of heating fuel, and electricity for heating is more common in villages than any other area type.



Government programmes have not delivered equitable benefits for rural communities primarily because of a focus on delivering cavity and roof insulation and a lack of funding to upgrade solid wall and off gas properties with associated higher costs of delivery.

The start of the Calor FREE project was delayed for various reasons but the first year of the project was geared around developing partnerships with the other two north east RCCs - Durham and Tees Valley - and NEA, as well as developing and implementing a regional delivery plan. Time also needed to be spent on training staff in fuel poverty advice work.

An article was prepared and published in the Hexham Courant newspaper; the project was promoted at a Hexhamshire Community Forum meeting; and staff were involved with a series of events at Village Halls across the county arranged by Northumberland National Park Authority as part of their RECAP project

(Renewable Energy Community Awareness Programme), which aims to raise awareness of what households can achieve in energy saving, renewable energy and heat production, as well as what can be achieved collectively at a community scale. The Tynedale area is fortunate in having a dedicated Fuel Advice worker employed by West Northumberland CAB and she provided significant support and assistance in formulating our advice work in that area.

Year 2 of the project will see a greater level of targeted activity with local communities in key areas; joint working with key organisations e.g. the County Council and the Warm Zone programme; CAB and others - as well as a general awareness programme.



CAN NEWS - our hard copy Newsletter is published every quarter - with our E-Bulletin being produced in the intervening months.

The Newsletter contains information on national, regional and local news and developments affecting the sector. It gives updates on areas of work that CAN is involved with and it also allows us to highlight interesting, topical, exciting voluntary and community group projects across the county.

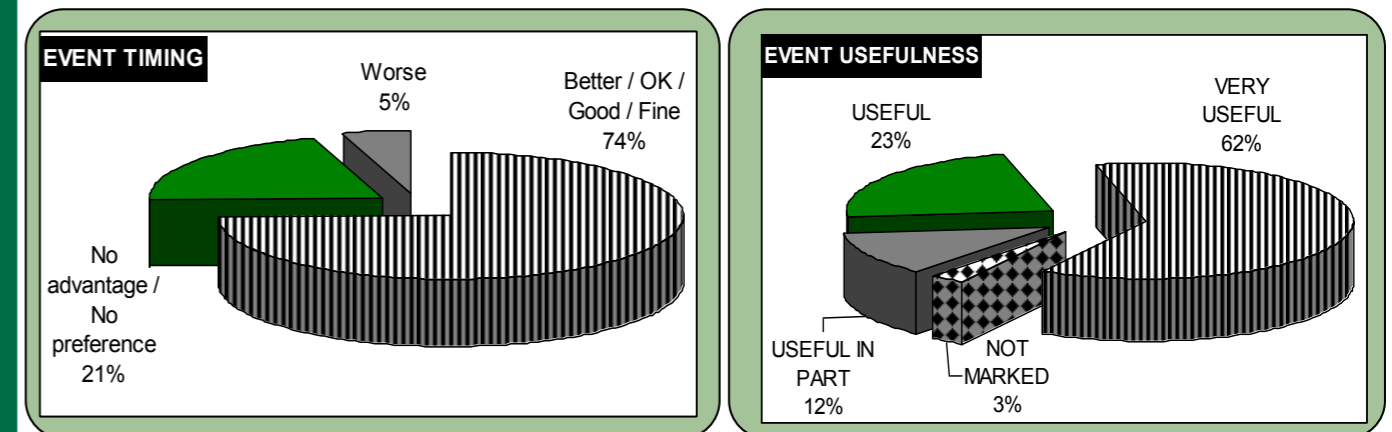
- ▶ 4 editions in 2010/11
- ▶ Sent to nearly 800 contacts - with many others receiving it electronically
- ▶ Special themed edition on Broadband in Winter 2010/11 issue.

Local Community Development ...

Meet The Funders

In May and June 2010, CAN organised another series of its very successful and popular **MEET THE FUNDERS** events for voluntary and community groups across the county.

Morpeth Town Hall, Bellingham Town Hall and Berwick Rugby Club played host to 107 groups (125 people) who came to get valuable one-to-one advice from a range of funders including: BBC Children In Need; Big Lottery; Community Foundation; Co-operative group; Greggs; Joicey Trust; NCC Community Chest; Northumberland National Park; Northumberland Lowlands and Coast Leader; Northumberland Uplands LEADER; Northumberland Coast AONB; Northern Rock; Sir James Knott and Unity Trust Bank.



Following on from the success of the previous year - all the events were held in the late afternoon/early evening - rather than the daytime. The vast majority of groups (74%) felt that this timing made the events more accessible as it allowed many people to attend the event whilst on their way home from work. An innovation - to try to reduce queuing/waiting times which we trialled during the 2009 events - was used for this year's events. Although the Bellingham event was overcrowded, the new half-hour 'block-booking' system worked well.

As in previous years, the opportunity to discuss their projects in detail and face-to-face with a wide range of prospective funders, in one place, was greatly appreciated by the groups. This is reflected in the fact that 85% of groups found the events to be either useful or very useful.

The only disappointing part of this year's events was the low turnout in the very, very north of 'our patch'. We decided to hold an event at Berwick to cater for the growing number of groups in the area and to give them an opportunity to meet funders 'on their doorstep' instead of having to travel to Alnwick each year. The British summer, however, had other ideas and decided to put on a display of incredible warmth and glorious sunshine - which obviously was more of an attraction to the folk of Berwick on the night!!

"Meeting the funders at a very convenient time of day was the most useful part of the event. I could still get home and see my children before they went to bed"

"We were made most welcome and given sound advice as to which funders we would find more beneficial. Thank you for giving us the opportunity of meeting the funders to discuss our future projects with them".

"The queues for the Big Lottery and the Community Foundation were too long and the room was too noisy!"