



NORTHUMBERLAND COMMUNITY

NEWS

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A FUTURE FOR NORTHUMBERLAND?

WORK HAS STARTED on a review of the county and district councils in Northumberland and Durham, to determine how they might be re-organised into a pattern of unitary principal local authorities. This has been launched by the ODPM (the Office of the Deputy Prime Minister) in the run-up to a North East-wide referendum, to be held probably in Autumn 2004 on the formation of a directly-elected regional assembly.

The ODPM has made it clear that the creation of such an assembly would be accompanied by the formation of unitary principal local authorities. The review is being conducted by the Boundary Committee for England (BCE) which is part of the Government's Electoral Commission. It is a multi-stage process:

Stage One, which lasts until September, invites proposals for new unitary authorities, from any interested parties. Rather than receiving a multiplicity of submissions, the BCE would prefer a single proposal document from a sector or group of stakeholders (e.g. the voluntary sector, all principal authorities, all parish councils or business sector etc). The BCE has issued 'Guidance and Procedural Advice for the Local Government Reviews'. During Stage One, the BCE will also collate financial information from the principal local authorities, and will commission public opinion research about local government boundaries and people's perceptions and travel patterns.

Stage Two will see the publication of findings and draft recommendations, which will be consulted upon during Stage Three (2 December 03 to 23 February 04). The BCE's final recommendations will be published during Stage Four, prior to their submission to the Secretary of State.

Currently, we can only guess at the unitary options that are likely to be proposed. The experience of the previous review, in 1994, would suggest the following options:

- (i) A single unitary authority for the whole of Northumberland: The favoured choice of Northumberland County Council, but opposed by the district councils. NCC would, in effect, absorb district council functions such as council housing, development control, refuse collection, leisure services etc. There would be the greatest of savings in running costs of any option. However, there would be major concerns about the responsiveness to local needs, of such a geographically-large body.
- (ii) Two unitary authorities, one covering South East Northumberland (i.e. Blyth Valley and Wansbeck) and one covering the rest of Northumberland: this would require the merger of various districts and the disaggregation of the county council. The 1994 review concluded that the 'urban' unitary would be viable, but the 'rural'

unitary would face problems of service-delivery. Its supporters agree that it would reflect the cultural and political differences between the urban and rural parts of the county.

- (iii) Three unitary authorities, one covering South East Northumberland, one covering Tynedale and Western Castle Morpeth and one covering the rural North. This option, or a slight variation of it, was considered during the 1994 review, but the 2 rural unitary authorities were felt to lack viability and stability. Nevertheless, it attracted a degree of support within parts of Northumberland.

Although the review can consider options for new unitary authorities which link with adjacent areas (i.e. Tyne and Wear, and Durham), these are unlikely to emerge in practice.

Inevitably, this review will create anxieties and tensions within and between our principal local authorities, especially in the final few months before the 2004 referendum. We can only hope that co-operation and partnership working is not adversely affected.

Communities and voluntary bodies will have a good opportunity to influence the review during Stage Three as well as through the

ballot box at the referendum. With luck, by then we will all have a clearer idea of the Government's views for a directly-elected regional assembly: who will be involved, what will it be able to do, what budget will it have, how will it fit with the Government office and other bodies, and so on?

One of the major difficulties facing the current review is that the drawing of lines on maps does not in itself give a clear picture of the style, culture, modus operandi or performance of any new bodies which are created. Therefore, if a referendum in Autumn 2004 votes 'yes', it will be essential that this is followed by a proper process of consultation, planning and negotiation to ensure that local interests are involved. It is almost certain that any new unitary structure would require the development of parish councils and other voluntary/community sector mechanisms in those places where this is weak, and also the underpinning of current systems of support (including funding) to permit a relatively smooth transition.

The Boundary Committee for England can be contacted at: Trevelyan House, Great Peter Street, London SW1P 2HW

(Tel 0207 271 0500; Fax 0207 271 0505; email: info@boundarycommittee.org.uk).

A CLUTCH OF RURAL STRATEGIES

FOLLOWING THE CRISIS of Foot and Mouth Disease in Northumberland in 2001, the County Council promoted an independent inquiry under the chairmanship of Professor Michael Dower. As well as identifying what went wrong, and how a similar crisis might be handled in future, this inquiry gave some pointers on developing a more effective development strategy for the rural parts of Northumberland. The drafting of this strategy has been frustratingly slow, but it has at last been published for consultation.

The draft strategy is wide-ranging: from enhanced support for entrepreneurs, to green tourism, visitor management plans, food quality assurance schemes, woodfuel/biomass developments and inter-farm co-operation. For Northumberland's communities, there is a robust combination of building on what is working well, together with some new initiatives. There are calls to step-up the provision of affordable, social housing, together with more house building in the towns and service centres. New strategies and investment programmes will be encouraged in service centres including those which are not part of the Countryside Agency/One North East Market Towns Initiative: for example, Belford, Bellingham, and Allendale. Attempts will be made, through the development of 'Rural Service Compacts' to stem the decline of services such as post-offices and bus services. New efforts will be made to encourage the economic diversification of our fishing communities, and to address the low take-up of state benefits. A review will be undertaken of the capacity and support requirements of Northumberland's development trusts and other community regeneration organisations, and a pilot project is suggested to support new multi-purpose community-run premises. Copies of the draft Northumberland Rural Strategy are available from Sue Bevan (Tel. 01670 500634) or from the nsp.org.uk website.

On a wider stage, the North East Rural Action Plan is now entering its second year. This plan is jointly 'owned' by GONE, OneNE, the Countryside Agency and the North East Regional Assembly. Its recently-published progress report of the first year is an honest appraisal; many of the actions

(Continued on next page)

ENVIRONMENT AGENCY RELEASES A NEW STRATEGY

AS REPORTED in our October to December 2002 issue the Northumberland Rivers CAMS is the Catchment Abstraction Management Strategy which describes the availability of water resources in the catchments of the Rivers Blyth, Pont, Wansbeck, Font, Lyne, Coquet and Aln. It sets out a strategy for managing abstractions from our rivers into the future to ensure that we have reliable water supplies and our rivers remain beautiful and attractive to wildlife.

The Environment Agency has carried out a consultation exercise to involve as many people as possible in the decisions which affect how our rivers will be managed.

This consultation process with stakeholders and the public has now been completed and the Environment Agency has finalised the management strategy for abstraction licensing. The strategy sets out how water abstraction from our local rivers and groundwater will be controlled over the next six years.

A copy can be viewed through the Environment Agency web site at www.environment-agency.gov.uk or by contacting Fiona Lobleby or Tara Duncan at the Newcastle Office on 0191 2034155.



River Aln and Alnwick Castle

Two New Bus Shelters for Greenhead

A YEAR AFTER LOSING its two bus shelters through freak accidents, Greenhead parish has two new bus shelters thanks to the perseverance of its Parish Council and grant assistance from the Countryside Agency and Northumberland County Council.

During the winter of 2001/2002 an unknown vehicle, presumed to be a wagon, ploughed into a popular stone built bus shelter on the A69 near Greenhead, demolishing it entirely. Surprisingly, considering the structure was built of stone, the vehicle made good its escape and Greenhead parish council was unable to make any claim on its insurance. The bus shelter had originally been built by locally raised funds and locally contributed building efforts. As if this wasn't enough, a similar freak accident happened shortly afterwards on the east bound lane with a wagon colliding with a metal bus shelter, rendering it unsafe for use.

Complaints soon arose from people needing to use the busy 685 service being soaked and of school children even missing the bus because they had been sheltering in the underpass when the bus arrived unobserved!

The cost of modern bus shelters, at some £5,000, is usually prohibitive for parish councils but in this case Greenhead Parish Council was able to access grant funding largely from the Countryside Agency's Parish Transport Grant scheme and also 25% from Northumberland County Council. Local Greenhead Parish Councillor, Patrick Lees-Millais, did most of the not inconsiderable paper work, as designs and costs fluctuated, with advice and assistance from Richard Sim, of the Community Council of Northumberland.

TRANSPORT GRANTS

The Countryside Agency's Transport grant scheme is open to any parish council. It offers up to £10,000 to each parish depending on the project. Parish councils can apply individually or jointly with other parish councils to com-

bine resources to fund larger projects. The grant scheme will fund 75% of the total cost of the project.

Bus shelters are by no means the only type of scheme that can be funded in this way. The grant scheme will fund many kinds of transport initiatives. There are no hard and fast rules, since each community may have very different needs. However, some ideas which parish councils are encouraged to develop are:

- car clubs
- vouchers for taxis or taxi sharing schemes
- funding for a local bus company to divert an existing service through a village
- projects to promote walking or cycling
- purchasing cars, mopeds or minibuses for community use
- new ways to provide transport information

For further information please contact the Tynedale Rural Transport Officer, Peter Mogridge, on 01434 602702.

A NEW COMMUNITY CENTRE FOR HALTWHISTLE

THE HALTWHISTLE PARTNERSHIP held two public consultation meetings on 29th July concerning a proposal to demolish the existing Church Hall built at the beginning of the twentieth century and replace it with a modern community centre on the same site. The Church would retain ownership of the new building, which would be leased for 50 years to the Haltwhistle Partnership with an option to renew the lease.

The scheme has been developed in co-operation between the owners of the site - the Church - and the Haltwhistle Partnership. From the community's appraisal process the need for a modern community centre had emerged as a key priority for the town. It was felt that the town needed modern meeting and function rooms with facilities for training, an internet café, a creche, modern kitchens and functional offices for various community agencies to work from. These might include CAB, the employment service, Sure Start, Escape, Victim Support, the Pensions Service, the Community Council, the police, Debt Advice, TVA and other bodies.

The meetings considered various options including refurbishment, a new site, a rebuild or doing nothing. The option of a complete new build on the site emerged as the best value option although several people expressed concern at the limited car parking which would be available to an expanded community centre. Estimated costs run at nearly £1.5 million and all the money would have to be in place by March 2004 if work is to proceed.

Autumn Views

LAUGHTER is a good remedy for curing the blues and people attending Scremerston Rugby Club for the September 10 meeting of Northern Views (the quarterly discussion forum on rural mental health issues) will be able to take part in a laughter workshop to check this out for themselves. The title of the meeting is "Mental Well-being - what is it, how do I get it, how do I keep it?" and together with speakers from health and social care organisations there will be an opportunity to try other 'feel-good' activities such as T'ai Chi and going for a healthy walk.

Meanwhile, in Haydon Bridge Methodist Church on September 18, the Western Views forum will be discussing 'The Challenge of Mental Health for Children'. Speakers from Haltwhistle Sure-start, the Purple Partnership and the Mental Health Trust's Children's Service will highlight how their work helps children.

Open to everyone, the meetings start at 10 a.m. and finish with a free lunch.

For further details contact Susan Cross, Rural Stress Initiative, on 01670 505 278.

PUBLIC LIABILITY INSURANCE

A FREQUENTLY EXPRESSED concern by village hall committees is their position regarding public liability insurance. Community buildings invite the public on to their premises and must therefore insure against legal liability for injury or damage suffered by visitors. This covers the Management Committee against claims for damages from any visitors if they are injured or develop an illness as a result of the organisation's negligence. (e.g. floor left wet - no warning sign displayed - someone slips, injures themselves and is off work for several months - claims loss of earnings arising from committee's negligence).

The Committee should ensure that any user groups, either on a regular or irregular basis, are covered by their insurance or that they have their own. The biggest problem is likely to be one off private hires (birthday parties, wedding receptions etc). It is probably safer to get cover in your policy and adjust hire charges to take this expense into account.

Some of the events and facilities provided that are sometimes overlooked by management committees, in respect of insurance cover, are fetes and galas (and especially the provision of bouncy castles), firework displays and bonfires, Christmas trees and the accompanying fairy lights and hazardous activities such as archery or shooting.

With the season for firework displays and bonfires not far away, it is timely to remind Village Hall Management Committees that they should check their insurance policies. Those halls insured through the Aon scheme with Allianz Cornhill can rest safe in the knowledge that their cover automatically extends to include fetes, firework displays, bonfires and similar events, provided the event is arranged by the insured Village Hall Management Committee.

Allianz Cornhill have a leaflet giving special events guidelines. Management Committees can obtain a copy of the the guidelines from Allianz Cornhill on 01483 736333.

LEADER+ AND CCN AT SEAHOUSES

As announced in the last issue the Community Council staff based at Seahouses have relocated to Alnwick. The new address and telephone numbers are: Russell House, Greenwell Road Alnwick NE66 1HB Tel and fax: 01665 606578 Email contacts remain unchanged and are shown on page 4 of this paper.

"WELL BEING FOR REAL": PROMOTING MENTAL HEALTH IN NORTHUMBERLAND

NORTHUMBERLAND'S APPROACH to Mental Health Promotion includes everybody who works or lives in Northumberland.

For positive mental health we all need a safe and secure place to live; access to employment or valued activity; and opportunities to socialise and to be respected.

There is a Steering Group for Mental Health Promotion in Northumberland that is chaired by the Director of Public Health, Mike Lavender, and includes representatives from voluntary and statutory services. They are keen to promote initiatives that provide advice or support, or which work to prevent the occurrence or escalation of mental health problems.

They have a database of examples of mental health promotion work in Northumberland in order to publicise local good practice and hope to share information and to invite comments and involvement from people. They are now updating the database. If anyone would like to add details about your work to the database please contact:

Judith Keepin (email Judith.keeping@northumberland-haz.org.uk) or download and print off a copy from: <http://www.northumberlandcaretrust.nhs.uk/mhp>

They are currently organising three "Well Being for Real" workshops and you are encouraged to register early interest in these by getting in touch with the key contacts below. The venues have yet to be confirmed.

WORKSHOP ONE:

Promoting Older People's Mental Health - Friday 16th September 2003.

Contact: John Dowswell, Social Care Directorate, Northumberland Care Trust

Tel: 01670 534741

Email: jdowswell@northumberland.gov.uk

WORKSHOP TWO:

Promoting Young People's Mental Health - Thursday 23rd October 2003.

Contact: Helen Watson, Department of Public Health, Northumberland Care Trust

Tel: 01670 394410

Email: helen.watson@northumberlandhaz.org.uk

WORKSHOP THREE:

Measuring and Evaluating Mental Health Promotion - Friday 21st November 2003.

Contact: Janet Bostock, Psychological

Services Directorate, 3Ns Mental

Health Trust

Tel: 01670 396130

Email: janet.bostock@nmht.nhs.uk

They are keen for people from Community and Voluntary groups and Statutory services to work together in these workshops to learn about good practice nationally and locally in order to strengthen mental health promotion in Northumberland.

If you would like to know more about Northumberland's Mental Health Promotion Strategy please contact: Janet Bostock, Community Psychologist. Tel: 01670 396130. Email: janet.bostock@nmht.nhs.uk

CAN DO - You and your community - Awards for individuals

THE SCARMAN TRUST continue to administer the annual Can Do Challenge, a grant scheme open to individuals and funded by the Millennium Commission.

The funder asks "What needs doing in your community that could really make a difference? Are you a can-doer?". Anyone interested in taking up this challenge is advised to apply for an application form as soon as possible, ideally before the summer holidays. The telephone number is 0808 100 2553.

AGM ADVANCE NOTICE

THE ANNUAL GENERAL MEETING for the year end 31 March 2003 will take place on Tuesday afternoon 21 October at Choppington Social Welfare Centre. There will be a Buffet Meal at 1.00pm provided by the Centre. The cost and further details of the meal will be available from the administration staff at Tower Buildings and also enclosed with the Notice of the Meeting that will be distributed to groups and organisations on our mailing list. (Meals must be ordered and paid for by 13 October)

At 2.30pm there will be the formal business of the AGM, to be chaired by our President, the Duke of Northumberland.

This will be followed by our guest speaker John Litherland, Chief Executive of the Northumberland Strategic Partnership who will be touching on Community Regeneration in Northumberland and the work of the NSP.

(Continued from front page)

have happened anyway, regardless of the Plan. This has provided some important lessons, which should enable the second year of implementation to be more focused. Copies of the progress report and consultation brochure are available from Northern Profile 0191 245 9020.

Also, at a North-East regional level, work is well advanced on a plan to implement the proposals of the Sir Don Curry Report into Sustainable Farming and Food. Although the subject-matter is rather more focused than the Northumberland Rural Strategy, the proposed actions are considerably detailed. The proposals cover commodity supply chains (such as milk and vegetables), the food procurement policies of public bodies, demonstration farms, encouragement of new farmers, healthy eating, animal welfare, the involvement of farm households in wider community regeneration activities, rural stress networks, and so on. Copies of the proposed Delivery Plan are available from Judith Ferry at GONE (Tel. 0191 202 3788) or from the Rural Affairs page on the GONE website www.go-ne.gov.uk

NEW FACES AT CCN



Jerry Diccoc

Jerry joins CCN as project officer for the REALL project (Renewable Energy at Local Level). REALL is Northumberland and County Durham's Countryside Agency initiative to stimulate community renewable energy. Jerry will be working out of the Lanchester offices of the Durham Rural Community Council covering rural County Durham. He will promote the benefits of renewable energy to rural community groups, and by working with rural community development staff will identify and develop renewable energy projects. Jerry says "This job is actually a complete departure from my previous career - I've spent the past twelve years working in London as a broadcast engineer for ITV and BBC, within network transmission and News 24. 5 years ago I embarked upon a programme of OU study at home, with the intention of finding a career that more closely reflected my interests and concerns for environmental issues and helping others. I have

moved to the area from Kent, where my wife is still working as a teacher, and I'm now concentrating on getting to know the area and the people." We extend a warm Northern welcome to Jerry.

Neil Wilson



Neil joins CCN as the Programme Manager to the Leader+ Programme at a time that coincides with the Project's move from Seahouses to a new office in Alnwick. Originally from Glossop in Derbyshire, Neil has a Sports Development background. He has previously worked for Tameside Metropolitan Borough Council within Greater Manchester in a variety of community roles. He moved to Berwick upon Tweed in 2000 to work for the Local Authority and has spent the last three years delivering on a variety of levels from local groups to regional and national strategic working groups. As you may have guessed he is a keen sportsman and having given up the more team orientated sport of Hockey when he moved to the Northeast, now lists his interests as kayaking, canoeing, walking and cycling. Neil sees this opportunity as a natural progression in his career and in his own words is 'looking forward to the challenge'.

Barbara King

Barbara King



Barbara joins CCN as CARAD (Communities in Alnwick, Rothbury, Amble & Druridge) Health Walks Co-ordinator. The project is a "Walking the way to Health initiative managed by CCN and funded through the Countryside Agency, Northumberland Care Trust, Northumberland County Council and the Health Action Zone Public Involvement Fund. After an initial spell working from the office of NNVA at Alnwick Barbara is now based at the Willowburn Health and Leisure Centre, Alnwick.

Having taken part in the walks around Amble and Low Newton and then completing the Walk Leaders Course, Barbara has experienced the values of walking for health and is therefore anxious to get things going as quickly as possible

Barbara's aim is to have regular weekly walk sessions, initially in Alnwick, Rothbury, Amble & Druridge, where anyone can join in this very sociable way of getting and keeping fit. It is then hoped that this will spread to other surrounding areas.

A Walk Leaders training course has also been arranged for Thursday 2 October. If anyone is interested in completing this course then Barbara can be contacted on 01665 605030.

Jane Davies



Jane Davies has joined CCN as a temporary part-time CDO and is based at ATAC, Widdrington Station. Having come from a wide-ranging social work background she now enjoys working with communities in the Coalfields area. Spare time is spent gardening, drinking wine and reading but not necessarily in that order!

FROM THESE PAGES IN

1984

Wansbeck CVS

It looks as if Wansbeck District will one day have a Council for Voluntary Service run along similar lines to that in Blyth Valley.

At a recent public meeting 140 people from various voluntary organisations throughout Wansbeck packed into Bedlington Community Centre to discuss their views on a Wansbeck CVS. Most people felt very positive about the need for a CVS and the outcome of the meeting was the setting-up of a Steering Committee. This will be made up of about 30 representatives from voluntary organisations, including Linda Denzey from the Community Council.

1988

Longhorsley Community Centre

Villagers from Longhorsley have finally had their efforts rewarded. Although the present project began three years ago, the idea has remained an embryo since 1949. It was then that the former hall was pulled down and ever since the village has been determined to secure another hall. Now at last, their ideals have been realised with the official opening of Longhorsley Community Centre by County Councillor Geoff France in May this year. The hall is built from two demountable classrooms which were purchased from South Tyneside for the grand total of £20! The cost of transporting them to the site itself was a further £250.

1993

Challenge Calor

a new village hall kitchen in a day

On Friday 18th June the kitchen area of the Creighton Memorial Hall in Embleton was transformed by a team of 30 staff from Calor Northern Region. Embleton were the lucky winners of a competition organised by the company's

'Calor in the Community' initiative.

The challenge issued by Calor Gas Northern Region was for members of their staff to refurbish a local village hall in a day, either decorating, improving kitchen facilities or gardening.

1998

Felton Village Hall A Truly Grand Re-Opening

THE LOCAL PRESS reported in 1926 that the original Felton Village Hall was opened by the then Duke of Northumberland "in presence of a large assembly". History was repeated on 20 June this year when the present Duke officially re-opened the extended and refurbished building in the presence of such a crowd that there was standing room only inside the Main Hall and late-comers couldn't get in at all!

ABBREVIATIONS AND ACRONYMS (AAA)

TWO OBSTACLES present themselves to organisations and groups putting themselves forward looking for funds. Firstly "what do all these acronyms and abbreviations actually mean?" and secondly "how does the system work?"

Ken Walters, the CCN community development officer for Alnwick and Rothbury, is particularly concerned that non-professionals (and professionals in this field) can be baffled by the jargon commonly used at meetings and in documents and has compiled a glossary of abbreviations and acronyms for reference.

The following is taken from Ken's list:

AAP Alnwick Area Partnership	LEA Local Education Authority
AONB Area of Outstanding National Beauty	LSP Local Strategic Partnership
CA Countryside Agency	MTI Market Towns Initiative
CCN Community Council of Northumberland	NALC Northumberland Association of Local Councils
CPRE Council for the preservation of Rural England	NCC Northumberland County Council
DEFRA Dept. of Environment, Food and Rural Affairs	NNPA Northumberland National Park Authority
DTA Development Trust Association	NNRTP North Northumberland Rural Transport Partnership
EAGGF European Agricultural Guidance and Guarantee Fund	NNVA North Northumberland Voluntary Action
ERDF European Regional Development Fund	NSP Northumberland Strategic Partnership
ESF European Social Fund	Objective 2 A European guided structural programme
FINE Funding Information North East	One North East The Development Agency for the NE of England
GGT The Glendale Gateway Trust	PC Parish Council
GONE Government Office for the North East	SME Small to medium enterprise
HO Home Office	

Does the list raise more questions than it answers? In order to help the projects which he advises and supports Ken has given further details about some of these organisations and their work:

Government Office NorthEast (GONE)

The Government Office for the North East is one of 9 Regional offices, which form part of the Office of the Deputy Prime Minister (ODPM). Set up in 1994 they provide a regional presence of several Government Departments:

Dept. of Culture, Media and Sport (DCMS) Dept. of Education and Skills (DFES) Dept. of Environment, Food and Rural Affairs (DEFRA) Dept. of Health (DOH) Dept. of Trade and Industry (DTI) Dept. of Transport (DfT) Dept. for Work and Pensions (DWP) Home Office (HO)

GONE has several basic objectives included within which are

- To sponsor the Regional Development Agency (One Northeast)
- To meet the Strategic goals set for European Programmes (In reality GONE is home to officers who administer the various European Structural Funds allocated to the North East of England.)

One NorthEast (ONE)

The Regional Development Agency set up in 1999 to "create and sustain jobs, prosperity and a higher quality of life" Responsible to the Government and "to the people of the North East".

Since April 2002 all of the English Regional Development Agencies operate within a single Financial Framework (The Single Pot). 11 separate Government funding streams, all with different priorities, were replaced by a single programme with a harmonised approach to project appraisal and monitoring.

One Northeast decided that 75% of its Single Programme resources will be devolved to its four Sub Regional Partnerships, which cover Northumberland, Tyne and Wear, County Durham and Tees Valley.

Northumberland Strategic Partnership (NSP)

Set up in 1997, this is an association of key stakeholders, which operate to bring benefit and look after the well being of Northumberland and its communities. The NSP acts as the sub regional partnership for Northumberland in the context of the One Northeast Regional Economic Strategy. The NSP promoted the setting up of even more local strategic partnerships, to consider more focussed local community strategies these are termed Local Strategic Partnerships (LSPs).

The Alnwick Area Partnership is the Local Strategic Partnership for the Alnwick District.

This organisation is charged with producing a Community Strategy. This strategy should act as the vehicle for improving the social, environmental, and economic well-being of the Alnwick area and must involve local communities.

Editor's addendum

And here is one that throws most people. **LEADER**.

This is French in origin and stands for Liaison Entre Actions Development L'Economie Rurale. (The loose English translation of this is joined up action for the development of the rural economy.)

FUNDING INFORMATION AFTERNOON

THE COMMUNITY FOUNDATION serving Tyne & Wear and Northumberland are holding a Funding Information Afternoon to show community groups how they might be able to help them.

The event is at the Langsley Room, Ground Floor, Gateshead Civic Centre between 3 to 7pm Wednesday 10 September 2003.

There will be information stands covering their grants programmes and the government funds that we administer -including the Local Network Fund for Children and Young People. One to one surgeries will also be available. Open question and answer sessions will take place at 4pm and 6pm.

It would assist in the organising of the event if groups intending to attend could advise the Community Foundation, by 27 August, by email [general@communityfoundation.org.uk] or telephone [0191 2300689] stating their name and contact details and approximately what time they will be coming (i.e. between 3-5pm or 5-7pm).

A WALK IN THE PARK

TYNEDALE COUNCIL have recently published an informative leaflet that invites all to "Explore riverside trails, heritage and play in Hadrian's wall country". Amongst other attractions the leaflet gives detail on Tyne Green Country Park, The Tyne Green Trail, and parks and play areas in Hexham, Prudhoe and Haltwhistle.

The leaflet can be obtained from Tynedale Council's Tourist Information Centres at Hexham, Corbridge, Haltwhistle and Bellingham and will assist residents and tourists to explore the parks and amenities in the District. Telephone Hexham Tourist Information Centre for further details - 01434 652220.

COMMUNITY CHEST FOR TYNEDALE



Celebrating the launch of the Rural Tynedale Small Grants Fund beside Hadrian's Wall with some symbolic money are (left to right): Susi Goncu, Tynedale Council's Community Development Officer; Councillor John Lynch, Chairman of Tynedale Council; Dr David Fruin, Chairman, the Northumberland Local Action Group for LEADER+; and Councillor John Riddle, Chairman of the Northumberland National Park Authority.

NEW BORDER HISTORY RESOURCE LAUNCHED

Where can we find some fascinating facts about the Border Reivers?



The launch of Tynedale Council museum service's new Border History resource, Tynedale Learning Links at Hexham middle School. Pictured wearing and carrying items from the Discovery boxes, right to left are: Ben Couch - 13yrs, Flora Fairbairn - Tynedale Council's Museum Service, Rivka Benjamin - 12yrs, Nicola Goodridge - 12yrs, Morag Iles - 12yrs, Daniel Millett - 10yrs, Mark Makepeace - 10yrs and Fiona Lockhart - Tynedale Council's Museum Service.

THE ANSWER LIES within a new educational resource, that will interpret Border History and historic buildings in Hadrian's Wall Country, Northumberland. Launched by Tynedale Council's Museums service this mine of information consists of:

- a fascinating new interactive website featuring the notorious Border Reivers of Tudor times, Hexham's Old Gaol, Moothall, and Abbey and other sites in Tynedale including Dilston Castle and Wylam Railway Museum;
- two teachers' packs exploring Hexham, Tynedale and Hexham Abbey, with National Curriculum links to the Tudors, the Victorians and World War II; and
- Discovery Boxes containing replica objects of the time.

Janet Goodridge, Tynedale Council's museums officer said: "The Tynedale Learning Links project arose from the Thinking Skills initiative adopted in many Northumberland schools and developed because we realised that there was a rich seam of historical information on Border history that was not widely available. The development of the Tynedale Learning Links project now makes this information accessible to a bigger audience and offers huge potential for increasing educational use of Tynedale's historic sites."

The £69,000 project has been made possible by funding from the Heritage Lottery Fund, North East Museums Libraries and Archives Council, Tynedale Council, the Historic Hexham Trust and other funders.

The website contains information on Dilston Castle featuring the Radcliffe family and the Jacobite cause, Wylam Railway Museum, the Hexham House of Correction, Hexham Abbey, Border tales, crime and punishment and the law, and many aspects of the way of life in former centuries, which will improve understanding before or after a visit to the attractions themselves.

Councillor John Herron, Leader of Tynedale Council said: "The new Tynedale Learning Links project is a wonderful educational resource, enabling schools in remote rural areas to access learning materials, linked to the national curriculum. However, the website itself will be fascinating for anyone in the wider community who is interested in the Border region, either using an internet connection at home or by visiting one of Tynedale's 23 village IT Centres."

The website address for Tynedale Learning Links is www.tynedaleheritage.org

The Tynedale Learning Links project was funded by the Heritage Lottery Fund (£48,200); North East Museums Libraries and Archives Council (£7,000); Tynedale Council (£8,050); Historic Hexham Trust (£1,200); with further support in kind to the value of £4,800 from teachers in local schools, Wylam Railway Museum, Heritage Centre, Bellingham and the Historic Dilston Group.

For further details on the teachers' resources contact Flora Fairbairn at Tynedale Council's museums service, Telephone 01434 652351. Email museum@tynedale.gov.uk.

VONNE GOES HOME

VONNE (Voluntary Organisations Network North East) have moved out of their temporary offices on the 4th Floor of Percy House to return to their original - and permanent - office accommodation in Cale Cross House (now simply Cale Cross) which has been restored following the smoke damage of several years ago. Their new postal address from Monday 23rd June 2003 is: 9th Floor Cale Cross 156 Pilgrim Street Newcastle upon Tyne NE1 6SU. Their telephone and fax numbers, email addresses and website address have not changed. Tel: 0191 233 2000, Fax: 0191 222 1998. Email: vonne@vonne.co.uk Website: www.vonne.co.uk

VOLUNTARY AND COMMUNITY GROUPS in rural Tynedale are being invited to apply for project funding following the launch of the Rural Tynedale Small Grants Fund.

A total of £30,000 is now available through the scheme, which is expected to run for 12 months, awarding grants on a first come, first served basis. Organisations applying for funding are expected to raise a minimum of five percent of the overall cost of each project, which can be 'in-kind' contributions.

Administered by Tynedale Council, the scheme has been funded by the council, Northumberland National Park Authority and LEADER+.

Grants of between £500 and £2,000 will be available to organisations and groups in the North Pennines LEADER+ and National Park areas within the district. Voluntary, non profit organisations, drama and arts clubs, community associations, youth organisations and charitable trusts will all be eligible to apply.

Community development officer at Tynedale Council, Susi Goncu, will administer the fund. She said: "This fund offers grants to organisations working on environmental schemes, tourism or heritage related projects, health initiatives and arts and cultural activities that will improve and protect the quality of life and well-being of those resident, working and visiting in the area.

"In the past, organisations seeking small grants would have had to make three applications to Tynedale Council, the Northumberland National Park Authority and LEADER+, so the introduction of this scheme will simplify the process a great deal and make it much easier and quicker for such projects to obtain financial support."

Applications will be assessed on their contribution to the local community, based on how each project empowers local people and communities, the creation of new skills and projects and the support provided for rural services. The way in which each project develops living and working landscapes, improves healthy lives and communities and affects art and culture will also be considered.

In addition to the Rural Tynedale Small Grants Fund, the council also distributes funding through the Sustainable Communities Fund, which over the last 12 months has contributed £112,000 towards the running costs of 16 key voluntary organisations.

Community groups are also eligible for funding through the Recreational Open Space Strategy Budget, providing grants of up to £5,000 towards the development of outdoor and sports facilities and the Grant Aid initiative offers organisations money to maintain and develop their own facilities.

For further information about funding opportunities or an application form for the Rural Tynedale Small Grants scheme, contact Susi Goncu at Tynedale Council on Tel: 01434 652200.

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 items on Parish Council affairs, community halls and funding as well as other items of informative and newsworthy value; 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, 23rd September, 2003

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