



NORTHUMBERLAND COMMUNITY

NEWS

VOL. 22 - No. 6

Mid December 2002 - Mid February 2003

Season's Greetings

to all our readers
from all the staff at
the Community
Council

The office will be closed
from Tuesday 24th
December opening again
on Thursday 2nd January

PUBLISHED BY THE COMMUNITY COUNCIL OF NORTHUMBERLAND, TOWER BUILDINGS, OLDGATE, MORPETH, NORTHUMBERLAND NE61 1PY. Telephone 01670 517178

A NEW LEASE FOR LONGHIRST PARISH HALL

THE VILLAGE OF LONGHIRST came into being in the mid-nineteenth century. It was originally in the ownership of the Duke of Portland who built the cottages which today line the main street. The Duke also built the school, a simple one room building with two entrances. Presumably boys went in one door and girls the other. All was well until, towards the end of the nineteenth century, the property passed into the hands of Mr. E. Lawson, a coal developer. Mr. Lawson worked the coal deposits in Longhirst and the village prospered and grew and it soon became obvious that the little one roomed school wasn't adequate to the needs of the village. A new school was built a little way out of the village and the former school was given to the village as a Reading Room.

A further exchange of property was conducted when Mr. Lawson sold his estate to the Joicey family and the Joiceys worked the land and provided for the upkeep of the village through to and beyond the second world war. The Longhirst Village Reading Room was the main focus of village social life from the turn of the century, 1900 onwards. The day to day affairs were managed by the men of the village who had their billiard table and a small library. Children were permitted to go to the Reading Room and take a book which they might read under the watchful eyes of the billiard players who put two pence into the box as their fee. Towards the end of the 1920's the Reading Room was becoming noticeably small for the needs of the village so many activities were laid on including art and craft classes which generated goods for sale at annual craft fairs and bazaars (not unlike similar schemes of today). Lord Joicey also gave financial assistance and in 1928 a bequest of land around the Reading Room was made so that a substantial brick built extension could be added to the original stone built room. What resulted was a hall three times the original size which retained its fireplace and snug at one end but allowed for games of badminton at the other which squeezed in as best they could around the stage which was used for village dramatics and other shows. The whole project cost a massive £2,000.

Over the years since then this enlarged hall has served the needs of the parish. It was commandeered by the army as a sort of field hospital during the second world war and run thereafter by the Church Council. Sadly, like a lot of village halls, money was needed for the maintenance of the fabric and a lot of time and energy has gone in to keeping the place running on a shoestring. Many people have worked hard to repair window frames, sort out the leaking roof and install heating systems which battle with constant drafts. Now it has become obvious that patch and repair won't do any longer and the village has new needs and new residents and things are (hopefully) about to change again.

In the last few years a village group has worked towards recognition as a charitable trust and has now been formed as the Longhirst Parish Association, representing all the residents of the parish of Longhirst. It is

hoped that this group will work alongside representatives from other small villages within a few miles radius so that a joint village group can put together a bid for the building and managing of a new hall for the twenty-first century. To this end some legal work had to be done allowing an exchange of lease. Previously the village hall in Longhirst was the Church hall and the lease was held by the Church of England Diocese of Newcastle to which the hall was gifted by Lord Joicey. However, it was deemed wise to have the lease held by the Parish Association itself and after months of letters and documents passing back and forth an agreement was drawn up which allowed the local church to give the hall into the care of the Longhirst Parish Association for ninety nine years. A formal signing and hand over ceremony was held on November 9th 2002. The Parish Association was represented by chairwoman Mrs. Gill Featonby and Mr. Lyn Dobson for the Parish Council signed



Lynn Dobson, Longhirst Parish Council, signing the lease watched by Gillian Featonby and Mike Elphick, Longhirst Parish Association

along with the Parish Association secretary Mr. Mike Elphick. Churchwarden Mrs. Jean Richardson signed for the church along with the vicar Rev. Stephen Liddle and the Archdeacon of Lindisfarne, the Rev. Bob Langley. All of this was watched by Mr. Alan Hedley, Village Halls Adviser, Community Council of Northumberland, who has been a great support and provider of guidance since the outset. (A table tennis table was even set up in his honour to help celebrate the historic occasion).

The Longhirst Parish Association has now secured the services of an architect and her team, and is proceeding with the next stage of planning and designs and funding applications. If all goes according to plan then building will be completed in 2005 and a new extension to the original Grade two listed Reading Room will provide facilities for small villages in the Longhirst area for many decades to come.

Our Heritage in a Letter Box

THE ROYAL MAIL letter box was introduced following the 1840 postal reform, which provided for a universal affordable postage rate. This was easily pre-payable by means of the new adhesive stamp. However, letters still had to be taken to the nearest letter receiving office, which could be miles away. This led to the need for many more convenient places where stamped letters could be posted. The novelist Anthony Trollope, who was a General Post Office (GPO) official, provided the solution which was the adoption of the continental system of placing locked cast-iron pillar boxes at the roadside and the provision of regular collection times.

A wide variety of designs have been used over the years. The first letter boxes were hexagonal in form appearing on the Channel Islands in 1852 and on the mainland in 1853. In 1859 an improved cylindrical design was created for standard use nationwide. This design had its posting aperture positioned beneath a cap for greater protection from rain-water. From 1857 wall box-type letter boxes came into use for fixing into existing walls. Small lamp post boxes were first introduced in 1896 for use in London squares but later became popular elsewhere, especially rural areas.

Royal Mail letter boxes are a cherished feature of the British street scene. As well as being in daily operational use for an essential public service, they are national icons and a highly distinctive part of our environment. Currently there are over 85,000 in England alone. To mark the 150th anniversary of Britain's first letter box, English Heritage and

Royal Mail, with the approval of the Department for Culture, Media and Sport (DCMS), have agreed a joint policy for the retention and conservation of all Royal Mail letter boxes. Letter boxes will continue to remain part of the Heritage of Britain for many years to come.

This article was prepared using information from the leaflet "Royal Mail Letter Boxes" published by English Heritage. For further information and/or a copy of the leaflet quote 50706 and contact:

English Heritage,
Customer Services
Department,
PO Box 569, Swindon,
SN2 2YP.
Tel. 0870 333 1181
E mail:
customers@english-
heritage.org.uk

Boxes at Clifton and
Mitford typical of those found in rural areas
of Northumberland

CHANGE OF TRUST SECRETARY

CCN wishes Brigadier (Retd) John F. F. Sharland all the best on his retirement as Secretary to the Sir James Knott Trust on 30 November 2002 after a period of just over 11 years.

CCN extends a welcome to the new Trust Secretary Mrs Vivien R Stapley who has been in post from 1 October.

Contact details for the Trust remain the same - 16-18 Hood Street, Newcastle upon Tyne, NE1 6JQ. Tel. 0191 230 4016.

HUNDREDS STORM ALNWICK CASTLE AS LEADER WAVES EUROPEAN FLAG

THE NORTH Northumberland Leader + programme was officially launched at Alnwick Castle on November 4th. to an invited audience of community interest groups and potential funding partners.

The theme of the event was centred around Northumbrian Culture and the way in which it can be used as a vehicle to draw community groups together, integrating culture with arts and crafts sector, local cuisine and the tourism industry throughout the Alnwick District and Berwick Borough.

Following two years of consultation the North Northumberland Local Action Group (LAG) which comprises of representatives of local development trusts: independent community groups and representatives from local authorities made an application for European Grant Aid for areas identified as most in need of community support.

The Scheme, which runs until December 2006, will be able to offer various levels of financial support for community driven initiatives.

At the event the Leader + web site was launched www.leader-northumberland.co.uk which will allow interested parties to draw down further information and application forms for innovative community projects or you can e.mail info@leader-northumberland.org.uk

BANKING ON BUSINESS IN THE COMMUNITY

Barclays is one of the UK's largest corporate community contributors and invests 1% of its UK pre-tax profits to community causes. Around 16% of all local community donations are allocated to projects in the North East, the remainder is spread across the rest of the UK.

The bank's local donations are dedicated to supporting people with disabilities (around 21% of total budget for 2001), social inclusion (around 40%), education (around 12%), the environment (around 12%) and the arts (around 9%).

A wide range of community projects are supported by Barclays at a local level. For example, in the educational sector the bank supports initiatives to help schools provide additional amenities or facilities; special literacy or numeracy projects; childcare, creche and nursery projects.

Through Barclays Sitesavers and support for other local community organisations, over £1million a year is given to environmental schemes. This includes recycling projects and environmental regeneration of neglected sites.

The bank promotes social inclusion through its funding of schemes for people with disabilities, for children from deprived backgrounds, for families with special literacy or numeracy education needs; and childcare, creche and nursery projects. The bank also assists schemes tackling drug addiction, crime and homelessness.

Arts organisations which have a local community impact can also qualify for Barclays support.

Recent community projects supported by Barclays in Northumberland include funding for a community theatre programme, The Maltings, in Berwick; refurbishment of two of the clients rooms at Calvert Trust, in Kielder; and funding of an educational

programme set up by Castle Morpeth Disability Association to raise young peoples awareness of the needs of people with disabilities.

Barclays has also made available £2m of its community budget to help rural communities overcome the effects of foot and mouth. Awards have been made to help local communities supporting new initiatives such as promoting community festivals or other new tourist attractions, marketing projects, and re-training programmes.

In addition to its donations, Barclays encourages its employees to make their own individual contributions to the community through personal fundraising or by donating their own time and expertise. In 2001 over 10,200 staff volunteered to take part in Barclays supported community activities.

Barclays employees have undertaken numerous fundraising activities which have been match-funded by the bank through its £ for £ scheme. They have assisted local schools, churches and many other charitable organisations. Examples of employee volunteering include staff from the northern agricultural team creating a sensory garden for the clients who attend North Northumberland Day Hospice; and several employees recently redecorated a room at Charlotte Straker, Corbridge.

For an application form for Barclays community funding, local organisations can contact: Stella McRae, North Eastern Regional Community Manager, 71 Grey Street, Newcastle Upon Tyne, NE99 1LG.

BT COMMUNITY CONNECTIONS

BT COMMUNITY Connections is a nation wide award scheme that aims to connect local community and voluntary groups to the internet. The scheme has already allocated 1,100 PCs throughout the UK during the past 12 months and there are a further 600 to be awarded.

A diverse range of community groups across the UK have benefited from the exciting opportunities that access to the internet can provide. These have included setting up an email facility for friends and relatives to contact a local hospital radio with song requests for patients; helping an ethnic minority group to access skills training via the world wide web and enabling a junior rugby team to set up its own website, making contacts with similar clubs across the world.

Every award winner will receive a fantastic package of an NEC multimedia personal

computer including speakers, 15" monitor and a contribution towards 12 months' internet access. Each award will give community and voluntary groups the ability to access up to date information via the world wide web, contact similar groups around the world by email and even create their own community interest websites.

If you, as an individual or part of a group, feel that the internet would make a positive contribution to your community then you can apply for an award. Applications will be accepted for Round 3 of the scheme until 28 February 2003.

All you have to do is log on to the website:

www.btcommunityconnections.com

OR request an application pack from

BT Community Connections,

PO Box 30775, London, WC1B 4QE.

STAYWARM.

GOOD NEWS FOR SENIOR CITIZENS

STAYWARM is a unique energy service designed exclusively for the over-60s. The suppliers provide all the electricity and gas you need at one low fixed price, even on the coldest days.

If you are a senior citizen age 60 or over, or if someone who is permanently resident in your home is age 60 or over, then you may be eligible for the new unique way to heat and light your home.

For a fixed amount, based on the number of people who live in your home and the number of bedrooms it has, participants in the scheme can use as much electricity and gas that they need and it won't affect the amount they pay.

The weekly payments due under this scheme are:

	1 bedroom	2 bedrooms	3 bedrooms
1 person	£7.00	£8.80	£10.00
2 persons	£8.50	£10.50	£12.00
3 persons	£9.00	£11.50	£13.00
4 persons	£9.50	£12.50	£14.00

To find out how Staywarm can help you phone free on 0800 1694 694.

Check out the details on www.staywarm.co.uk

VITAL VILLAGES AND REALL

GROUPS WHO ARE preparing Parish Plan applications to the Vital Villages programme might like to consider how energy from the sun, the wind or woodfuel could be used locally.

REALL - Renewable Energy at Local Level - is part of the Countryside Agency's Community Renewables Initiative. There are staff in both Northumberland and County Durham who are available to help communities work through ideas about using renewable energy.

Examples might be wood heating using forestry residues for community buildings; small wind turbines for schools and village halls; solar water heating panels on groups of houses and community buildings; solar power generated by converting sunlight into electricity.

Parish Plans applicants could bring forward their ideas about renewable energy applications.

Further information:

Vital Villages, Michael Patterson, 0191 269 1600. email: michael.patterson@countyside.gov.uk

REALL, Northumberland, Bridget Gubbins, 01670 505451. email: REALL@ccn.org.uk

REALL, County Durham, Tim Matthews, 01207 529621. email: timmatthews@ccn.org.uk

Tynedale Artists Network

TYNEDALE ARTISTS NETWORK was established in 1992 as an independent association of professional artists living and working in and around Tynedale. Membership has grown to around 200 and extends throughout the north east of England.

TAN is seeking to promote art events and networking throughout our county of Northumberland. Many artists work and live in isolation and as so often been proved in the past, would benefit from being among other artists. With the help of the Northern Rock Foundation the network has produced a new promotional leaflet that is now available in tourist centres, galleries and art centres throughout the region. A new website has been created and a directory of artists will be available in the new year.

For further information about the Network or how to become a Friend of the Network please telephone 01661 853919 or their website www.tynedaleartistsnetwork.org.uk

The Revive Furniture Project

THE REVIVE YOUTH Project is a local charity based in Blyth. Its object is to promote the advancement of education for young people by providing training.

The Furniture Project is part of the Youth Project. It accepts donations of furniture from local people and recycles it to provide low cost furniture for people in need. There is therefore a two-way benefit:

- Local vulnerable young people are given an opportunity to participate in a supported work experience programme where they can learn warehousing, office and administration skills

- People on limited incomes who are in need of low cost furniture can buy safe in the knowledge that the product is of good quality.

- Potential customers can not go direct to Revive but need to go via an 'agency' who will 'refer' the customer. The Project is currently searching for more partners to take on the roles of agencies. Typical agencies are the various advice and support organisations that are more likely to come into contact with those most likely of need. Citizen's Advice Bureaux are one example of a partner providing this agency service of referral.

If you are an organisation that comes into contact with people in need of low cost furniture you might be able to help by

LOCAL VIEWS ON COUNTY BUDGET

PARISH COUNCILS and other community groups are being invited to have their say on County Council spending plans at a series of Area Committee meetings in January. This is part of the consultation process for the 2003-04 budget, and it is the first time that local groups have been involved.

Dates and times for the meetings are:

Blyth Valley 10.30am, 17 January, *St Mary's Church Hall, Blyth*

Wansbeck 10.30am, 15 January, *Newbiggin Sports Centre*

Castle Morpeth 2.00pm, 15 January, *Committee Room 5, County Hall, Morpeth*

Alnwick 10.30am, 16 January, *Lindisfarne Middle School, Alnwick*

Tynedale 2.00pm, 16 January, *Beaumont Hotel, Hexham*

Berwick 10.30am, 17 January, *Old Day Centre, Bell View, Belford*

For a copy of the budget proposals, please contact Karen Archbold in early January at County Hall on 01670 533488.

volunteering to become an Agent. Even if you can not become an agent you can assist by pointing potential donors of furniture in the direction of the Revive Project.

For Further details please contact:

The Revive Furniture Recycling Project
Phone: 01670 368665 Fax: 01670 368665
Email: paul@smartp19.freemove.co.uk
PO Box 48, Unit 16D, Cowley Road
Blyth Industrial Estate, Northumberland,
NE24 1YR

NEW EDITION OF GRANTS GUIDE FOR VOLUNTARY ORGANISATIONS NOW AVAILABLE!

FUNDING INFORMATION North East has published the 7th edition of its, "North East Guide to Grants for Voluntary Organisations" (2003/2004).

The Guide contains information on over 100 charitable trusts which support voluntary organisations and community groups in Northumberland, Tyne & Wear, County Durham and Teesside. Most of the information is provided by the charitable trusts themselves and lists their grant-making policies, procedures and recent grants awarded.

There is also a useful section on how to successfully raise money from charitable trusts.

The Guide, which is available from mid-December 2002, costs £12.00 plus £1.50 postage and packing.

To order a copy please contact Funding Information North East, John Haswell House, 8/9 Gladstone Terrace, Gateshead, NE8 4DY. Tel: 0191 477 1253 or email: enquiries@fine.org.uk. You can also find an order form on the website; www.fine.org.uk

Funding Information North East researches sources of funding information for the voluntary and community sector in the North East of England and keeps organisations up to date with funding opportunities via publications such as the guide and regular information bulletins. To find out more about FINE and its services contact a member of the team at the above address.

TYNEDALE FOCUS

Kirkhaugh with Knarsdale Community Hall

Knarsdale with Kirkhaugh parish, on the upper south Tyne, is seeking lottery funding for a new community centre to serve its scattered but active community.

Knarsdale has long suffered from a shortage of community space to serve its diffused population. Located some ten miles south west of Haltwhistle, its nearest service centre, the parish is more remote than that bald statistic suggests. Its hilly countryside and B - road network ensure that this remains a relatively remote part of the county.

Currently, the W.I. Hall in Knarsdale village itself has been doing fine work in hosting a range of activities but age and growing demands mean that the building no longer meets modern needs. If successful, a new community hall will be built at a cost of over £200,000 to meet local community needs and a venue for local training courses.

Halton Lea Gate Play Area

An enterprising group of local ladies, supported by the Parish Council, is trying to establish a play area in Halton Lea Gate for all age groups.

Mrs. Megan Hyde has been instrumental in putting together a bid for an all weather playing surface for young people in the village. If the bids for money are successful the play area will be able to host six-a-side football, basketball and other sports all the year round regardless of the weather.

It is also hoped that additional funding will be found to provide playing equipment for the younger age groups. This may, however, have to be part of a longer term funding scheme.

The applications have been largely made possible by Tynedale Housing who own the site and have recently drained it at considerable cost and generously offered it for community play space. The local Hartleyburn Parish Council has also offered to maintain the area.

Haltwhistle's "Make a Difference" Day

Tynedale Voluntary Action's recent appointment of a new volunteer recruit co-ordinator, Claire Heaviside, at Haltwhistle has already



Some of the volunteers hard at work daffodil planting on Haltwhistle's "Make a Difference" day.

paid off for this small rural market town. On 16 November 2002 Claire helped to organise a group of over a dozen volunteers plant daffodils along the former A69 route, now Avenue St. Méen, and along the approaches to the town's pedestrian Tyne Bridge.

Tynedale District Council had supplied the daffodil bulbs free and now after hours of freely donated time by local volunteers it is hoped that some of the Town's main approaches will be a blaze of yellow next Spring!

Jackie McCormick appointed Western Tynedale's SureStart co-ordinator

Western Tynedale is one of the County's first venues for a Sure Start scheme, a national scheme designed to improve access to services, in areas of relative deprivation, for children aged 0-4 and their families. Jackie McCormick has been appointed as the new co-ordinator. Her role will be to work with local communities, families and those involved in childcare to encourage, develop support new projects that will give children the best start in life.

Jackie's office is based at The Haltwhistle Partnership but she will be serving Haltwhistle, Plenmeller, Slaggyford,

Coanwood, Halton-Lea-Gate, Greenhead, Gilsland, Bardon Mill, Henshaw, Whitfield, Melkridge, Featherstone and Lambley.

Slaley's Parish Plan

Slaley is conducting widespread community consultation as part of its preparation in drawing up a Parish Plan.

Several well-attended public meetings have been held at which parishioners of all ages expressed their views on Slaley's strengths, weaknesses, opportunities and needs. Funding for the project has largely been supplied through the Countryside Agency's Vital Villages grant scheme.

Local people have drawn up a detailed questionnaire to be sent to each household. Further public meetings are planned and, in the meantime, specialist focus groups are examining specific issues.

Lesley Woodhouse and Pat Wilson have already spoken to 20 Slaley school children at Corbridge Middle School with the full co-operation of the Head Teacher. A special meeting in Slaley Village Hall for local farmers and landowners produced a lively response while Margaret Rastall has been getting the views of parents of local first school children. Caroline Barnes, a QEHS youth worker, has been working tirelessly with local youths to ensure their views are fully reflected. Another focus group is scheduled to meet the local elderly on Monday 16th December. Northumbria Police too are proving very helpful and have already started responding to local concerns about speeding traffic.

The Community Council of Northumberland assisted Slaley in the early days of the consultation.

Greenhead's New Arts and Crafts Group

In November the small Tynedale village of Greenhead launched a new Arts and Crafts Group. Numbering some 15-20 people the group is looking to grant assistance in acquiring equipment and will be using the facilities available at Greenhead's newly re-furnished Village Hall.

FROM THESE PAGES IN

1983

Beware of Con-Men

Mrs Janie Heppell, Chairman of Age Concern, is worried that some elderly people may be persuaded to part with their TV sets 'to have an adjustment made' to receive Channel 4. Don't trust such con-men. That may be the last you see of your set. Yours local television dealer knows when Channel 4 will be available in your area and until that time, you just have to wait.

1988

Village Housing - What Hope Now?

One of the main difficulties in promoting rural development and putting ideas into action is that the rules keep changing. Sometimes it seems that no sooner have we understood the implications of new legislation and learned how to use it to the advantage of rural communities, than policies are revised and we have to start all over again. Housing is a case in point.

1993

Strategy for Survival

For many decades, coal has been the lifeblood of the social and economic life of many parts of Northumberland. It is difficult to find a village south of Alnwick which has not at some time had a pit: even places falling outside the obvious coalfield area, such as The Lee near Rothbury and Longframlington, have seen coal extraction at some time in their history.

Pit closures have accelerated rapidly in the last 20 years and, with the loss of Bates and Whittle in the mid-1980s, Ellington is the last British Coal deep mine in the county. Amidst a 'sea' of fairly high unemployment there are now villages and towns which are islands of exceptionally high unemployment. And, with the loss of this major industry and job losses in farming and fishing, has come a decline in the social vitality of many communities.

1998

Electricity for Enterprise

It is quite amazing that in these days of the 'Information Society' over 300 properties in the Northumberland part of the Northern Uplands do not have mains electricity. Complaints and requests for mains connection have been received by MPs, councillors and others over the years, but there seemed little opportunity to obtain grant aid for this very expensive work until the arrival on the scene of European funding in 1994.

TINN TO BRIDGE TRANSPORT GAPS IN NORTH NORTHUMBERLAND

TRANSPORT - it has almost become a swear word in North Northumberland. The biggest problem is that the main towns are so far apart that covering these distances is an arduous and expensive task for any transport provider trying to create a comprehensive service for the whole area.

Transport in North Northumberland (TINN) is a non-profit organisation funded by The Countryside Agency and Help the Aged that has been set up to address community transport problems by setting up a brokerage with bases throughout the area.

The term 'brokerage' may sound like a fashionable buzzword but it has been proven to be a highly successful way of making transport available in rural communities. Put simply, a brokerage is a company that acts as a middleman between organisations with minibuses and groups in need of transportation.

In practice, TINN negotiates with local minibus owners to utilise their vehicles during their 'downtime' in return for a share of the revenue made from hiring them out to registered groups within the community. TINN also provides full training to volunteers in the Minibus Drivers Awareness Scheme (MiDAS) to ensure that they provide safe and reliable transport. The service is designed to complement existing public transport and is aimed specifically at individuals or groups that have problems gaining access to community based activities due to disability, age or

geographical isolation.

Lee Bailey is the Transport Co-ordinator for TINN, and is responsible for assessing transport needs throughout North Northumberland and managing the brokerage. He said: "There is already a great deal of quality public transport available in North Northumberland but obviously there are going to be some gaps in the service. Because of this, transportation has often been a bit of a sore point in some communities, but through brokerage, I am confident that we will be able to go a long way toward bridging them."

"There has already been an incredible amount of interest generated and we have been approached by a number of people wanting to help. We are always on the lookout for people who can spare anything from a couple of hours to a couple of days a week to drive the minibuses or to act as chaperones on some of the routes. Minibuses are also always appreciated, and there are lots of benefits to those who decide to enter their buses into the brokerage."

The ball has been set rolling in Rothbury where TINN has been offered the use of the Scout group's converted ambulance and in Berwick where the charity HOBBI has made their accessible minibus available to the brokerage.

If you are interested in volunteering for TINN, have a Minibus gathering dust or if you would like more information on the service, give them a call on 0845 602 3794.

RISK MANAGEMENT

ACTION RISK Ltd. is a risk management company based at Mill Road, Langley Moor, Durham DH7 8HJ. Joanne Pratt, Director of Action Risk, has written 2 books aimed at charitable organisations.

Risk Management - A Guide for Charities summarises the key issues in relation to risk management for charities. The book was written with the aim to give charities a basic understanding of the process without using technical terms that are not easily understood by staff without a background in finance

Practical Audit Issues - A Guide for Charities enables charities to be more prepared for audit. It documents the responsibilities of trustees, and the benefits of implementing controls and procedures within the organisation to make the process more efficient and to guard against the risk of fraud.

For more details contact the author on 0191 378 3969.

BRAVE HEARTS OF THE NORTH EAST

THE LOCAL CHARITY FOR LOCAL CHILDREN



Some of the children benefiting from awards with Samson & Delilah (Sunderland's mascots) at the Stadium of Light, earlier this year

IN 1988 a young girl from the North East called Joanne Gillespie was given a Children of Courage Award. Joanne, who was 11, had endured 2 major operations but still managed to write a book called 'Brave Heart'. She hoped that this diary of her recovery would help other sick children and it did.

In 1989 Joanne was presented with a North East personality award which inspired members of Hexham Round Table to start a massive fundraising effort. Over £35,000 was raised which enabled 22 brave children to go to Disney World on the holiday of their life. Other children who were too ill to travel received other gifts such as computers or other

THE NORTHERN ROCK FOUNDATION CHANGE OF ADDRESS - NEW PROGRAMMES

THE NORTHERN ROCK Foundation is an independent grant making organisation. It was formed in 1997 when Northern Rock Building Society converted to a plc and committed itself to giving a percentage of its profits each year to be used for the benefit of the community. Because of the unique way it is funded the Foundation will be around for a long time to come.

After 5 years at Lansdowne Terrace in Gosforth the Foundation have moved, on 16 December, to larger more accessible premises at The Old Chapel, Woodbine Road, Gosforth, Newcastle upon Tyne, NE3 1DD. Telephone numbers and e mail address remain the same. Tel 0191 284 8413 Fax 0191 284 5411 E mail: generaloffice@nr-foundation.org.uk

From January 2003 the Foundation introduces new grant programmes, which although new adhere to the Foundation's primary purpose to help disadvantaged people.

A brief summary of the new programmes is:

Programme 1: Prevention of local and regional social decline - actions which stop social problems from developing or worsening.

Programme 2: Regeneration - local initiatives which improve the economic prospects of an area or community of interest.

Programme 3: Basics - day to day services.

Programme 4: Exploration and experiment - researching, trying out, thinking, finding new ideas or ways to address social problems.

Programme 5: A better, stronger voluntary sector - making the sector more capable of helping itself and others, articulating its needs and fighting its corner.

Programme 6: Aspiration - assistance to cultural, environmental, heritage and sporting charities which raise the profile of our area and make it a better place in which to live and enjoy life.

More detail can be found in literature issued by Northern Rock Foundation which can be requested through telephone or e mail contact or by viewing their website at www.nr-foundation.org.uk

equipment that would enhance their lives.

A number of Round Tablers were determined that local brave children should continue to be recognised and in 1991 a registered Charity was started called 'Brave Hearts of the North East'.

Since its inception, Brave Hearts has awarded over 160 young children from the North East, Children who have shown the most incredible courage in battling to overcome illness, handicap, or other adversities. There have been some fantastic Presentations, the last 2 have been held at Sunderland's Stadium of Light, with over 100 people attending. Whilst all the kids have received the holiday of a lifetime or the toy of their dreams, the parents and family can also cherish the Brave Heart Crystal awards that they are given. It will always be there. Sadly Joanne died in 1993 when her illness returned. So now it is more important than ever that Brave Hearts of the North East continues to honour her memory. Each year between 10 and 20 awards are made to children who seem to see nothing remarkable about their struggle to overcome adversity.

What makes Brave Hearts stand out as a Charity is the fact that there are no paid personnel involved. Every single penny that the Charity receives goes towards the awards for the children. The Charity does, however, rely on local organisations for funds. A £500 donation will look after one very special child. If you know of anyone who can help with funds please contact Martin Owen on (01434) 602331 or write to Brave Hearts of the North East, Portnell Ward & Rose, 4 Eastgate, Hexham NE46 1NB.

NEW GUIDELINES FOR 2003

LLOYDS TSB Foundation for England and Wales are one of the better known grant making foundations and are active in the North East Region.

The Foundation have just published their guidelines for charities who are applying for a grant in 2003. The Foundation has 3 programmes:

Community programme: which covers the majority of the grants they make

Collaborative programme: encouraging organisations working together

New initiatives: supporting new projects that demonstrate innovation.

For more detail check out www.lloydstsbfoundations.org.uk or contact Peter Ellis, Manager North East Region or his assistant Maria Hallett on 0191 261 8433.

Involving the Public - The Next Steps

NO FEWER than 44 people met at Northumberland County Hall to prepare the way for public involvement in the Northumberland Care Trust.

Ms Linda Ions, Chief Executive of Northumberland Care Trust, welcomed the initiative commenting that the Trust was keen to involve the public in its activities.

Paddy Conway, Project Manager for North of Tyne Patients' Voice, described the new structure for public and patient involvement in the Health Service - Patient Advice and Liaison Service, Independent Complaints and Advocacy Service, Local Authority Scrutiny and Patients' Forums.

John Slater of Northumberland Community Health Council introduced the proposed new system that aimed to involve a wide range of individuals and representative organisations. John said:

"We want to involve as many people and groups as possible to commit themselves to participating in a manner suitable to them and to an extent that they are comfortable with".

The meeting contributed to the design of the system. Emphasis was made that people with learning difficulties and the young must be made welcome. Meetings and events should be timed and located to achieve maximum input. The forums should be designed "bottom up" - to accommodate the needs of patients. Views should be sought in a variety of ways, sympathetic to the demands, work and domestic commitments of patients and public. Links need to be established with education sport, housing and a wide range of other interests.

Many people were concerned about selection for the forum. John Slater in his presentation emphasised that the Northumberland forum was about inclusion - selection processes excluded people who had a view, and as a consequence their valuable contributions were often lost to the process. There would not be any selection for involvement with the pilot.

Eventually the Commission for Health and Public, Patient and Carer involvement would select a small group of people for the patient forum, but in the meantime the pilot would involve as many people as wanted to be involved without selection, vetting or other potential discrimination. This would set a standard to be followed to include and not exclude from the eventual forum.

The attendance of so many and the many positive contributions excited Ted Clemit, who chaired the event. He closed the event

saying: "There were many positive ideas for the planning group to dwell upon. A report of the event will be sent to all participants and those on the CHC's mailing list who were unable to attend".

He emphasised that there would never be an end to registering an interest in the pilot project. "New members" would always be welcomed.

In thanking those who came along he emphasised: "The key point to remember is that the forum does not belong to the CHC or the Care Trust or the politicians -- it is yours".

For further information contact John Slater or Cathy Cushnahan at the Northumberland CHC telephone 01670 504562.

More I.T. on the Farm Project in Northumberland

AS REPORTED in the June to August issue of Northumberland Community News a partnership between Learning Choices, a local charity in Northumberland, and the Workers Education Association, a national charity, is working to provide farming communities within Northumberland with free IT training.

The project has been running from September 2002 and is now moving around the county to Embleton Village Hall, Swarland Working Men's Club, Longhorsley Village Hall and the Haltwhistle Partnership.

The aim of the project is to provide IT training in very local community venues. To assist farming communities to computerise their businesses, whether it is stock movement databases, advertising or business accounts. The courses will be tailor made to each learner to address their specific needs. All delivery will be provided free of charge using a bank of mobile resources.

Clare Wood of Learning Choices said, "The response we had for the first courses was exceptional, this really is very worthwhile to the farming communities in Northumberland".

If anyone is interested in enrolling on a course or would like further information about this project please call Clare Wood on 01669 621899, or email learningchoices@supanet.com

PUBLICATION DETAILS

Northumberland Community News is produced by the Community Council of Northumberland. The first edition came out in October 1981 and it has appeared every two months since then. The newsletter should be of interest to anyone who is working to benefit their local community. We use it to circulate useful information on sources of advice and money, to alert people to changes in legislation or service provision which may affect them, and to pass on ideas and news from one community to another. There are regular columns on Parish Council affairs, community halls and the Community Health Council; but our hope is that most people read the whole paper as a means of keeping in touch with voluntary activity and the rural parts of the county. Northumberland Community News is distributed free to Parish and District Councils, the County Council, village hall and Age Concern committees, the rural clergy and many voluntary organisations. Copies are also available in public libraries. If you belong to one of the groups mentioned and do not see the newsletter, find out why not. If you would like more copies contact the Community Council.

Contributions and ideas are welcomed. Please get in touch with the Editor, at Tower Buildings, 9 Oldgate, Morpeth NE61 1PY For information on the Community Council check out their website at www.ccn.org.uk

Copy deadline for the next edition is Tuesday, 21st January, 2003

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