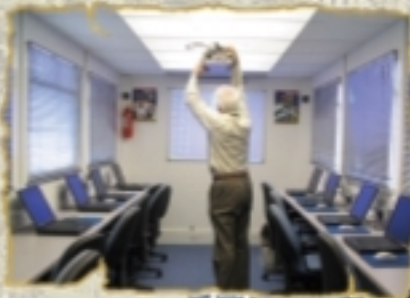




Community Council of Northumberland

ANNUAL REPORT 2005-2006



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 infrastructure body to support and develop community groups, charities and voluntary bodies throughout the County of Northumberland.

The Community Council is both a Rural Community Council and a Council of Voluntary Service. Constitutionally, the Community Council 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 an Executive Committee of between 21 and 30 members, who are the charity's trustees.

The Community Council owns one piece of property: Tower Buildings in Morpeth, of which the holding trustee is the Official Custodian of Charities. Other properties are occupied on leases or licenses.

The Community Council has a 3 year business plan, and each year an action plan is prepared for the year ahead. At the year-end, an annual report and audited accounts are produced.

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 and the Independent Auditor's report to the Trustees on the financial statements should be consulted. Copies of the Trustees' Annual Report and Financial Statements are available from our Morpeth Office, on request.

The cover photographs show some of the people involved in community events throughout the year and some of the halls in Northumberland, where community activities have taken place, in a montage. Many of the cover photos have been used in Northumberland Community News during the year covered by the report.

Acting as a watermark on the whole cover is a view of Wingates, the winner of the 2005 Northumberland Building Community Life competition.

Front cover from top left hand side the photos are: Tynedale Village Halls Consortium meeting June 2005; The Swan Bench, Featherstone councillors clearing away fly tipping; Opening of Berwick Children's Centre; Management committee of Hindmarsh Hall, Alnmouth; Northumberland ECO Wild Team; CCN's Chairman in Great North Run (yellow shirt); Northumberland College Learning Bus; Presentation of Investors in People Award to CCN; Spring meeting 2006; Workshop at "Meet the Funders" 2005; Ingram Village Hall management committee beside the hall's new windows; Open day at Castle Morpeth Disability Association.

Rear cover from the top left hand side: Whalton Village Hall; Felton Village Hall; Ancroft Memorial Hall; Ovingham Reading Room; Netherton Village Hall; Milfield Reading Room; Deneholme Centre, Allendale.

COMMUNITY COUNCIL OF NORTHUMBERLAND

2005-2006

Honorary officers and trustees as at 31 MARCH 2006:

PRESIDENT

His Grace the Duke of Northumberland

VICE PRESIDENTS

Rt Hon Alan Beith MP	Sir John Riddell CVO
Mrs S E Black MBE	Lady Sutherland JP
Rev Canon R Burston	Mr J A Trotter OBE
Lt Col H Crossman JP DL	Rt.Hon Lord Vinson LVO DL
Mr W H Foakes DL	Mrs S Walker
Rt Hon Viscount Ridley KG GCVO TD	

EXECUTIVE COMMITTEE

CHAIRMAN

Ven R Langley

VICE-CHAIRMAN

Cllr Mrs L Rickerby

Ms H Talbot

Ms S Bevan
Mrs S E Black MBE
Cllr P R B Brooks
Rev Canon R Burston
Mr B Harwood
Mrs J Jury
Cllr A C Kerr

Mr J F Lewis
Cllr J D Lockie
Mr J Riddle
Cllr H G H Sanderson
Cllr A G Sambrook
Mrs S Walker
Mr D G Woodard

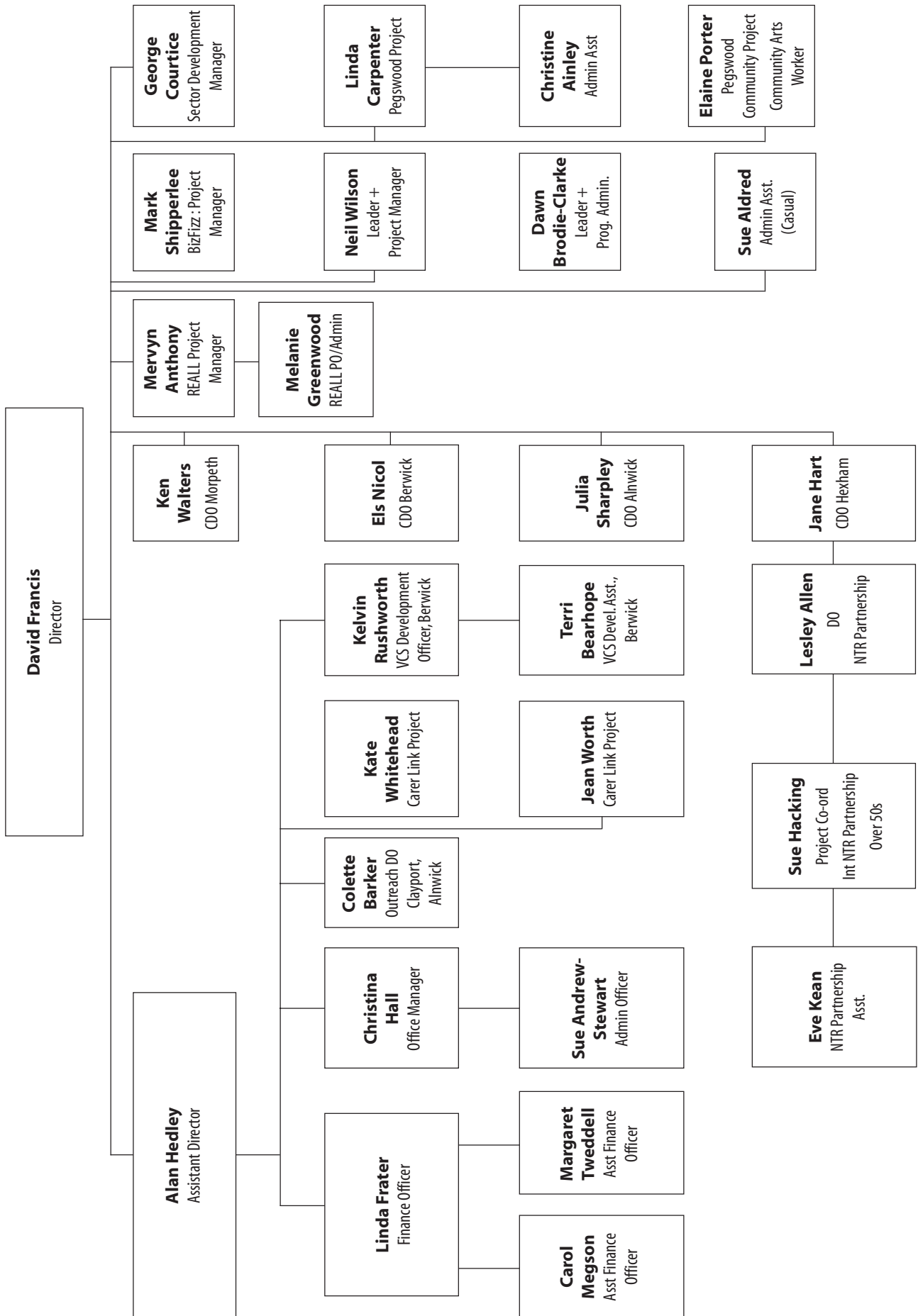
HONORARY TREASURER

Mr S P Mason FCCA

ASSISTANT HON TREASURER

Miss B McKie

STAFF ORGANISATION CHART as at 31 March 2006



CHAIRMAN'S INTRODUCTION

This has been a challenging year for the Community Council. The changes which were heralded by the previous Chairman in her introduction to last year's Annual Report gathered pace. The progress of our own internal strategic review was overtaken by the unexpected loss of European funding. This resulted not just in a quickening of the pace of our internal review, but also unfortunately in an urgent restructuring of our staff, including the painful necessity of some posts being made redundant, and others being reorganised on substantially fewer hours.

It has been therefore a stressful time for members of CCN staff and I need to pay tribute to their forbearance and cooperation through the period in the middle part of the year when the pressures were greatest; not least because whilst these internal changes were having to be made, the demands on staff in the field did not lessen. Whilst we tried to indicate to communities in the county that we may not for a short period be able to provide our usual service, I suspect that so great is the commitment of our staff members that they simply absorbed the extra work and continued to work with the multitude of activities carried out by the organisation in the county.

So I pay tribute to those staff whom we lost: Assistant Director Sandi Downing in Alnwick, Assistant Director Bill Carr in Widdrington Station, Assistant Director Richard Powell in Hexham, Community Development Officer Chris Barker in Haltwhistle and Judith James, Administration Assistant in Hexham. This was a sad loss of experienced people. We are very grateful to them for the way in which they coped with this difficult period, and of course for all they have given to CCN over a number of years. We wish them well for the future.

Then I must express gratitude to those staff who remain, for their commitment and cooperation during the transition and for being willing in a number of cases to reduce their hours of employment. All that has meant that we were able to get back on track with our strategic review and produce a new Business Plan for the next three years which sets some clear priorities for our future direction. Our major internal priority is to improve our communications, both within the organisation and to the wider world. The web-site, Community News, drawing the media's attention to the many good specific outcomes of the support for the communities of the county, and increasing awareness of CCN's wider role, are all part of that. But communication needs to be two way and we are pledged to find ways in which you can let us know of things that are of concern to you which either we can take up and act upon or influence others to do so.

Continuing support for local community organisations, mobilising the voluntary and community sectors as a whole, and particularly within localities relating to the 'natural communities' of the Northumberland Local Area Agreement, and building links with and active collaboration with the public sector in practice and policy, describe the three main priorities for CCN's work in the county.

As well as the increased load on staff members, the last year has also meant a great deal more work for the Executive. This too has been restructured and new members are being recruited to try to ensure that we continue to have the right mix of skills and geographical spread to carry out the work with greater accountability. Again gratitude is due to all of them for all the extra hours which have been demanded, and to our President, His Grace the Duke of Northumberland, for his continuing support during this period.

And so as I write this Introduction to the Annual report for 2005 – 2006, it feels as if that year was very much a watershed, and that we are now entering yet another new phase in the life of the Community Council of Northumberland. We look to all of you to help us in making this new phase one appropriate to our times, and as creative and productive as in the past in supporting, giving voice to, the local communities of the county, and influencing the policy and decision makers who help shape their lives.



Venerable Bob Langley
Chairman

COMMUNITY COUNCIL STAFF as at 31st March 2005



David Francis
Director



Alan Hedley
Assistant Director



George Courtice
Senior Development Officer



Christina Hall
Office Manager



Susan Andrew-Stewart
Administrative Assistant



Linda Frater
Finance Officer



Margaret Tweddell
Assistant Finance Officer



Carol Megson
Assistant Finance Officer



Mervyn Anthony
Project Manager Renewable
Energy at Local Level



Melanie Greenwood
Administrative Assistant,
REALL



Colette Barker
Outreach Development Worker,
Clayport



Kate Whitehead
Project Worker
Carer Link Project



Jean Worth
Project Worker,
Carer Link Project



Neil Wilson
Leader+ Project Manager



Dawn Brodie-Clarke
Leader+ Administrator



Kelvin Rushworth
NNVA - Berwick



Terri Bearhope
Administrative Assistant NNVA -
Berwick



Mark Shipperlee
Project Manager - BizFizz



Els Nichol
Community Development
Officer, Berwick Area



Ken Walters
CDO, Rothbury Area



Jane Hart
CDO, Bellingham Area



Julia Sharpley
CDO, Alnwick Area

These staff work on activities which are largely determined by CCN. In addition, we employ and support some staff on behalf of other voluntary bodies.

OUR VISION

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

Vision	CCN's vision is of communities in Northumberland that are vibrant, inclusive, confident, effective and capable of sustaining themselves.
Mission	<p>Our mission is to support communities in Northumberland in realising the vision.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● Enabling local communities to shape their own future ● Ensuring that all sections of society have an opportunity to be involved in decisions affecting their lives ● Giving special attention to those most disadvantaged. ● Responding flexibly to urgent matters raised by voluntary and community organisations
Roles	<p>Our key roles as a support organisation to new and existing community and voluntary sector organisations in Northumberland are:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● Developing the capacity of local voluntary and community groups to identify unmet need and to work to meet this need by building up the skills base of individuals within these organisations ● Facilitating the development of new, and supporting existing networks of local voluntary and community groups, to enable them to be a mechanism for developing collaborative work across the sector ● Enabling the diverse views of the local voluntary and community sector to be voiced, and to be a conduit for them to be heard, within the decision making structures of other bodies, locally, regionally and nationally

OVER THE PAST YEAR...

This was an exceptionally challenging year for our organisation. The considerable volume of community development and programme management support which we provided through the European Objective 2 programme came to an abrupt end in September 2005, due to a cessation of European funding. This unexpected decision came 9 months after the submission of our funding application and 5 months into the delivery of a new service level agreement with the Government Office for the North East. It required an immediate and significant reduction in our activities and commitments, including the closure of offices in Haltwhistle, Bellingham, Widdrington Station, Rothbury and Alnwick, and the loss of valued staff at assistant director, development worker and administrative assistant levels.

In December 2005, we opened discussions with a wide range of stakeholders and agreed a new business plan and action plan before the start of the new financial year, based on a consolidated staff team and a balanced budget. The key features of these new plans include:

- a continued fieldwork service based on Berwick, Alnwick, Morpeth and Hexham
- a continuation of specialist support for parish councils and community buildings and on topics such as charity law, legal structures, management and VAT
- an enhanced role in supporting local and county-wide networking within the voluntary and community sector

- as far as possible, to provide a voice for communities, voluntary organisations and rural areas, in those circumstances where they cannot speak for themselves

In addition, we have strengthened many of our internal operations and the involvement of trustees in our work, and we are also developing our arms' length communications media, including our website and our bi-monthly newsletter Northumberland Community News.

One of the inevitable outcomes of these changes is a reduced capacity to host and incubate other people's projects, such as the employment and support of staff for development trusts, and innovative projects such as Biz Fizz and our former rural stress work. Nevertheless, we are continuing to support a number of outside bodies or projects in this way and supporting them to a point where they may either become independent or otherwise reach a natural conclusion.

European programmes

From 2001 to 2005 we acted as 'package co-ordinators' for the operation of the local community 'Priority 4' elements of the Objective 2 programme in rural Northumberland. This work included:

- promoting the up-take of EU funds, both by local communities and by outside agencies such as colleges and training organisations
- advising individual community groups re the development of projects and the availability of different funding sources
- promoting effective co-ordination and complementarity between 3 key EU programmes (Objective 2, LEADER and the England Rural Development Programme)
- convening and supporting a package partnership and 8 community panels, composed almost entirely of community representatives
- working with colleagues in Blyth Valley and Wansbeck to make effective use of a diminishing programme budget
- assisting GONE with the administration of grants claims and monitoring/checking

During this time, we helped to deploy about £600k of Objective 2 funds within rural Northumberland. Although this work has now ceased, we continue to administer the European LEADER + programme for North Northumberland, and we have actively assisted the DEFRA Rural Development Service in deploying both regionally-available and additional national funds into local community projects.

We have also undertaken a central co-ordinating and administrative role re the Northumberland-wide GOLD scheme (Grant Opportunities for Local Development) on behalf of a range of agencies and local communities.

A voice for voluntary and community interests

Although we work closely with a wide range of bodies and sectors, our main concern is for the needs and interests of communities and voluntary bodies. Our support for the Northumberland Voluntary and Community Sector Consortium and for community panels is referred to later in this report. We also monitor local conditions and act as a mouthpiece on behalf of this constituency. Although we have had to focus on our own restructuring and the retention of direct service-delivery, we have sought to influence a number of decisions and programmes.

Here are some examples:

- (1) DEFRA Social and Community Programme – we made an input to DEFRA's nationwide consultation on the Programme, we assisted with the regional promotion of the new opportunities, we organised some consultative events for local communities, we helped draw up the priorities for financial support in Northumberland, we lobbied (unsuccessfully) for the inclusion of Northern Tyne & Wear's rural communities in Northumberland programme, and we agreed to take the lead on a community buildings and a parish council development initiative.
- (2) Schools – we encouraged local communities to take an interest in the future organisation and deployment of schools in Northumberland, including the major question of whether to change from the current 3-tier system of first, middle and high schools. We voiced our reservations about the prospective loss of middle schools, especially in the county's smaller rural service centres, and we were keen to promote collaboration in order to retain small, village-based first or primary schools. However, it was apparent that key decisions had been substantially formed several years earlier, reducing the realistic scope for local discretion and alternative solutions.
- (3) Licensing – we helped community building committees to understand the new licensing arrangements which brought together several previously separate licensing systems, concerned with alcohol, and various forms of

public entertainment. We tried – in vain – to reduce the amount of paperwork involved. We also voiced concerns, through the Commission for Rural Communities, about the disproportionate impact on small-scale retailers, including village shops and garages, which sell small amounts of alcohol.

- (4) Local Area Agreement – LAA's are a government-inspired initiative, to encourage co-operation and a collective responsibility among (primarily) public bodies for the attainment of a wide range of objectives concerned with young people, elderly people, health, economic development and safer/stronger communities. As well as representing the VCS interests within the LAA's CIG (Co-ordination and Implementation Group) we have tried to promote and interpret the LAA to local people. It is possible that the LAA will bring fresh opportunities for voluntary bodies to deliver services which are currently the responsibility of local authorities and NHS bodies. We have a contribution to make in prioritising and 'enforcing' the new Compact and in helping voluntary bodies to make the most of any new contracts and service-delivery opportunities. Equally important, we

have been supporting the development of the LAA's Natural Communities concept: a means of defining appropriate scales of locality across which communities can work together to influence the provision of services and even take a direct responsibility for organising their own initiatives. To some extent, these new networks may be a successor to the previous Objective 2 community panels, in some areas.

- (5) Competitions – although our days of organising major competitions such as the Best Kept Village and Village Ventures are in the past, we did undertake the promotion and judging of the Calor/DEFRA sponsored Building Community Life Competition in Northumberland. The strength of community life within many of our small villages was clearly demonstrated by the results of the competition which placed Horsley (328 residents) in third place, Norham (300 residents) in second place, and Wingates (138 residents) in first place. Wingates went on to represent the County in the regional and national competitions and were delighted to win first prize in the Business Section for the Northern Region. CCN are pleased to use an image of Wingates as their watermark on the cover of this year's Annual Report.

SUPPORTING PARISH COUNCILS

The Community Council has a well-established commitment to supporting local community groups, including parish councils. At the centre of this support are the services which we provide to the Northumberland Association of Local Councils—the local government association for parish and town councils in Northumberland and Newcastle. Through this arrangement, our Director David Francis is also NALC's Secretary and he and his CCN colleagues provide to NALC and its members a range of professional and administrative services.

Over the past year, through NALC we have provided advice on a wide range of topics, such as legal matters, insurance, good practice at council meetings, VAT and other taxation, grant aid, licensing, websites, charity trusteeship, the Code of Conduct, Freedom of Information Act and many others. We also ran 9 training events specifically for parish councils: some at an introductory level for new clerks and councillors, and others of a more specialist nature, e.g. on accounts and audit, employment matters and the national qualification the Certificate in Local Council Administration.

NALC continued to promote the Quality Parish Council scheme, through talks to individual councils and a region-wide event in Durham, which David Francis chaired. One further parish council achieved Quality status during the year: Blakelaw and North Fenham, in the northern parts of Newcastle, a very new parish council which had been created as a result of a community petition.

A number of parish councils continued work on the production of parish plans/community appraisals. CCN and NALC ran a 'Interim Parish Plans' grants scheme, using DEFRA money, offering grants of typically £2-3000 for new parish plans work. Although this scheme was slow to take off, 7 grants totalling £15k were awarded to parish councils throughout Northumberland: Beadnell, Corsenside, Horncliffe, Mitford, Norham, Rochester and Shilbottle. Several grants for parish plans/community appraisals were also awarded, to other communities, through the GOLD scheme.

NALC has made efforts to engage with the new Local

Area Agreement for Northumberland, and this was the principal topic for the presentation and discussion at NALC's AGM in October 2005. The LAA is deliberately designed to cut across traditional departmental and organisational boundaries, to encourage a range of partners (mainly from the public sector) to pursue targets jointly, in the 4 main themes of: economic development; safer and stronger communities; healthy communities and older people; children and young people. It is not entirely clear where certain mainstream services fit in (e.g. social housing, public transport, leisure services), and also how parish councils can contribute to the planning and delivery of the LAA.

During the year, the Government through its Office of the Deputy Prime Minister (now, the Department for Communities and Local Government) initiated discussion about a new shape for local government, based upon the 'Double Devolution' from central government, through stronger and more-strategic local authorities to stronger and more-confident neighbourhood-level governance structures. This debate has opened the door to the possible creation of many more parish-level councils across England, especially in the towns and cities, including London. Speculation has

also increased again about local government reorganisation, merging county and district authorities to form larger units which are more appropriate for city-wide governance. The forthcoming Local Government White Paper is expected to pave the way for such reform.

During the year, NALC also took the initiative over a diverse range of other policy areas, including, for example:

- the operation of the Licensing Act 2003, and its impact on local premises
- the review of the Code of Conduct and of the Quality scheme
- parish council involvement in the Hadrian's Wall developments, County Council Area Committees and other bodies
- the Clean Neighbourhoods and Environment Act
- the DEFRA Social and Community Programme

NALC's own annual report for 2005-06, together with its accounts, are available on request from our offices in Tower Buildings, Morpeth.

COMMUNITY REGENERATION

Since the mid 1990's CCN has built a network of community development staff, who have been based in local centres throughout most parts of the county, in order to engage with and support a wide range of community groups and active individuals.

We have supported communities in devising and taking forward their own regeneration initiatives, whether by self-help or by drawing-in the services and resources of agencies from outside the community. We have encouraged the involvement of what may be regarded as disadvantaged or socially excluded groups. We have facilitated and developed better links with the voluntary sector, and also partnerships with statutory bodies, and we have actively influenced policies and decisions, for the benefit of local voluntary action.

Our Community Development Officers cover the 4 rural districts of Northumberland and are based in offices in Alnwick, Berwick, Hexham and Morpeth. Also within our staff we have a number of experts who offer their specialities to communities throughout the county: for example, on charity and local government law, constitutions, grant aid, community buildings, taxation, rural services, renewable energy and employment issues.

Some examples of work done are:

North Tynies

North Tynies Childcare opened its new building on Bellingham First and Middle Schools' Site on 18 April 2005. The project was the culmination of nearly two years' work by a steering group made up of many committed people, voluntary and professional, including Jane Hart, CCN's Community Development Officer covering the North Tyne and Redesdale area. Northumberland County Council built the building with funds received through the Neighbourhood Nursery Initiative and it was equipped with help from many generous funders.

At the present time the building comprises a "tots" room for 0-3s, a preschool room, kitchen and multi-purpose adult room. It offers childcare, education for both the Foundation Stage and Birth to three, and activity sessions for all such as "Messy Play", "Lets Dance", "Music-time" and "Drop-in" sessions. North Tynies supports the wider community through preschools in the North Tyne First Schools and through Childcare Associates (local child minders associated to North Tynies).

Ofsted has acknowledged the North Tynies success with a glowing inspection report given within 6 months of opening! The success of the project can be

attributed to great flexibility of service to users made possible by a flexible part time staff. The Project has grown from a register of 64 children after 6mths to 88 at the end of the first year. (This has grown to 106 by June 06.) To celebrate North Tynies' success a 1st Birthday Party was held. Steering Group members, Committee members, funders, local schools, Parish Councillors, Sure Start Northumberland and Social Enterprise Northumberland were all invited, together with *Maisy Mouse* and *Snow White* and the *7 Dwarfs*.

The project continues to develop and now provides outreach childcare activity within some of the North Tyne Toddler groups and a Parent Club together with the local Health Visitor. The next milestone will be Children's Centre status, as North Tynies is part of the Phase 2 Children's Centre Initiative. This will mean an extension to enable the project to care for more children at any one time.

Smile please!



Happiness is a computer



Messy play

From Coquetdale to Castle Morpeth

The closure of our Rothbury Office saw our Community Development Officer for the Coquetdale area, Ken Walters, moving to take up similar duties in Castle Morpeth. Before he left, some of the projects that he reported on last year had finally achieved real success. The Upper Coquetdale Community Taxi group took delivery of a brand new minibus in October and the launch day was attended by His Grace the Duke of Northumberland. The minibus operates within the Transport in North Northumberland (TINN) brokerage and provides an important community resource for residents of Coquetdale and North Northumberland. Ken and Marc Johnson of North Northumberland Rural Transport Partnership (NNRTP) supported throughout the hard working organising group. It is somewhat ironic that shortly after delivery of the vehicle, notification was received that funding for the various transport partnerships was coming to an end. Rural transport issues continue to be a major factor in the life of many of our isolated rural communities and without the support of workers like Ken and Marc the opportunity for other communities to emulate the Upper Coquetdale taxi group will be much restricted.

Last year Ken reported on the embryonic Rothbury Cinema group. This year has seen this group also achieve real success and The Jubilee Hall is now home to Rothbury's very own cinema. The opening night in early March coincided with the worst snowstorm of the year but despite such inclement weather the residents of the village turned out in good numbers to support the event. The sustainability of community buildings is an ongoing concern for many groups and it is hoped that in addition to providing the community with an excellent leisure activity the revenue generated will assist the long-term sustainability of the hall.

One of the first groups assisted by Ken in his new role in the Castle Morpeth area was the Pegswood Dance Club.

Success for teenage Northumberland Eco Wild Team

A teenage Wildlife Watch group made news early in the year when it was announced that they had become the overall winner of the Volvo UK Young Environmentalist Awards 2004/5!

Up in the Berwick Borough area, the Northumberland Eco Wild Team, NEWTs for short, were working on a project to create an environmental farm holiday to share their ideas for protecting the environment in the home and on the farm. The teenagers researched how a farm cottage could be renovated and furnished with

as little impact on the environment as possible and have participated in the practical 'green' refurbishment. The team put together a huge research document looking into insulation, eco paint, compost toilets, timber, flooring, soft furnishings and renewable energy. They have created a resource pack from their findings and have designed and developed a website: www.thenewts.org.uk which tells the full story.

As well as receiving £500 in prize money towards their project, the team were invited to attend the Volvo Adventure Conference in Gothenburg in May 2005. The conference was an international three day event where young people discussed their ideas for local environmental projects with experts and drew up a statement on sustainability that was submitted to the United Nations Environment Programme.

In a press release the NEWTS acknowledged the help given to them by CCN with the statement, 'We'd like to thank Community Development Officer, Els Nicol. She told us of the Volvo Awards and made this very exciting trip to Sweden possible!'



Tynedale "Meet the Funders" 2005

Early in the year the Community Council of Northumberland, jointly with Tynedale District Council, organised a "Meet the Funders" event at the Tynedale Function Suite, Tyne Green, Hexham. 186 invites were issued to various organisations in the Tynedale area and of these 85 were returned. On the day 83 people attended.

The funders who attended included:-

- Barclays Bank Community Programme
- Grant Opportunities for Local Development (GOLD) scheme – the North East of England Objective 2 Priority 4 European funded grant scheme managed by Community Council of Northumberland
- Community Foundation serving Tyne and Wear and Northumberland
- Co-operative
- Northern Rock Foundation
- Northumberland National Park Sustainable Development Fund
- Tynedale Council Small Grants
- Tynedale Rural Transport Small Grants

In addition to the funders the following organisations provided advice and support:-

- Community Council of Northumberland
- Unity Trust Bank
- Northumberland College Bus
- J4B (providers of the Funding Tynedale website)

Workshops were held covering:-

- Successful Funding Applications (run by Wendy Howe, (NCT))
- Monitoring & Evaluation (run by Jane Hart, CCN)
- Fundraising online (run by Ian Jeffries, J4B)

Feedback forms were given to everyone who attended and 31% completed the evaluation. Of those, 92% thought the event was useful, 84% thought there was good advance publicity, 85% thought the event was well organised. Although, there were negative comments on the range of funders and the necessity to queue at busy times, the majority of people were very enthusiastic and complimentary about the day. Because of this success, three events are planned for October 2006 in Hexham, Belford and Morpeth.



Local Network Fund helps community groups build on village hall GOLD grant successes.

Two community groups for children, whose users straddle the Alnwick and Berwick Borough Council areas, have benefited from grants from the Local Network Fund this year with help from Julia Sharpley, Development Officer for Alnwick District. Both of these groups use village halls which have, earlier in the year, accessed GOLD (Grant Opportunities for Local Development) grants through the Community Council of Northumberland to improve their facilities.

Lucker and District Sports Club

In October 2005, a group of parents living between the towns of Alnwick and Berwick were comparing notes on the difficulties of accessing sporting opportunities for their school age children. The long round trip of, in many cases, 40 miles to Berwick or twenty miles to Alnwick and the associated costs in petrol and time meant that many children just couldn't hope to take part in indoor sports after school. At the same time, a village hall in Lucker at the centre of this area had recently had its floor renovated through a GOLD grant accessed via the Community Council of Northumberland and was a suitably large venue for indoor sporting activities.

The parents wondered if they could get training or help to start their own group and approached the Community Council. By February 2005, the group had adopted a suitable constitution, developed a child protection policy, opened a bank account, assembled a budget and completed an application to the Local Network Fund. The application was successful to the tune of almost £6000 for a range of equipment, venue hire, coaching and training for volunteers. As Alistair McCall, a parent of one of the children put it, "the children in our area are now jumping for joy – literally!"



Children at Lucker and District Sports Club

Little Acorns Pre-School

The children at Little Acorns have also benefited from two successful grant applications made this year to GOLD and LNF through the Community Council. The GOLD grant was awarded to South Charlton village hall, where Little Acorns is based, to contribute to refurbishment and improved access. Then, in January 2005, the parent committee of Little Acorns Pre-School, approached the Community Council of Northumberland with a very different issue. Keen to develop the opportunities for outdoor play at the village hall, the pre-school leaders and parents wanted help to access funding to enclose an outdoor playground and woodland area adjacent to the hall and to provide suitable playsuits so that the children could enjoy the outdoors in all weathers. The subsequent grant success and help from the Northumberland Estates have meant that children under 5 can access safe outdoor play and exercise, away from the dangerous farm vehicles and equipment which surround the often quite remote places where they live.

Border Links

One of the more northerly groups assisted by CCN staff is Border Links, a new social enterprises based in Cornhill, a village on the English side of the River Tweed.

Els Nicol, CCN's Community Development Officer covering the Berwick area has been supporting this group with funding advice and project development advice and in February 2006 she was invited to attend the launch of the group.

Border Links Limited has been developed with additional support and advice from Enterprise for Inclusion and Social Enterprise Teams on both sides of the Border. Its aim is to provide a high quality, local service for adults with learning disabilities living in rural North Northumberland and the Scottish Borders.

With support and advice coming from different organisations it is a good example of partnership working between voluntary and community sector infrastructure bodies not constrained by country borders.

One initiative that has found great enthusiasm from all is the 'Veggie Box' idea. People sign up for a weekly delivery, to be collected from their local Village Hall. Border Links buy in the vegetables and other local produce from wholesalers nearby in Milfield. Veggie Boxes are accompanied by suggested menus and recipes and cost in the region of £5.

The picture shows the Border Links Team with a typical "Veggie Box".



Pegswood Community Project

The Pegswood Community Project has been an invaluable asset to the residents of Pegswood and the neighbouring area for a good number of years. Originally established in 1991 as the Pegswood Open

Project it was run from a terraced house in the village. In 2001 it changed its name to Pegswood Community Project when it acquired larger new premises that enabled it to expand and provide a base for a number of community groups and organisations. Current users include After School homework groups, a Community Café, a youth drop-in and IT facilities provided by Ukonline. An Arts worker, Elaine Porter is employed to support both adult and children's activities.

Over a number of years Bill Carr, CCN's Assistant Director covering the South East area, has supported the project in various ways. Linda Carpenter, the Project's co-ordinator said "We have received considerable support from CCN, especially in our transition from small scale to larger project. Support was given regarding our management committee and management issues including supervision and appraisals, employment and payroll of certain staff. We were also advised on legal responsibilities such as VAT and licensing and given references for funders. Importantly CCN has been a source of information on developments in the voluntary sector, training, grant funding etc."

GROUPS ASSISTED YEAR END 2006

Throughout the year CCN staff have assisted a number of groups which can broadly be categorised under 3 headings:

- Community Groups/voluntary organisations
- Partnerships, funders and strategic bodies
- Community panels. Some of the groups assisted include:

Community Groups/voluntary organisations

Acomb Parish Council
 Adderstone & Lucker Parish Council
 Alnmouth and Lesbury Cricket Club
 Amble 1st Responders
 Ancroft Village Hall
 ATAC
 AVM Support Group UK
 Bamburgh Parish Council
 Beadnell Parish Council
 Belford Development Trust
 Belford Railway Group
 Belford St Mary's Church
 Bellview
 Berwick Borough Crime & Disorder Partnership
 Berwick Borough Family Centre
 Berwick Borough Safe Steps
 Berwick CAB
 Berwick Coastwatch
 Berwick Community Development Trust
 Berwick Community Mental Health Trust

Berwick Gymnastics Club
 Berwick Sailing Club
 Border Links
 Bowsden Parish Council
 Bowsden Village Hall
 Branxton Parish Council
 Branxton Village Hall
 Breamish Hall, Powburn
 Cambo Village Hall
 Castlegate Area Residents Association
 Chatton Church
 Chatton Pre-school
 Coquetdale Resource Group
 Corbridge Youth Initiative
 Cornhill Parish Council
 Corsenside Parish Council
 Craster Memorial Hall
 Creative Arts
 Creighton Memorial Hall, Embleton
 Eglington Church
 Eglington Village Hall

Ellingham Parish Council
 Elsdon Gallery
 Embleton Junior Football Club
 Embleton Play Park
 Fawside Foundation
 Friends of Addycombe
 Friends of Whittingham Vale
 Friends of Wooler Churchyard
 Gallery Youth Project, Alnmouth
 Glanton Village Hall
 Glendale Gateway Trust
 Glendale Sports & Leisure Association
 Haltwhistle Community Workshops
 Haltwhistle Cricket Club
 Haltwhistle Summer Play Scheme
 Harbottle Show
 Harbottle Village Hall
 Heritage Centre, Bellingham
 Hexham Book Festival
 Hexham War Gaming Club
 Hipsburn Playgroup

Holburn Village Green Project
 Horncliffe Parish Council
 Humshaugh Online Centre
 Ilderton Church Hall
 Ingram Village Hall
 Kielder Trail Reavers
 King Edward VI School
 King Edwards VI Community Education
 Knaresdale with Kirkhaugh Community Association
 Lambley Village Hall
 Learning Choices, Rothbury
 Lego League
 Lesbury Village Hall
 Linton Village Hall
 Longhorsley Parish Council
 Longframlington Church
 Longframlington Methodist Church
 Longframlington Parish Council
 Longframlington Village Action
 Longhorsley Playgroup
 Longhoughton Development Trust
 Longhoughton Drop In Sports Club
 Lowick Pre-school
 Lowick Village Hall
 LSP Culture & Heritage Sector Board
 Lucker and District Sports Club
 Lucker Watson Memorial Hall
 Maltings Summer Drama Project
 Matfen Village Hall
 Merse Singers
 Milecastle Housing Residents Panel
 Milfield Methodist Church
 Minerva Prints
 Mitford Village Hall
 National Childbirth Trust
 Nethererton Computer Club
 Nethererton First School
 Nethererton Village Hall

Newbrough Town Hall
 Newbrough, Warden and Fourstones Pantomime
 Norham Parish Council
 Norham Public Hall
 North Country Leisure
 North Northumberland District Scout Council
 North Northumberland Rural Transport Partnership
 North Northumberland Village Hall Consortium
 North Northumberland Women's Network
 North Sunderland & Seahouses D. T
 North Tyne & Redesdale Community Partnership
 North Tyne and Redesdale Computer Association
 North Tynies Neighbourhood Nursery
 Northumberland Daybreak
 Northumberland Mediation Services
 Northumberland STARS (Small Tasks And Repair Service) Tynedale Steering Group
 Ovingham Parish Council
 Pegswood Community Project
 Pegswood Dance Club
 Ponteland and District over 60 Club
 Ponteland Camera Club
 Rede Tyne Coquet Society Sports Centre, Otterburn
 Remembering Flodden
 Rennington and Rock Parish Council
 Rennington Village Hall
 Riding Mill Parish Hall
 Riding Mill Village Hall
 Rothbury and Coquetdale Youth Project
 Rothbury Cinema Group

Rothbury Coquetdale Vision
 Rothbury Jubilee Hall
 Rothbury Parish Council
 Rothbury Scouts
 Rothbury Youth Project
 Safe Steps Berwick (re. setting up in Alnwick)
 Seahouses Community Sports Centre
 Seahouses Parish Council
 Seahouses Youth Drop-in
 Shilbottle Friendly Frogs
 Shilbottle Homing Society
 Shilbottle Parish Forum

Partnerships, funders and strategic bodies

Alnwick Rural Area Network
 Bridging The Borders
 Hidden Britain
 Mid Tyne Community Trust
 Northumberland Community Development Network
 Northumberland National Park Authority
 Social Enterprise Northumberland
 Tynedale Community Development Network

The 8 Community panels are:

Alnwick
 Berwick and Coast
 Glendale
 Rothbury
 Coalfield Villages
 Eastern Tynedale
 West and South Tynedale
 North Tyne and Redesdale

NORTH NORTHUMBERLAND CARER LINK PROJECT

North Northumberland Carer Link Project is a registered charity with their trustees having the responsibility to administer and manage the project. In hosting the project CCN assists the trustees with the management and supervision of the staff, providing support and advice on charity legislation and other matters pertinent to the voluntary and community sector as well as being responsible for the employment of Carer Link staff.

On 1 April 2005 the project was still very much in its infancy with the second co-ordinator taking up post to cover Berwick district. Jean Worth joined Kate

Whitehead, the Alnwick Co-ordinator, who had done much of the preparatory work in establishing policies for the charity.

Initially, the main objective of the project was to link Carers through a confidential telephone service by matching carers, who wanted someone to talk to, with a trained volunteer listener and this service was established. Taking on the role of a carer link listener offered Carers/former Carers personal satisfaction, skills development and the opportunity to share what they had learnt from their own experiences appropriately. A training package was established for volunteer

listeners which focused on developing effective listening skills. It comprised three separate sessions which were offered to volunteers in both Alnwick and Berwick districts.

The feedback from carers who have received the service was that it was very helpful to talk to someone who understood what it was like because they were, or had been, carers. They valued being able to talk to someone without having to explain things or worry that the listener would think they were being selfish talking about their own needs.

Reflecting on the benefit that carers had derived from the listening service, the Co-ordinators considered how this could be extended to more people and began telephoning carers on the database once a month to find out how they were. Subsequent feedback

indicated that carers really appreciated knowing that someone was concerned about them.

An additional benefit which emerged from direct contact with carers was the opportunities offered to expand the project services in response to comments from carers. Monthly face to face generic support groups were established in Alnwick and Berwick providing an opportunity for carers to share their concerns in a supportive environment. Other services which have been established are individual emotional support, information/signposting, training and representation of carers' views at County Carers Strategy meetings. A regular newsletter has been produced which is sent to all carers on the database as well as other organizations and professional contacts with whom the project works in close partnership.

VILLAGE HALLS AND COMMUNITY BUILDINGS

The term village hall is often used generically to cover all community buildings in Northumberland. The "model" village hall is established as a trust with its deed identifying them as being facilities provided specifically for multi user groups with each of the user groups having a representative on the management committee of the hall. These village hall trusts are charitable organisations with the management committee members being the trustees of the charity. In amongst the "model" village halls there are dozens of other community buildings such as Women's Institute halls, church halls, scout huts, recreational pavilions, day centres and community centres which have initially been set up to serve a single specific user group but many of which now open their doors to a wider community. Such buildings also fall within the remit of the village halls advice service offered by CCN, whether in urban or rural areas.

Within this service the specialist role of Village Halls Adviser (VHA) is filled by Alan Hedley, Assistant Director who fits it in with his various management duties within the Finance and Administration sections of CCN and his function of producing and editing the CCN's bi-monthly newspaper Northumberland Community News (NCN).

With assistance from CCN's community development officers the service has been able to respond to the needs of a great many of the 180 or so village halls and community buildings throughout the county, making visits to halls to talk to committee members and writing letters in response to enquiries. In addition numerous telephone and email enquiries were responded to, village hall-related news items produced

for publication in NCN and information/training sessions provided on specific subjects.

Over the years the subject matters covered have remained reasonably consistent:

- * Project planning, including funding matters
- * Constitutional advice including the clarification of trust deeds and acting as an intermediary in correspondence with the Charity Commission
- * Insurance matters
- * Access including advice on the requirements of the Disability Discrimination Act 1995
- * Licensing matters including entertainment, health & hygiene, copyright and permissions and gaming and lottery.

The Licensing Act 2003

In the year ending 31 March 2006 the Licensing Act 2003 has occupied a good percentage of the VHA's time and that of hall management committees. Prior to November 2005 the situation was that under the Local Government (Miscellaneous Provisions) Act 1982 all places which were used for public dancing, music, or public displays, contests or exhibitions of sport or other types of entertainment were required to hold a Public Entertainment Licence (PEL). The licence regulated/controlled: the safety of the premises when members of the public were present (fire safety, maximum numbers in attendance, hygiene) and the prevention of nuisance (noise, rowdiness in and out of the premises) and needed to be renewed annually.

Halls without an alcohol licence (the vast majority in Northumberland), who wished to hold events where

alcohol was to be sold, were required to apply for an occasional licence to the magistrate's court - there was no limit on the number of occasional licences they could have in a year.

The LA 2003 brought in a new licensing regime. Halls that were used for regulated entertainment were required to apply for a Premises Licence (PL). There was also an opportunity for halls to apply for the PL to include the sale of alcohol at events, though the conditions were stringent.

Most community buildings in Northumberland that held a PEL applied for a PL excluding the sale of alcohol (because of the attached conditions). In such halls, when an event is now held that requires the supply of alcohol it must be covered by a Temporary Event Notice (TEN). These permissions are similar to the old occasional licence but there is now a limit of 12 on the number of TENs that may be given for any one premises per annum and applications are made to the local authority and not the magistrate's court.

The application procedure for the new licensing system was not simple. CCN wrote to all halls, published guidance material on their website and in their newspaper Northumberland Community News and organised two well attended information evenings in May and June 2005 at Wooler and Wylam. Throughout the first 8 months of the year many halls requested and received advice. A good partnership developed between CCN and the appropriate licensing staff in the various local authority districts. CCN is grateful to Paddy Gasgoine, Blyth Valley, who led the Wooler event and Phil Solderquest from Tynedale Council who led the Wylam event. Thanks go also to David Wilson (Berwick), Yvonne Durham (Alnwick) and Jim Pendrich (Castle Morpeth) who supported Paddy in the question and answer session at Wooler and Tasmin Hardy (Castle Morpeth) who, along with Jim, supported Phil at the Wylam event.

Village Hall Consortia

During the difficult time preceding the new licensing system a number of halls in the Berwick area met together with David Wilson, Berwick Borough Council to work through the completion of the application forms. This working together offered an opportunity for CCN and some of the halls to talk about the formation of a village halls consortium for North Northumberland. Exploratory meeting in early 2006 led to the formation of North Northumberland Village Halls Consortium later in 2006. A strong management committee from hall representatives promises greater collaboration between halls in the future.

Tynedale Village Halls Consortium had one meeting during the year. There may be scope for some combined events in the future.

Refurbishment and re-build projects

Determination, application, tenacity, ingenuity, industrious, are all words that can be associated with most management committees of village halls but perhaps even more so with halls engaged in refurbishment or rebuild projects. It is rare that a year passes without some major refurbishment project taking place and the year-end March 2006 was no exception with projects being completed at Ingram Village Hall, Whalton Village Hall, Ancroft Memorial Hall and South Charton Village Hall.

Funding sources for refurbishment or rebuild projects have continued to be scarce with DEFRA's England Rural Development Programme providing a lifeline for most of the projects in the year.

At Whalton the hall committee had the task of arranging alternative accommodation for users for a great part of 2005 as their premises underwent refurbishment. Funding sources included the Barbour Trust, DEFRA, Castle Morpeth Borough Council, the Countryside Agency and Whalton Village Hall. CCN's Alan Hedley (VHA) and Ken Walters (Community Development Officer) were pleased to give some advice along the way and were delighted to be present on 17 September 2005 when the hall was officially re-opened by Dame Margaret Barbour. A large picture window providing an uninterrupted and breathtaking view South across open countryside is a unique feature that has led to the building being referred to as "the Village Hall with a spectacular view".



The new Ancroft Memorial Hall was officially opened on 14 October 2005 replacing the old building which had been taken from an airstrip at Haggerston in 1921. Jim Turner, Chairman stressed the team effort that had gone into developing and building the new community facility. Bill Nesbit, Treasurer, explained that a great deal of work had gone into securing the funding of the fine new facility and encouraged people to use it. At the opening ceremony CCN's Alan Hedley and Els Nicol (Community Development

Officer) received special thanks for their help and support with regard to finding funding sources such as DEFRA and the Northern Rock Foundation.



Ancroft's Management Committee at the opening of the new building

Four years ago Ingram Village Hall was a Church Hall. With assistance from CCN the management committee went through the procedures of establishing a village hall trust and early in 2005 were successful in obtaining their first funding award. With a grant from GOLD, a scheme administered by CCN, they were able to replace the windows and doors in their building.



Ingram's management committee by the new windows

In December 2005 work began on the new Stonehaugh Community Hall. The building is to make use of many forms of renewable energy and will be an exemplar of a sustainable hall. The building came in kit form from Finland in what must be one of the largest "flatpacks" seen in Northumberland. CCN have been involved in advising on constitutional matters, project planning and fund raising since 2000. The building was a long way from completion on 31 March 2006. Fuller details will appear in CCN's next Annual Report but if you want to know more go to Stonehaugh's website at www.stonehough.com and view the Diary section.

GOLD opportunities

A number of halls benefited from funding from the GOLD Scheme (Grant Opportunities for Local Development), administered by the Community Council of Northumberland, during the year end March 2006.

Whittingham Village Hall gained a GOLD grant for new crockery and cutlery at the hall to save people from having to carry their own to events!

Watson Memorial Hall, Lucker used their GOLD award towards buying curtains, renovating floor and providing an accessible toilet.

South Charlton Village Hall's GOLD grant provided a ramp for disabled access. Earlier funding from other sources provided new kitchen facilities.

Netherton Village Hall benefited from works to their computer suite via GOLD.

Felton Village Hall used a GOLD grant to equip their new fitness centre.

Wark Town Hall benefited from GOLD grants to create new, accessible toilets and to improve the computer suite.

Tarset Village Hall received a GOLD grant to provide curtains to make the hall more suitable for film shows and training courses.

Rede, Tyne and Coquet Society used a GOLD grant to improve the acoustics in the main hall. This work made the hall more "user friendly", especially for sports coaching.

Greenhead Village Hall received a GOLD grant to enable the appointment of a centre manager to increase the use of the building.

Whitfield Parish Hall used a GOLD grant to undertake a feasibility study into the possible use of an adjacent former mill race to provide hydroelectricity for the hall.

Newton and Bywell Community Hall Trust spent GOLD grants on a scheme design for a new community hall and on new tables for the hall which is currently under construction.

Work in progress

Other halls with refurbishment or rebuild projects in place or planned include Rennington Village Hall, Matfen Village Hall, Newton and Bywell Community Hall, Wark Town Hall, Tarset Village Hall and Rochester Village Hall.

Some of the halls supported by CCN staff throughout the year include:

Ancroft Village Hall	Lambley Village Hall	Shilbottle Skills Centre
Belford St Mary's Church	Lesbury Village Hall	Shilbottle Welfare Hall
Bellingham Town Hall	Linton Village Hall	Slaley Village Hall
Bellview	Lowick VH	Spittal United Reformed Church
Bowsden Village Hall	Lucker (Watson Memorial Hall)	St Georges Church Hall, Morpeth
Branxton Village Hall	Matten Village Hall	St John - Berwick Day Centre
Cambo VH	Mitford Village Hall	St. Cuthbert's Church Hall, Amble
Corsenside Parish Hall	Netherton Village Hall	Stannington Village Hall
Craster Memorial Hall	Newbrough Town Hall	Tarset Village Hall
Creighton Memorial Hall, Embleton	Norham Public Hall	Thropton Village Hall
Eglingham Village Hall	Powburn (Breamish Hall)	Tweedmouth Parish Church Hall
Falstone (Matthew Ridley Memorial Hall)	Rede Tyne and Coquet Society Sports Centre	Warkworth War Memorial Hall
Glanton Village Hall	Rennington Village Hall	Whalton Village Hall
Harbottle Village Hall	Riding Mill Parish Hall	Whitfield Parish Hall
Ilderton Church Hall	Riding Mill Village Hall	Whittingham Memorial Institute
Ingram Village Hall	Rothbury Jubilee Hall	Widdrington WI Hall
Knaresdale with Kirkaugh Community Association	Seahouses Community Sports Centre	Woodhorn & Newbiggin WI Hall

VOLUNTARY ACTION IN NORTH NORTHUMBERLAND

From Voluntary Action to Volunteer Centre

In 1996, the Community Council of Northumberland (CCN) initiated North Northumberland Voluntary Action (NNVA) to serve communities throughout the Borough of Berwick-upon-Tweed and the District of Alnwick. For ten years, right through until March 2006, NNVA had two prime purposes:

- * to assist in the launch, development and support of voluntary organisations, self-help, mutual support and community groups in the field of health and social care
- * to provide a volunteering brokerage service both for individuals wanting to volunteer and for organisations wanting to create and develop a range of volunteering opportunities.

During 2005-2006, CCN Trustees/Senior Staff, NNVA staff and a variety of internal and external professional advisers concluded that NNVA was no longer sustainable as a 'twin-track' organisation and that an exit strategy for the existing project and an action plan for a more sustainable future project should be developed.

Changing environment

A growth in the number of agencies actively involved in NHS 'Choosing Health' priorities and changes in the responsibilities of CCN Community Development Officers meant that NNVA health and social care organisational development and support could be assimilated into the broader role of CCN Community



Development Officers and that NNVA networking and training initiatives could be incorporated into the work of a range of other organisations (eg LSP Health and Wellbeing Sector Board, Berwick Voluntary Forum, Berwick and Alnwick Networks, Development Trusts in Alnwick, Amble, Belford, Berwick, Holy Island, Seahouses and Wooler).

National recognition and future plans

In 2002, in relation to activities as a part-time volunteer bureau, NNVA was awarded the then Volunteering Development England accreditation for achievement of VDE Quality Standards. In 2005, the newly formed national organisation, Volunteering England, granted CCN the sole licence to operate a volunteer centre in North Northumberland and invited NNVA to work towards renewal of Quality Accreditation in September 2006.

In late 2005, it became clear that the new and more sustainable CCN project should be the development and support of Volunteer Centre North Northumberland (VCNN) with the object of providing:

- * a full-time volunteer centre for the larger, smaller and isolated communities in the Borough of Berwick-upon-Tweed and the District of Alnwick and
- * a nationally Quality Accredited volunteering

brokerage service for individuals wanting to freely volunteer their time and talents and organisations in the public, private, voluntary and community sectors wanting to create and develop a range of volunteering opportunities.

Staffing

During the past year, NNVA has seen changes to the staff team from four at the beginning to two at the end.

The NNVA Co-ordinator, Sandi Downing, moved initially to become a permanent CCN Assistant Director and eventually to another voluntary organisation. The NNVA Information Officer, Ian Bell, left to work in the public sector.

Within the emerging VCNN, Kelvin Rushworth became Manager and Terri Bearhope became Berwick Borough Co-ordinator. In due course the aim is for an Alnwick District Co-ordinator to be appointed. The VCNN 'hub office' was established in Belford and VCNN 'spoke offices' were developed in Alnwick and Berwick with plans for more in Amble, Rothbury, Seahouses and Wooler.

Project activities

Health and Social Care Activities

Throughout the year, NNVA has continued both to develop and support a wide range of health and social care self help, mutual support and community groups and also to actively participate in an immense variety of networks and partnerships.

Highlights included the development of the Berwick Borough LSP Health and Wellbeing Sector Board, an evaluation of the Volunteer Managers' Forums in Alnwick and Berwick, the launch of quarterly Get Motivated! Events, planning and organising open discussion sessions with Berwick Voluntary Forum (on 'The local Compact for Northumberland' and the Northumberland Local Area Agreement), devising and implementing an exit strategy for The SPACE Project, the transfer of Berwick STARS to Berwick Voluntary Forum and Northumberland STARS and the merger of the Bewick Education Network, the Berwick Social Inclusion Network and the Berwick Health Development Group into the one Berwick Network.

Volunteering Brokerage Service

NNVA has continued to successfully deliver the six 'core functions' of a quality accredited Volunteer Centre (ie brokering volunteering, marketing volunteering, developing good practice, developing volunteering opportunities, developing campaigns and policies, developing volunteering strategies).

Highlights included receiving 614 enquiries from individual volunteers (monitoring gender, age, employment status, diversity and disability), a series of features celebrating 2005 Year of the Volunteer in the Northumberland Gazette and the Berwick Advertiser, signing-up to the Volunteering England 'Time To Give Time' to promote employer-supported volunteering, registering one hundred and fifteen 'volunteer-involving organisations' (offering hundreds of volunteering opportunities), actively participating in the Birmingham launch of the 'Hubs' of voluntary sector expertise and the Westminster launch of the National Commission on Volunteering.

Wider involvement

During the summer and autumn of 2005, NNVA planned and organised a training programme (funded through GOLD) for hundreds of delegates from the voluntary and community sector in Berwick Borough and Alnwick District. The 'annual learning needs survey' revealed a number of priority learning topics for the future; VCNN plans to deliver a number of specific training sessions concerned with aspects of volunteering.

Following the national launch of 'Building on Success' by Volunteering England, Volunteering Development Councils were established in each of the regions. The first meeting for the North East was held in The Centre for Life in Newcastle and the VCNN Manager was elected to represent volunteer centres in Northumberland on the Council.

Together with Castle Morpeth & Wansbeck and Tynedale Volunteer Centres, VCNN has developed closer and collaborative working relationships. 'Volunteering Northumberland' (a shorthand term for the three centres) has organised themed Volunteer Fairs and events with Job Centres Plus to debate 'worklessness and volunteering' across the county.

The future is bright

Retaining community spirit and encouraging volunteering activities are vital to the social and economic health and wellbeing of the population of North Northumberland. All residents are potential volunteers with time and talents to offer to their neighbours and communities; all organisations in larger, smaller and isolated communities have the potential to create and develop a rich variety of volunteering opportunities.

As a Volunteering England Quality Accredited Volunteer Centre, VCNN is required to adopt and use the nationally agreed Volunteer Centre branding; the standard logo is orange. So, as the advertising slogan says, for VCNN, 'the future is bright, the future is orange'.

RENEWABLE ENERGY AT LOCAL LEVEL

REALL, (Renewable Energy at Local Level) is a project that has been hosted by CCN since April 2001. It is part of the Community Renewables Initiative (CRI) which was launched by the Countryside Agency to promote renewable energy within England's rural communities.

REALL, is the rural North East's branch of this initiative, covering Northumberland and Durham, and is respected as an independent and impartial organisation which works with communities, rural community councils, and regional and sub-regional partners to promote renewable energy and energy efficiency, without favour, throughout the region.

Throughout the year REALL has worked with the relevant regional and sub-regional energy groups to ensure that renewable energy has a high priority in any development or strategy being planned for implementation in the region. It has helped community groups from rural Northumberland and Durham bring forward their own renewable energy schemes, using the energy from the sun, the wind and biomass. The project's aim is to regenerate rural communities and strengthen their economies in order to increase the use of renewable energy technologies and assist in fulfilling the Government's target of 10% of energy sourced from renewable technologies by 2010.

Local "communities" which include - village hall committees, voluntary groups of all kinds, farmers, local development interests, local government, parish councils, schools, small businesses which play an essential economic role in a rural area, and groups of residents - have been supported by REALL to propose, plan, seek funding for, develop, own and take energy from renewable energy projects. This might be in the form of a small wind generator for a village hall but it could just as easily be a biomass project serving a small industrial estate and with its fuel source supplied by local farmers.

By supporting these projects REALL has brought together people, skills and resources for shared benefit, raising awareness about renewable energy and energy efficiency, bringing about agricultural diversification, new local jobs, environmental sensitivity, local ownership and energy supply and raising the local skills base for renewable energy technology.

No scheme is too little or too large for REALL to assist. Two examples at each end of the scale, which were completed during the year, were the Berwick Coastwatch Tower and the Deneholme Centre.

Berwick Coastwatch

The group needed electricity in their little watch tower on the seafront, to run their weather-station, their radio's, charge their mobiles and to provide them with light.

With assistance from REALL and CCN's Community Development Officer covering Berwick, they considered the options. Ground-source electricity from Scottish Power could have been an option but for the fact that the watchtower is situated on the outskirts of a very beautifully kept Golf Club Course a third of a mile from the main power source. Digging up the golf course was not realistic.

The installation of solar PV panels seemed appropriate and after all there was some government funding initiatives, such as Clear Skies to assist such projects. "Too small" the group of volunteers were told after they made an enquiry into such grant aid. Funding was not available to cope with community projects with less than an output of 0.5 Kw. As the group only needed 4 panels (each providing 85 Kw power) they were almost 2 panels short of the required output for funding.



Undaunted the group, supported by REALL and CCN, set an example for other groups to follow and secured funding through the National Lottery's Awards for All programme and the CCN administered GOLD scheme. Berwick Coastwatch Tower is now provided with 100% of its electricity needs through renewable energy provided by solar PV panels.

The Deneholme Centre, Allendale

Deneholme is an Edwardian mansion, situated on the outskirts of Allendale, which was once owned by Northumberland County Council when it was used as an outdoor centre. On its closure it was acquired by the Fawside Foundation with the view to developing the site as a conference and training centre for community and private use.

CCN has given some funding advice and specialist VAT advice. REALL has given advice on renewable energy issues. The refurbished building re-opened during the year.

The project has incorporated significant sustainability measures including renewable energy installations of solar water heating and ground sourced heat pumps as a direct result of REALL's support.

The Centre is now run by Fawside as a 'social enterprise' initiative enabling the organisation to become financially self-supporting over the long-term, reducing its critical dependence on grant aid to cover core staffing and running costs. This also means that not only will it be community run but all profits will be reinvested locally. The significant reduction in heating costs made possible by the incorporation of renewable energy technology will help the project achieve this aim.



The project will respond to a wide variety of local needs, ranging from delivery of local services, support for local businesses, and creation of local employment opportunities to provision of affordable housing. The principal use of the centre will be for 'sustainable tourism' and it expects to accommodate around 3000 overnight stays per annum. The centre has already safeguarded 3 jobs and created 2 new jobs. A catering concession has been awarded, leading to development of a successful local business. Deneholme maximised local economic benefits by using local builders and suppliers.

In terms of carbon dioxide savings the centre is saving 17.7 tonnes of CO₂ per annum by using the ground source heat pump compared to an equivalent oil fired heating system on which it would otherwise have to rely upon as Deneholme is off gas mains. By using solar water heating the centre is saving a further 1.4 tonnes of CO₂ per annum. In total a CO₂ saving of 19 tonnes of carbon dioxide

The future for REALL

Throughout the year REALL has been staffed by Mervyn Anthony, Project Manager and Melanie Greenwood, Project Officer/Admin Officer.

Funding for the project is unlikely to continue beyond 2006. Both members of staff have left CCN in the summer of 2006 for other career development. No new work is being undertaken whilst the work in hand is being progressed for CCN by North Energy, an expert renewable energy consultancy, who are based at premises in Oldgate, Morpeth close to CCN's Morpeth office.

Any enquiries about REALL should be initially addressed to David Francis, Director, Community Council of Northumberland.

LEADER + IN NORTH NORTHUMBERLAND

LEADER+ is a European Community Initiative for assisting rural communities in improving the quality of life and economic prosperity in their local area. LEADER+ is the third LEADER Programme, and is preceded by LEADER I and II.

The North Northumberland LEADER+ partnership consists of local statutory private business partnerships and voluntary organisations, some with specific interests in young people, women and the environment.

The main theme for the Development Plan is "making the best uses of natural and cultural resources".

Support has been provided to sustainable tourism initiatives; environmental education and encouraging increased inter-trading in the local economy. The core themes are linked by six strands (Environment, Culture, Tourism, Food and Drink, Arts and Crafts and Education), providing opportunities for developing innovation, increased partnership working and

new models of good practice.

Examples of projects developed and funded by North Northumberland LEADER+ in 2005-06 are: -

Learning and Access Development Programme - Bailiffgate Museum - This project aims to engage the community through a variety of educational activities, by building relationships with schools and community groups and developing learning resources to meet the National Curriculum Collection. Shelving is to be developed to enable full access to the museum collection for both education and community use.



Half term craft activities at Baillifgate Museum - children making Border Reiver helmets and finger puppets

Lionheart Music and Media Technology Project - Alnwick Community Development Trust - The aim of this project is to open up new training opportunities for young people in music technology and media studies, which is not available elsewhere in Alnwick. This project will link closely with the local community radio station, so that young people can gain skills that they will be able to put into effect and perform on the radio.

Women at the turn of the 20th Century - Glendale Gateway Trust - Josephine Butler spent her last years living in Wooler and is buried at Kirknewton within Northumberland National Park. 2006 will be the 100th anniversary of her death and rather than just mark the occasion by hosting an event to celebrate her life GGT are seeking to make the most of the opportunity by running a programme of events celebrating the changing role of women in the early 20th Century.

St. Oswald's Way - Alnwick District Council - The establishment of a long distance walk route, (100 miles/ 160km), stretching from Bamburgh to Heavenfield in Tynedale, utilising existing rights of way and foot-paths.



Sense of Place - The International centre for the Uplands - The purpose of this project is to identify if, and how elements in the cultural landscape of upland Northern England might contribute to community sustainability. The project assumes that cultural identity and sense of place are defined by tangible and intangible heritages from the deepest past to the present

Natural Connections - Northumberland Wildlife Trust - The Wildlife Trust wished to appoint an officer within North Northumberland to increase the engagement of local people and communities with the wildlife and green spaces around them. This will be achieved through a comprehensive programme of education, practical volunteering and community events both independently and with partner organisations.

The Community Woodland Scheme - AONB - This is a community project to provide the opportunity for three communities to adopt and improve a small area of woodland or other wooded habitat (e.g. hedgerows scrub, shelter belt etc) in their local area

Young Rangers - AONB - The project aims to recruit up to 20 young people between the ages of 13 and 20 to learn about the natural and cultural heritage of the Northumberland Coast AONB, practical coastal and countryside conservation and survey skills, and develop recommendations on how to involve young people in the care and management of the AONB.

The Country Mile - AONB - The Country Mile project is designed to encourage the preservation, maintenance and enhancement of the small rural roads of the AONB by organising a competition called 'The Country Mile'. Groups will be invited, through a targeted campaign, to submit a plan for the conservation and enhancement of a mile length of country roadscape, including both the natural and traditional built environment.

North Northumberland Women's Network Phase 2 -Fourth Action - The project will develop NNWN in order to meet new needs and objectives emerging from its first year of activity. These will focus on a set of themes including women and enterprise, heritage, the environment, health & well-being, ICT and community development work.

GOLD

It is well known that schemes which offer small grants can be highly effective in initiating and supporting local community projects. Experience in Northumberland has demonstrated the added value of putting the responsibility for distributing these funds into the hands of local communities. Building on the success of the former European Objective 5B delegated grants scheme, in recent years we have worked closely with a variety of agencies and local communities to initiate and operate the GOLD scheme (Grant Opportunities for Local Development). GOLD has brought together and delivered almost £1million of public funding in Northumberland, from the European Objective 2 programme and ONE North East's Single Programme. It has been a fascinating partnership:

- The Community Council has promoted and co-ordinated the scheme across the county
- The Northumberland Strategic Partnership and County Council have been accountable to the funders
- 10 community panels of local volunteers have promoted and allocated 'their' share of GOLD, with the support of staff from CCN, Blyth Valley borough and Wansbeck district councils.

In accordance with the funding rules GOLD came to an end in March 2006, and there was a great deal of activity in the final 6 months to ensure that all available funds were effectively deployed, or re-deployed as appropriate. The sorts of projects which were supported ranged from large community groups and organisations to small individual projects created

to involve, improve and benefit the communities of which they were part. Community members of all ages have benefited from the infusion of funds within their local community, enabling inclusion from a variety of backgrounds and abilities. Village halls, community groups, co-operatives, training facilities and halls, local transportation, Nursery facilities, local tourism projects, are but a few of the organisations assisted. By the end of the year GOLD had awarded 148 grants and had supported 232 community groups. Over 60 full-time-equivalent jobs had been created or safeguarded, 400 training places of more than 30 hours duration had been delivered (with a further 321 of shorter duration) and 2586 square metres of community buildings' floor-space had been renovated or created.

The outputs achieved speak volumes but the un-measurable outcomes of importance from these projects has been the combination of groups of individuals who may never have otherwise interacted and enabled them to work as a community to assist improve and produce a project available and beneficial to all.

As importantly, a large number of community representatives, from rural and urban areas, had developed the skills and confidence to manage public funds, and to take responsibility for their effective use.

As with its predecessor, GOLD has proved itself as a valuable tool in community development. We believe that efforts should be made to establish this as a more permanent resource within Northumberland, and thereby overcome the stop-start difficulties which have beset local grant schemes over the last ten years.

Organisations which have benefited by assistance from GOLD are:

Acorns Day Nursery (Northumberland) Ltd	Bliss Meditation Services	Crossroads Church
ADAPT	Blyth Valley Food Co-operative Ltd (BVFC)	Drop in Club Longhoughton
Alnwick & District Citizens Advice Bureau	Blyth Valley for Voluntary Services(cvs)	Earth Balance 2000
Appetite	Blyth Valley Local Strategic Partnership	East Ashington Development Trust
Ashington Credit Union	Boulmer Memorial Hall	East Ord Village Hall
ATAC Ltd (Area Training & Activity Centre)	Branxton Parish Council	Embleton & District Youth Club
Bell View Belford Ltd	Branxton Village Hall	Embleton Computer Club
Bellingham Community Trust	Broomhaugh Squirrels Club Ltd	ENRGI
Berwick Borough Family Centre	Broomley & Stocksfield Parish Council	Etal Village Hall
Berwick Borough Safe Steps	Bywell Parish Council	Felton Village Hall
Berwick Citizens Advice Bureau	Catton Bodybuilder Class	Felton Youth Club
Berwick Coastwatch	Chatton Pre School Group	Friends of Berwick & district museum and archives
Berwick Citizens Advice Bureau	Choysez	Friends of the Vale
	Cowpen & Kitty Brewster Community Association	Get Ahead Group (GAP)
	Cowpen Quay Community Association	Glanton Memorial Hall
		Glendale Play Group

Glendale Sports and Leisure Association	North Northumberland District Scout Council	Spital Estate Community Association
Greenhead Village Hall	North Sunderland & Seahouses Sports and Community Centre	Elizabethan Hall
Hadston House Youth & Community Building	North Sunderland and Seahouses Development Trust	St John Ambulance (Berwick Day Centre)
Haltwhistle Partnership	Northern Learning	Surestart Western Tynedale
Hedgeley Parish Council	NorthTyne & Redesdale Committee	Tarset Village Hall
Hepple Village Hall	North Tyne & Redesdale Partnership	The Fawside Foundation
Humshaugh On line Group	Northumberland Coast Conservation Team	The Gefrin Trust
Ingram Village Hall	Otterburn Toddler Group	The Hearth at Horsely
Isabella Community Association	Our PART	The Sanctuary Wildlife Centre Ltd
Jubilee Institute	Parkhead & Wansbeck Powersports	Upper Coquet Resource Group
Kielder Limited	Ponteland Community Partnership	Upper Coquetdale Community Transport
Kirknewton Village Hall	Princess Louise Pre School Nursery	Visual Arts in Rural Communities
Knaresdale With Kirkhaugh Parish Council	RASCALS (Ringway After School Care Active Leisure Scheme)	Wark Mechanics Institute and Town Hall
Longframlington Action Group	Rede, Tyne & Coquet Society	Wark Pre School
Longframlington Parish Council	Rennington Village Hall Committee	WATBUS
Lynemouth Day Centre	Rothbury & Coquetdale Tourism Assoc	Watson Memorial Hall
Minerva Prints	Seahouses Drop - In	West End Residents Association
Netherton Computer Association	Shilbottle Friendly Frog Pre School	Whiteburnshank Trust
Netherton Memorial Hall	Shilbottle Skills Centre	Whitfield Parish Hall Committee
Newbiggin by the Sea Sailing Club	Shilbottle Village Forum	Whittonstall Online Group
Newton & Bywell Community Hall Trust	Slaley Commemoration Hall	Whittonstall Rainbow Club
Newton by the Sea PC	South Charlton Village Hall Committee	Wingates Village Institute
Norham Public Hall		Womens Health Advice Centre
North Country Leisure		

CLAYPORT OUTREACH AND DEVELOPMENT WORKER

The post of Outreach and Development Worker within the Clayport area of Alnwick has been funded by the Northumberland Children's Fund which is part of a government initiative to improve services and support to children aged 5-13 and their families. Colette Barker was appointed as the Worker in January 2004 and from then until the closure of the project, at the end of March 2006, has provided a flexible and responsive approach towards meeting the needs of children, young people and their families in the Clayport area. This has entailed promoting existing services, encouraging participation by local young people and assisting in the development of new services and activities for young people.

Most of the activities supported, promoted and organised have taken place within the premises of the Alnwick Community Association at Howling Lane within the Clayport estate.

Over the years in which the project has run the Milkshake Club has proved to be the most popular activity. The Saturday morning sessions together with the mid week Out of School sessions have been staffed by local people, several of whom have been working

towards NVQ qualifications. The sessions have provided the children with an opportunity to mix socially, developing their confidence and skills levels and participating in arts, craft and sporting activities.

During the summer of 2005 a pilot play scheme was run jointly by Alnwick Community Association and Milkshake, funded through the Local Network Fund. Four weeks of activities included:

- dance sessions with some of the musicians involved in the Alnwick Music Festival
- mini-olympics
- arts and crafts
- swimming
- cooking
- "Stars in Their Eyes" final 

The development officer has also been working with the nearby Barnsdale House Special School, a residential school in the Clayport Ward attended by young people with disabilities. A good degree of integration has been achieved with after school activities in the Community Centre involving children of all abilities.

Regrettably the funding for the Clayport Outreach project came to an end at the end of March 2006 and the regular Milkshake and Out of School Club activities ceased then. Sustainability of the project through self financing has not proved and further funding will need to be located if the work already done

is to be built upon. CCN does not currently have sufficient resources to progress this work but it hoped that a local charitable trust is successful in their pursuit of funding to pick up on the development work done in the Ward over nearly three years.

IMPROVING VOLUNTARY AND COMMUNITY SECTOR RELATIONSHIPS

Improving relationships between Northumberland's voluntary and community organisations and between the sector and public bodies is an important part of CCN's remit. To help bring this about CCN has hosted the position of Sector Development Officer (SDO) since April 2005.

As the value of the sector is increasingly recognised by government, both central and local, and by public bodies, like the Care Trust, so it becomes essential for the voluntary and community sector to be better represented. One of the SDO's first tasks was to help develop a consortium of VCS organisations which could act as an effective voice for the sector.

Although CCN hosts the post, the sector development officer acts for the sector as a whole and is ultimately accountable to the wide range of organisations which make up the consortium. They include those providing generic advice and support to voluntary and community organisations, like CCN and the two councils for voluntary service in Wansbeck and Blyth Valley, as well as volunteer centres, community development networks, specialist networks and frontline organisations.

During the last year the VCS consortium has been responsible for allocating funds worth over £600,000 to twenty different infrastructure projects throughout the county. They range from relatively small revenue projects, like the one in Tynedale to discover more about the use of websites by village halls, to major capital schemes like the one used to refurbish the William Elder Building for VCS use in the centre of Berwick. CCN was funded by ChangeUp to develop a searchable database, to be placed on the internet, to allow infrastructure organisations easier access to

up-to-date details of over 1000 voluntary and community organisations. In addition CCN received ChangeUp funding to allow it to install a new and cost effective telephone system.

Capacitybuilders takes over the responsibility for the ChangeUp programme and indications are strong that, as a result of the consortium's success in managing the funding to date, the county is well placed to continue to receive its share of funds in future. This would include the salary and associated costs of the sector development officer.

Much of the government's ChangeUp programme has been geared towards building up the capacity of the sector to make it better able to bid successfully for public service contracts. These could be anything from home care provision to debt advice. Ensuring the better flow of information to enable more organisations to engage, should they wish, was a high priority. A seminar on procurement issues, as they relate to the VCS, was well attended.

Northumberland's Local Area Agreement was signed-off in March after more than six months negotiation and discussion. The SDO sat on the Co-ordination & Implementation Group which was chaired by the County Council. There was a requirement to involve the voluntary and community sector in both the planning and delivery of appropriate public services. The extent to which this is successful could well be a reflection on whether the ground rules of the Northumberland Compact are fully accepted and implemented. Over twenty organisations drawn from the voluntary and community sector, local government and public bodies were signatories to this agreement in July 2005.

SUPPORT STAFF

The often-invisible face of CCN is its support staff, which regularly provides the first line contact for those seeking advice, both from our Tower Buildings base at Morpeth and in our other offices throughout the county. Our phone lines, email system and website are easily accessible and queries are channelled to the

relevant development officers and field staff in order to be answered as quickly as possible.

The role of the administration and finance support staff is one of many hats, as it encompasses an increasingly heavy workload of tasks in reduced working hours, and

often being undertaken simultaneously. Secretarial, telephonist and word processing duties vie with those of tea-lady and receptionist, mixed with photocopying, purchasing, photography, website and database updates, booking rooms and caterers, producing artwork and flyers, collating information received from surveys, questionnaires and events, keeping diaries updated, coping with post received and diverse mail-shots for meetings and information purposes. The finance staff also need to be multi-skilled, dealing as they do with an array of tasks involving payroll, annual leave, issue and payment of invoices, allocation of debits to a huge variety of budgets, devolved grant schemes, petty cash, accounts prepared and balanced..... and then of course there is the obligatory filing which is attached

to both admin and finance work. Support staff work can never said to be dull – there simply isn't enough time for that - and a sense of humour is obligatory!

Support staff in post at the end of the year were:

At Tower Buildings, Morpeth: Chris Hall, Office Manager; Sue Andrew, Administrative Officer; Linda Frater, Finance Officer; Margaret Tweddell and Carol Megson, Assistant Finance Officers.

At other offices: Dawn Brodie-Clarke (Leader+, Wooler), Terri Bearhope (NNVA, Berwick). Sue Aldred is retained on a casual basis to carry out administrative functions as and when required in the Northern area.

STAFF LOSSES

As mentioned in the item "Over the last year" CCN was faced with an unexpected loss of funding in September 2005. This resulted in a reduction in our activities and commitments, including the closure of offices in Haltwhistle, Bellingham, Widdrington Station, Rothbury and Alnwick, and the loss of valued staff at assistant director, development worker and administrative assistant levels.

CCN acknowledges the work done by these staff during their period of employment:



Bill Carr,
Assistant Director
South East area:
Joined CCN 1 July 1998,
left 6 January 2006



Richard Powell,
Assistant Director
Western area:
Joined CCN 23 March 1998,
left 27 January 2006.



Sandi Downing,
Assistant Director
Northern area:
Joined CCN 11 December 2001,
left 6 January 2006



Chris Barker,
Community Development
Officer
Haltwhistle area:
Joined CCN 12 July 2004,
left 9 December 2005



Judith James,
Administrative Officer
Western area:
Joined CCN 5 July 2004,
left 9 December 2005

HONORARY TREASURER'S REPORT AND AUDITOR'S STATEMENT

HONORARY TREASURER'S FOREWORD

Format of the Accounts

The financial statements published in this annual report are a summary extract from the full set of annual accounts and are presented in our traditional style, which may not allow a full understanding of the financial affairs of the charity.

The format of the full version of the financial statements and accounts reflect latest accounting practice and have been prepared in accordance with Part V1 of the 1993 Charities Act and the recommendations of the 1995 "Statement of Recommended Practice for Charity Accounts", as revised in March 2005. These statements were approved by the Executive Committee on the 20th September 2006, and are available on request from Tower Buildings in Morpeth, and will be sent to the Charity Commission.

Results for the Year

This year's financial statements include the full adoption of the Accounting Standard FRS17 which requires the disclosure of any pension asset/liability accrued over the years from contributions to a Defined Benefit Pension Scheme. The Community Council of Northumberland is an admitted body of the Local Government Pension Scheme administered by Northumberland County Council. The actuaries Hewitt Bacon and Woodrow have calculated the deficit due from Community Council of Northumberland for 2005/06 as £267,000 compared with the figure of £276,000 for 2004/05. The balance sheet has been adjusted to reflect the annual movement of this liability for comparative purposes.

The overall financial result for 2005/06 is an increase in total funds of £125,203.

- The restricted funds decreased by £524 resulting from the release of funds earmarked for the depreciation of fixed assets. The remaining balance of £5,929 is to be carried forward into the following year.
- The unrestricted designated funds decreased by the sum of £34,156. This is inclusive of a decrease in the Redundancy Fund £5,874 and the Projects Fund £23,086 which was necessary to support the restructure of the organisation following the unexpected loss of European Funding. The remaining balance is £36,996.
- CCN's main office, Tower Buildings, which is owned

by CCN was subject to a revaluation on 31st March 2006. This increased the Capital Fund by £150,000. In turn, this helped offset the liability from the Pension Fund itemised on the balance sheet at £267,000.

- The general reserve increased by £884 representing the surplus generated on activities. This compares to an increase of £94 reported for 2004/05.

Compared with 2004/05, total income increased by approximately 14% resulting partly from the establishment of three main projects, VCS Infrastructure, Voice for the Sector and BizFizz.

Further grant funding was received to support Interim and Legacy Parish Plans in addition to the Calor-Village of the Year Project. During the same period the Motivate project came to an end.

The surplus of £884 on the Income and Expenditure account is less than the £2649 that was planned by the Finance Sub-Committee in February 2006. However an increase in Core income and management fees allowed the sum of £3,000 to be transferred back to the Redundancy fund whilst still achieving a small increase which was added to the General reserve, as agreed by the Finance Sub-Committee in July 2006. The final position has been achieved through very careful scrutiny and monitoring of all expenditures throughout the period, most notably the Northumberland Rural Community Capacity project where the loss of European monies was felt the most and redundancies were unavoidable.

The Community Council now moves forward with a new Governance and staffing structure involving the introduction of 5 sub-committees, management systems and new funding programmes to support the current Business Plan. Increased involvement by the Trustees assists in developing the objectives of the organisation as well as identifying future risks. This contributes to a more stable environment. The General Reserve now stands at £76,799 which, relative to financial turnover, is considered reasonable in aiming to provide the Council with the prospect of continuing financial stability in the medium term.

AUDITOR'S STATEMENT TO THE TRUSTEES OF THE COMMUNITY COUNCIL OF NORTHUMBERLAND

We have examined the summarised financial statements of the Community Council of Northumberland set out on the following pages.

Respective responsibilities of trustees and auditors

The Trustees are responsible for the preparation of the summary financial statements in accordance with the recommendations of the Charities SORP. Our responsibility is to report to the Trustees our opinion on the consistency of the summarised financial statements with the full financial statements and Trustees Annual Report. We also read other information contained in the summarised annual report and consider the implications for our report if we become aware of any apparent misstatements or material inconsistencies with the summarised financial statements.

Basis of opinion

We have carried out the procedures we consider necessary to ascertain whether the summarised

financial statements are consistent with the full financial statements from which they have been prepared. We have conducted our work in accordance with Bulletin 1999/6, "The auditor's statement on the summary financial statement" issued by the Auditing Practices Board for use in the United Kingdom.

Opinion

In our opinion the summarised financial statements are consistent with the full financial statements and the Trustees' Annual Report of the Community Council of Northumberland for the year ended 31 March 2006.

Read Milburn & Co	71 Howard Street
Chartered Accountants	North Shields
Registered Auditors	Tyne & Wear
21 September 2006	NE30 1AF

EXTRACT FROM FINANCIAL STATEMENTS

2004/05 £	EXPENDITURE	2005/06 £	2004/05 £	INCOME	2005/06 £
CORE ACTIVITY					
EMPLOYEES			GRANT INCOME		
137,931	Salaries	141,140	100,985	Countryside Agency	100,985
10,285	Employers National Insurance	10,408	13,400	Northumberland Country Council	13,400
16,771	Employers Superannuation	26,372	2,800	District / Town Councils	2,850
1,284	Recruitment		10,110	Trusts & Local Councils	9,516
PREMISES RUNNING COSTS			FEES AND CHARGES		
4,718	Heat / Light / Cleaning / Water	4,693	305	Membership Fees	355
1,501	Planned Maintenance - Funded	10,883	8,500	Agency Fees - NALC	8,700
1,262	Other Maintenance	1,460	3,640	Rents	4,168
120	Premises - Sundries	531	4,130	Services Charges (Premises)	4,917
2,516	Insurance	2,516	2,225	Recharges for Admin Services	2,516
ADMINISTRATION			OTHER INCOME		
1,379	AGM and Exec Meetings	814	76	AGM and Exec Meetings	124
4,970	Travel	5,422	823	General Income	6,877
163	Volunteers / Members	89	77	Sales of Publications	67
9,015	Printing, Stationery, Photocopying	8,824	2,402	Investment Income	2,885
1,382	Office Equipment & Maintenance	1,872			
22	Depreciation				
8,058	Postage & Telephones	7,195			
68	Publications	60			
1,798	Insurance	3,027			
2,861	Audit Fee	4,831			
7,093	Fees and Subscriptions	7,244			
2,450	Training and Conferences	826			
7,429	Other Expenditure	13,375			
TRANSFER TO FUNDS			TRANSFER FROM FUNDS		
5,466	Contribution to R & M Fund	5,687	1,501	Contribution from R & M Fund	10,883
5,000	Contribution to Redundancy Fund	3,000		Contribution from Projects Fund	1310
				Internal Transfer	4,265
<u>233,542</u>		<u>260,269</u>	<u>150,973</u>		<u>173,818</u>
SPECIAL PROJECTS					
5,010	Rural Housing Enabler Work		6,510	Rural Housing Enabler Work	
60,949	North Northumberland Vol Act.	33,617	64,069	North Northumberland Vol Act.	36,857
111,249	Northumberland R C C - North	135,697	133,927	Northumberland R C C - North	160,234
97,056	Northumberland R C C - West	79,086	122,028	Northumberland R C C - West	98,526
39,935	Northumberland R C C - East	33,743	50,553	Northumberland R C C - East	40,268
	Northumberland R C C - Technical Support			Northumberland R C C - Technical Support	1
2,800	Information Technology Network		2,800	Information Technology Network	
64,893	Leader Plus	71,369	71,543	Leader Plus	78,219
20,174	Bellingham Heritage Centre	17,292	21,149	Bellingham Heritage Centre	18,157
18,085	Bellingham Community Trust	26,486	18,085	Bellingham Community Trust	26,555
86,810	Renewable Energy (REALL)	61,042	86,810	Renewable Energy (REALL)	63,842
35	Community Building Activities	135	266	Community Building Activities	66
7,434	Gold Scheme	8,497	7,434	Gold Scheme	8,497
2,243	Mid Northumberland		2,243	Mid Northumberland	
28,344	Pegswood Community	30,492	28,344	Pegswood Community	30,492
6,213	Motivate		6,214	Motivate	
11,137	CARAD	8,172	11,137	CARAD	8,172
34,242	Clayport	42,273	38,362	Clayport	46,508
15,235	VCS Infrastructure	4,265	15,235	VCS Infrastructure	4,265
6,619	VCS Development	44,593	8,599	VCS Development	48,883
507	Voice for the Sector	38,904	1,497	Voice for the Sector	43,194
43,293	BizFizz	55,238	47,123	BizFizz	59,838
8,640	Carer Link	32,507	9,640	Carer Link	35,507
	Calor-Village of the Year	650		Calor-Village of the Year	1,500
	Parish Plans-Interim	30,218		Parish Plans-Interim	30,855
	Parish Plans-Legacy	14,778		Parish Plans-Legacy	15,953
<u>670,903</u>		<u>769,054</u>	<u>753,568</u>		<u>856,389</u>
RESTRICTED FUNDS					
1,517	Access to the Working Countrys.		1,515	Access to the Working Countrys.	
6,762	Other Grants to Local Groups	5,075	6,762	Other Grants to Local Groups	5,075
<u>8,279</u>		<u>5,075</u>	<u>8,277</u>		<u>5,075</u>
94	Excess of Income over Expend.	884			
912,818	Total Expenditure	1,035,282	912,818	Total Income	1,035,282

BALANCE SHEET as at 31st March 2006

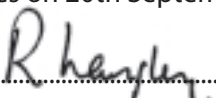
	2005/06	2004/05
	£	£
Fixed Assets		As restated
Tangible Assets	250,000	100,524
Current Assets		
Debtors	107,164	66,977
Short term deposits	88,407	254,981
Cash at bank & in hand	2,893	200
	<u>198,464</u>	<u>322,158</u>
Deduct Creditors :		
<i>amounts falling due within one year</i>	<u>78,740</u>	<u>169,162</u>
Net current assets	119,724	152,996
Defined Benefit Pension Asset/Liability	(267,000)	(276,000)
Total assets less abilities	<u>102,724</u>	<u>(22,480)</u>
Represented by:		
Income funds		
Restricted funds	5,929	6,453
Unrestricted funds :		
Designated funds	36,996	71,152
General reserve	<u>76,799</u>	<u>75,916</u>
Unrestricted funds excluding pension liability	113,795	147,068
Pension Reserve	(267,000)	(276,000)
Net Unrestricted Funds	(153,205)	(128,932)
Restricted Funds	5929	6453
Capital funds		
Premises	250,000	100,000
TOTAL FUNDS	<u>102,724</u>	<u>(22,479)</u>

Prepared by the Honorary Treasurer - Mr S Mason FCCA

Signed 

Date September 2006

Approved by the Board of Trustees on 20th September 2006

and signed on its behalf by  Trustee and Chairman

MEMBERS OF COUNCIL APPOINTED BY AUTHORITIES AND ORGANISATIONS

MARCH 2006

(a) Schedule A, Representatives

Northumberland County Council	Cllr A C Kerr , Cllr Mrs L J Rickerby, Cllr Mrs M Milne, Cllr A G Sambrook, Cllr T S Wilson, Cllr G Castle
Alnwick District Council	Cllr Mrs A R Glass
Berwick upon Tweed Borough Council	Cllr J D Lockie OK
Blyth Valley Borough Council	Mr J P Gascoigne
Castle Morpeth Borough Council	Cllr H G H Sanderson
Tynedale District Council	Cllr Mrs J K Somerville
Wansbeck District Council	Cllr Mrs I Harbottle
Age Concern Northumberland	Mr G Brown
Association of N'land Local History Societies	Mr B A Keegan
Blyth Valley Council for Voluntary Service	Mr T Bradley
Business Link Northumberland	Mr L Smith
Business & Professional Women's Clubs Area Committee	Mrs M Trotman
Campaign to Protect Rural England	Mr B Harwood
Church of England	Ven R Langley
Coal Industry Social Welfare Organisation	Mr V B Clements
Community Foundation	Mr G Hepburn
Country Land & Business Association	Mr D A Chalmers
Development Trusts Association	Ms D Lamb
Forest Enterprise	Mr J G S Gill
Methodist Church	Rev M Sellers
National Association of CABx, Area Committee	Mr P Rickard
National Farmers Union	Vacancy
National Trust Northumbria Region	Mr T Crump
North of Tyne Patients Voice	Mr P Conway
N'land Association of Clubs for Young People	Mr N G Voules
N'land Association of Local Councils	Cllr P R B Brooks, Cllr N Dunn, Cllr J Rudd, Cllr D Woodard
N'land Care Trust	Ms L Ions
N'land College	Dr T Capron
N'land Federation of Women's Institutes	Mrs J Arthur
N'land Federation of Young Farmers' Clubs	Mr D Lumley
N'land Learning & Skills Council	Mr R Malecki
N'land Mental Health NHS Trust	Mrs A Joseph
N'land National Park Authority	Mr J Riddle
N'land & Newcastle Society	Mrs R Hall
N'land Playing Fields Association	Mr I Kingsland
N'land Pre School Learning Alliance	Mrs S Hillan
Northumberland Strategic Partnership	Ms S Bevan
Northumberland Village Halls	Vacancy
Northumbria Healthcare NHS Trust	Ms J Christer
Roman Catholic Church	Father D Tanner
Transport & General Workers' Union, Agricultural National Trade Group	Mr B Anderson
Tynedale Voluntary Action	Mr M Coleman
United Reformed Church	Miss J Turner
University of Newcastle upon Tyne	Ms H Talbot
University of Northumbria	Mrs H Manns
Voluntary Organisations Network North East	Mr R Cowell
Wansbeck Council for Voluntary Service	Ms S McGuckin
Workers Educational Association (NE District)	Mr P Bennett

(b) Schedule B, Ex Officio Members of Council

Chief Executive, Northumberland County Council	Mr M Henderson
Director of Environment	Mr J Nicholson
Director of Protective Services	Mr B Hesler
Director of Adult Services	Mr E M H Hill
Director of Children's Services	Mr T Doughty
Director of Public Health, N'land Care Trust	Dr M Lavender
Chief Executive, N'land Care Trust	Mr R Houlden
Chief Executive, Alnwick District Council	Mr W R Batey
Chief Executive, Berwick upon Tweed Borough Council	Mrs J Pannell
Chief Executive, Blyth Valley Borough Council	Mr G Paul
Chief Executive, Castle Morpeth Borough Council	Mr K Dunbar
Chief Executive & Chief Financial Officer, Tynedale District Council	Mr R Robson
Chief Executive, Wansbeck District Council	Mr R A Stephenson
Chief Executive, Northumberland National Park Authority	Mr A Gates
Chief Constable, Northumbria Police	Mr M Craik

ASSOCIATE MEMBERS AND OTHER CONTRIBUTORS 2005/06

Acklington Village Hall
 Allendale Village Hall
 Alnmouth Parish Council
 Alnwick District Council
 Alnwick Town Council
 Alwinton Parish Council
 Ancroft Memorial Hall
 Ancroft Parish Council
 Aon Ltd
 Bamburgh Parish Council
 Bamburgh Pavilion Association
 Bardon Mill Parish Council
 Bavington Parish Council
 Beadnell Women's Institute
 Berwick upon Tweed Borough Council
 Big Lottery
 Birtley Parish Council
 Mrs S E Black MBE
 Blanchland Parish Council
 Bolton Village Hall
 Breamish Hall
 Brinkburn & Hesleyhurst Parish Council
 Broomhaugh & Riding Parish Council
 Broomley & Stocksfield Parish Council
 Rev Canon R B S Burston
 Bywell Parish Council
 Calor Gas Ltd
 Cambois Welfare Institute
 Capheaton Parish Council
 Carr-Ellison Charitable Trust
 Cartington Parish Council
 Catton Village Hall
 Charities Aid Foundation - C I Porter
 Charities Aid Foundation - KPMG
 The Civic Trust
 Colwell Village Hall
 Community Foundation
 Corbridge Parish Council
 Cornhill Parish Council
 Corsenside Parish Council
 Countryside Agency
 Craster Memorial Hall
 Creighton Memorial Hall
 Cresswell Parish Council
 Dalton Village Hall
 Denwick Village Hall
 Dept of Environment, Food & Rural Affairs
 Mrs E A Dodd
 Lambley Village Hall
 Langley Village Hall
 Lesbury Parish Council
 Lesbury Village Hall
 J F Lewis
 Lloyds TSB Foundation
 Longframlington Memorial Hall
 Longframlington Parish Council
 Longhirst Parish Association
 Longhorsley Parish Council
 Longhorsley Village Hall
 Longhoughton Parish Council
 Lowick Parish Council
 Lynemouth Parish Council
 Matfen Parish Council
 C G Matthews-Maxwell
 Meldon Parish Council
 Milfield Reading Room
 G E Miller
 D H Morgan
 Morpeth Town Council
 N Mundy
 NCH Northumberland Childrens Fund
 Netherton & Biddlestone Parish Council
 Newbiggin by the Sea Women's Institute
 Newbrough Parish Council
 Newbrough Town Hall
 Newton & Bywell Community Hall
 Newton by the Sea Parish Council
 Newton on the Moor & Swarland Parish Council
 Norham Parish Council
 Norham Village Hall
 North Northumberland Carer Link Project
 North Sunderland Parish Council
 North Sunderland & Seahouses Sports & Community Centre
 Northern Rock Foundation
 Duke of Northumberland
 Northumberland Care Trust
 Northumberland County Council
 Northumberland National Park Authority
 Northumberland Strategic Partnership
 One NorthEast
 Ord Parish Council
 Otterburn Parish Council
 Ovingham Parish Council
 Ovington Community Group
 Ovington Parish Council
 East Chevington Parish Council
 East Ord Hall
 Ellingham Parish Council
 Ellington Welfare Social Club
 Elsdon Parish Council
 Elsdon Village Hall
 Embleton Parish Council
 Environment Agency
 European Agriculture Guidance & Guarantee Fund
 European Regional Development Fund
 Featherstone Village Hall
 Felton Parish Council
 Felton Village Hall
 W H Foakes
 Ford Parish Council
 M Gibbs
 Mrs R Gibbs
 Gilsland Village Hall
 Glanton Parish Council
 Glanton War Memorial Hall
 The Glendale Gateway Trust
 Greenhead Parish Council
 Greenhead Village Hall
 Haltwhistle Town Council
 Harbottle & District New Hall
 Harbottle Parish Council
 Hartburn Parish Council
 Heddton on the Wall Parish Council
 Heddton on the Wall Women's Institute
 Hedgeley Parish Council
 Hepple Parish Council
 Hepscoth Parish Hall
 Hexham & Tynedale Community Trust
 Hexhamshire & District Parish Council
 Hindmarsh Village Hall
 Hornccliffe Parish Council
 Horsley Parish Council
 Horsley Women's Institute & Village Hall
 HSBC
 Humshaugh Parish Council
 Ingram Village Hall
 W D Johnson
 The Joicey Trust
 Kirkwhelpington Parish Council
 Knaresdale & Kirkhaugh Parish Council
 Sir James Knott Trust
 Kyloe Parish Council
 Ponteland Memorial Hall
 Ponteland Parish Council
 Rev Canon S V Prins
 Prudhoe Town Council
 Rennington Village Hall
 Viscount Ridley
 E M Robson
 Rochester Parish Council
 Rochester Village Hall
 Rothbury Parish Council
 The Rothley Trust
 Seaton Sluice Community Association
 Shanklea Community Association
 Simonburn Parish Council
 Slaley Commemoration Hall
 Slaley Parish Council
 South Charlton Village Hall
 St Johns Hall, Shotley
 Stamfordham Parish Council
 Stannington Parish Council
 Stocksfield Institute Community Association
 Lady Sutherland
 Tasset & Greystead Parish Council
 Thropton Memorial Hall
 Thropton Parish Council
 Tillmouth Village Hall
 Tynedale District Council
 Ulgham Parish Council
 Ulgham Women's Institute
 Lord Vinson Charitable Trust
 VONNE
 Mrs S Walker
 Wallington Demesne Parish Council
 Wansbeck CVS
 Wark Parish Council
 Warkworth Parish Council
 Whalton Parish Council
 Whittingham & Callaly Parish Council
 Whittington Parish Council
 Whitton & Tosson Parish Council
 Widdrington Station & Stobswood Parish Council
 Wingates Village Institute
 Woodhorn & Newbiggin Women's Institute
 Wooler Parish Council
 Woolsington Parish Council
 Wylam Institute Community Association
 Wylam Parish Council

THANKS AND ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS

We benefit from, and greatly appreciate, an enormous amount of voluntary support, goodwill and help in kind, as well as the grants and payments which are shown in our accounts. Almost all of the services which we provide are free-of-charge to those who ask our help, and yet it is particularly warming to note the donations which we receive even from some of the county's smallest and impecunious community groups. We also appreciate the active support and encouragement which comes from the variety of local authorities, government departments and agencies, even though at times we are lobbying and (constructively) criticising them on behalf of local communities.

We wish to say special thanks to the following:

- the professional advisory services of the County Council, arranged through our Honorary Treasurer, Steven Mason, which include not only financial management advice but also personnel issues, property services, computer training and printing/purchasing
- those bodies who have given us the free use of premises, including the County Council, Tynedale Council, Morpeth Town Council, National Park Authority and various school community education departments and village halls/community buildings.
- the Northumberland Strategic Partnership, who have supported our development through funding, encouragement and partnership work.
- grant-making bodies : not only those such as Carr-Ellison, Vinson, Rothley 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 Northern Rock Foundation, the Big Lottery Fund and Community Foundation.
- the European Programmes Secretariat in the Government Office for the North East, who over the last few years have provided an enormous amount of support to ensure that European funding is available to Northumberland's communities
- our members and trustees, who put in so much time for no recompense to the running of our organisation and activities
- our colleagues in ACRE (Action with Communities in Rural England), and in neighbouring councils of voluntary service, who form part of our mutual support network
- the staff and members of DEFRA, with whom we have enjoyed, along with previous government departments supporting rural communities, a mutually supportive relationship for more than 50 years
- the groups, voluntary bodies, public authorities and agencies who continue to respond to and co-operate enthusiastically in our activities and work.



HOW YOU CAN HELP

The Community Council 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 over more than fifty 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 become an Associate Member for a subscription of £10 or more per year. Associate Members receive our bi-monthly newsletter Northumberland Community News, participate in our periodic meetings and other activities, and keep us in touch with life around the county. Six places on our Executive Committee are reserved for Associate Members
- if you are a group, agency or business, you can make a financial contribution. Like most voluntary bodies, we need donations in order to survive, and we are supported by hundreds of contributions each year. We are a registered charity, (no 224798), and tax-paying businesses and individuals are able to make tax efficient donations to us
- if you have other things which you can offer to community groups (eg 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.

For more information, or to discuss the ways in which you would like to help, please contact us (by telephone, or writing to our offices):

COMMUNITY COUNCIL OF NORTHUMBERLAND, TOWER BUILDINGS, 9 OLDGATE, MORPETH, NORTHUMBERLAND NE61 1PY

Tel: 01670 517178 Fax: 01670 511400 E-Mail: info@ccn.org.uk

Community Council - Morpeth

Telephone: 01670 517178
E-Mail: info@ccn.org.uk
davidfrancis@ccn.org.uk
alanhedley@ccn.org.uk
juliecrockier@ccn.org.uk
georgecourtice@ccn.org.uk

Alnwick

Russell House
Greenwell Road, Alnwick
Northumberland NE66 1HB
(Mark Shipperlee, Alnwick BizFizz Coach)
Telephone: 01665 605977
Email: markshipperlee@ccn.org.uk

Alnwick

Julia Sharpley
Community Development Officer
The Centre, 27 Fenkle Street, Alnwick
Northumberland NE66 1HW
Telephone: 01665 605540
Email: juliasharpley@ccn.org.uk

Belford

Volunteer Centre North Northumberland
Bell View Resource Centre
33 West Street, Belford
Northumberland NE70 7QB
Telephone: 01668 219879
Email: kelvinrushworth@ccn.org.uk

Berwick

Volunteer Centre North Northumberland
Berwick Voluntary Forum
5 Tweed Street
Berwick upon Tweed TD15 1NG
Telephone: 01289 308338
Email: kelvinrushworth@ccn.org.uk
terribearhope@ccn.org.uk

Marc Johnson
Community Development Officer
Telephone: 01289 304141
Email: marcjohanson@ccn.org.uk

Hexham

Hexham Community Centre
Gilesgate
Hexham
Northumberland NE48 2DG
Telephone: 01434 607871
Email: janehart@ccn.org.uk

Wooler (Leader Project)

52 High Street
Wooler
Northumberland NE71 6GB
Telephone: 01668 283898
Email: davidbrettell@ccn.org.uk
dawnbrodie-clarke@ccn.org.uk

