

ANNUAL REPORT 2021-22

CHAIR'S FOREWORD

It is always important to review previous years and to learn from what we have done so that we bring about positive change for CAN, in line with the business plan. This year has been a year of further growth and expansion. The introduction of new ways of working improved what we were able to achieve for the community we serve, and to model the values and behaviours we promote.

There was much to learn from 'lockdown', as the team adopted a judicious use of on-line meetings, giving more time to support the community and leading to a reduction in travel. Face to face meetings remain key to maintaining links within CAN teams and those 'all – important networks' that support many of our most vulnerable groups across Northumberland.

The search for funding to enable a strong and targeted support programme has been successful this year, leading to a 15% increase in financial resources and a strengthening of skills in the team. Expanding to a team of fourteen full and part-time staff has broadened CAN's expertise, greatly extending provision across rural communities.

The employment hubs have exceeded targets in supporting people to develop the skills needed to help them find work. Tackling unemployment, signposting support for health and social services and mitigating against fuel poverty have continued throughout the year.

The Warm hubs, created and supported by CAN, responded rapidly to Arwen and subsequent storms providing food, warmth, shelter and often a place to work for those hardest hit by power cuts. Warm hubs have gained national recognition through well co-ordinated publicity and membership of the ACRE network, which has led to CAN being asked to advise on introducing a similar model of good practice in other rural communities across the country.

The urgency of becoming energy efficient and responding responsibly to climate change has never been more essential in the challenging economic and political climate. The hardships faced by our rural communities have become more acute. By anticipating and planning for action and making good use of marketing, lobbying for funding and an effective publicity strategy, CAN has been able to provide practical support and energy advice to rural communities very quickly.

Extensive work with the National Innovation Centre for Rural Enterprise and the Rural Design Centre brought a unique partnership to work with community buildings through CAN seeking ways to pioneer green energy and efficient use of increasingly scarce resources.

The achievements of Andy Dean, CEO and his talented team, are reflected in the growth CAN is experiencing and in the way in which Andy has been invited to join wider regional committees such as the new North of Tyne Rural Investment Plan Advisory Group. Most of the achievements mentioned are in addition to the core work with village halls, Parish & Town Councils, community groups, local and national networks. CAN continues to provide regular advice, up to date news and examples of good practice through the online portal, village hall meetings and other regular events across rural Northumberland.

CAN enjoys excellent leadership, not only from our CEO, but from a very supportive group of Trustees, led for over nine years by Adrian Hinchliffe. Sadly, Adrian, our wise and clear-sighted Chairman, stepped down from CAN this year. My personal thanks to Adrian who has provided me with excellent support and a very professional model of a skilled chairman to inspire me!

Finally, I would like to thank the many volunteers and supporters throughout the County whose interest, support and commitment are so vital and invaluable.

Jean Humphrys, Chair



SOME HIGHLIGHTS OF THE YEAR

The covid-19 pandemic had an unprecedented impact on all areas of life, communities and organisations regardless of sector. CAN is proud of the way in which we not only sustained but expanded our services and support for Northumberland's rural communities during and after the pandemic. Highlights include:

- We secured funds from the Energy Industry Voluntary Redress scheme to employ 2 Energy Advisers providing essential energy support and advice to vulnerable residents across rural Northumberland. Together with our **Energy Advice in Rural Northumberland** online information hub, this has enabled direct local support to be available throughout the global energy crisis.
- Our **Warm Hubs** project has expanded to more community venues where people can be assured of finding a safe, warm and friendly environment in which to enjoy the company of other people. A series of additional activities have built on the Warm Hubs project which has become a national exemplar.
- Our partnership with The National Lottery Community Fund continued, directing much needed investment into **village halls and community buildings** across the county. The foundation for this partnership is CAN's hugely valued support service, including one-to-one case work, good practice resources, training, funding bid support and achieving the Hallmark accreditation standard. Reflecting the critical community value of village halls, CAN invested more resources during the year increasing our village hall staffing capacity by 40%.
- Our **Rural Employment Hub** network is a key element of the countywide 'Bridge Project' with 6 hubs operating every week across the rural county providing essential support to local unemployed people. The Bridge Project is funded by the European Social Fund and the National Lottery Community Fund as part of the Building Better Opportunities Programme. Our service expanded to an additional hub during the year, increasing the services available and ensuring rural residents can access the support they need.
- Our direct partnership with the **Northumberland Association of Local Councils (NALC)** has remained a fundamental element to the way we work. Through a dedicated officer, we have provided advice, training and a wide range of support throughout the year and further solidified the NALC-CAN relationship into the future.
- Our enabling hub for community-led housing, **Communities CAN (North East)** has continued to support local communities keen to deliver community-led affordable housing schemes where these are needed in many parts of Northumberland. During the year this service expanded to cover the whole of the North East and employed a dedicated Coordinator, developing a strong pipeline of projects across the area.
- We built further our support to local **Development Trusts** through the provision of a dedicated Project Officer for both Haltwhistle Partnership and Prudhoe Community Partnership, supporting the development of new initiatives, funding submissions and effective local management.
- We expanded our climate action work including feasibility studies into the potential installation of solar panels and associated battery storage to 19 community buildings across the county. Funded through the **Rural Community Energy Fund**, this work aims to lower carbon emissions, reduce energy costs and enhance community resilience supporting village halls in their Emergency Rest Centre roles.
- We worked closely with the **National Innovation Centre for Rural Enterprise** (led by Newcastle University) and the **Rural Design Centre** (funded through the North of Tyne Combined Authority) on a range of projects seeking to harness the innovation expertise of both the academic and private sectors to solve entrenched rural issues.



For more information about our activities during 2021/22 and our plans for the future, please view our website or contact info@ca-north.org.uk

CAN'S FINANCES

2021-22 saw CAN's income and expenditure expand for a fifth consecutive year – despite the covid-19 pandemic. No staff were furloughed at all during the pandemic.

Previous years' surplus was invested in further activities and services and, despite an accounts deficit of £13,360, expenditure of restricted project funds received in the previous year resulted in a net addition to reserves for the year of £6,393.

Our reserves remain healthy and at the level we need, and we have a small project fund available for investment in new activities.

Our key financial relationships with both Defra and NALC have been maintained. A small number of funded programmes came to an end, but we have continued to diversify our other income with a combination of grant, contract, consultancy and directly earned income representing the continuing strength of our relationships with funders and partners, maintaining robust foundations for subsequent financial years.

In the face of unprecedented challenges, sincere thanks must go to all our funders for their continued support throughout the year together with our committed and passionate staff and trustees, our members and supporters, all of whom are listed below.

Income and Expenditure Account (year ended 31 March 2022)

| INCOME | £ | EXPENDITURE | £ |
|-----------------------------|----------------|------------------------------|-----------------|
| Voluntary Income | | Raising Funds | |
| Donations & legacies | 3,175 | Cost of generating income | 4,559 |
| Other trading activities | 7,745 | | |
| Investments | 474 | | |
| Grant Income | | Charitable Activities | |
| DEFRA | 42,405 | Salaries, NI, pension | 193,832 |
| Community Foundation | 10,000 | Project direct costs | 310,883 |
| Energy projects | 23,600 | Support costs | 8,658 |
| Community Buildings Officer | 14,250 | | |
| Rural Community Energy Fund | 32,800 | | |
| NICRE | 19,736 | | |
| BBO Project | 195,325 | Governance Costs | |
| Community Housing Fund | 42,270 | Salaries, NI, pension | 8,486 |
| Energy Redress | 53,584 | Administration | 1,902 |
| Other | 7,066 | Independent examination | 1,180 |
| Other Income | | | |
| NALC | 30,000 | | |
| Prudhoe Partnership | 10,500 | | |
| Haltwhistle Partnership | 9,000 | | |
| NE Community-led Network | 4,700 | | |
| Wingates | 2,956 | | |
| OilCAN | 6,554 | | |
| TOTAL INCOME | 516,140 | TOTAL EXPENDITURE | 529,500 |
| | | SURPLUS FOR YEAR | (13,360) |

Patron

His Grace the Duke of Northumberland

President

Lord Curry of Kirkharle CBE

Vice Presidents

Rt Hon Lord Alan Beith; Mrs S E Black MBE; Rev Canon B Burston; Ven R Langley; Mrs S Walker; Dr D Francis

Board of Directors

Ms Sian Armstrong (Treasurer)

Ms Jan Ashdown

Mrs Elizabeth Elliott

Mr George Hepburn OBE until 15.11.21

Mr Adrian Hinchcliffe (Vice Chair)

Mr Tony Hood

Mrs Jean Humphrys (Chair)

Mr Miles Middleton CBE FCA until 15.11.21

Ven Catherine Sourbut-Groves

Mrs Lesley Tudor -Snodin

Mrs Valerie Vaughan

Staff

Andrew Beresford – Bridge Worker

Carol Davison – Finance & Admin Officer

Alan Gerono – Development Officer

Tracey Morgan – Community Development Officer

Julia Plinston – Community Development Officer

Alex Scott- Bridge Worker

Margaret Tweddell – Finance & Admin Assistant

Marketing Consultant: Carrie Brookes

Work Coaches: Caroline Armstrong, Michelle Awburn, Lisa Douglas, Joy Pacey, Sarah Sunderland, Janet Turnbull, Tracy Hinton

Louise Currie – Community Initiatives Officer

Andy Dean – Chief Executive Officer

Tom Johnston – Communities CAN Coordinator

Christine Nicholls – Community Development Officer

Stephen Rickitt – NALC Chief Officer

Leanne Shipley – Energy Adviser

Brian Watson – Energy Adviser

Members and Supporters 2021-22

| | |
|---|--|
| Action with Communities in Rural England (ACRE) | Cresswell Village Hall |
| AF Affinity Ltd | Crookham Village Hall |
| AFC Hunter | Lord Curry of Kirkharle |
| Age UK Northumberland | Dalton Village Hall |
| Allenheads Trust Ltd | Dept for Environment, Food & Rural Affairs |
| Alnwick Town Council | Diocese of Newcastle |
| Amble Town Council | Duke of Northumberland |
| Ancroft Memorial Hall | Durham County Council |
| S Armstrong | Ellington Social Welfare Centre |
| J Ashdown | Ellington Village Hall |
| Assoc of Northumberland Local History Societies | E A Elliott |
| Beadnell WI | FoNDT |
| Birtley Village Hall | D Francis |
| S E Black MBE | Gateshead Council |
| Bowsden Village Hall | M Gibbs |
| The Breamish Hall Powburn | R Gibbs |
| B Burston | Gilsland Village Hall |
| Capheaton Parish Council | Great Whittington Village Hall Committee |
| CLA North | Haltwhistle Partnership Ltd |
| Coal Industry Social Welfare Organisation | T Hawkins |
| Colwell Village Hall | Haydon Parish Council |
| Cornhill Village Hall | Healey Parish Council |
| Community Foundation | The Hearth Centre (Horsley) Ltd |
| Craster Community Trust | Heddon on the wall Parish Council |

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| <p>Hedley on the Hill Parish Council Hepple Parish Council A Hinchcliffe High Forest Community Association Hindmarsh Village Hall T Hood Horsley WI/Village Hall Howick Village Hall Trust J Humphrys W D Johnson Jubilee Hall, Newton on the Moor The Jubilee Institute, Rothbury Kirknewton Village Hall Trust Kirkwhelpington Memorial Hall Knarsdale with Kirkhaugh Community Hall B Langley Langley Village Hall Lesbury Village Hall J F Lewis Longhoughton Community & Sports Centre Trust A Lowrie LSI Energy C G Matthews-Maxwell Merton Hall Recreation Centre Middleton & Todridge Village Hall G E Miller Mind Active D Morgan N Mundy National CAB National Energy Action North East Community-led Development Network Netherton Village Hall Netherton War Memorial Hall Newbrough Parish Council Newcastle City Council Newcastle University NICRE Norham Parish Council Northern Gas Networks North Northumberland Village Hall Consortium Northumberland Assoc of Local Councils Northumberland County Council Northumberland CVA</p> | <p>Northumberland Estates Northumberland Federation of Women's Institutes OilCAN Members Otterburn Memorial Hall Ovingham Reading Room Ponteland Memorial Hall R Poppleton Prudhoe Community Partnership Rennington Village Hall RCEF S Richardson Ros Freeman K Rushworth Shilbottle Community Hall Slaley Commemoration Hall Slaley Parish Council South Charlton Village Hall Stannington Village Hall Stocksfield Community Association C Sourbut-Groves H Talbot Taret Village Hall L Tudor- Snodin The Energy Savings Trust The Joicey Trust The Rothley Trust The National Lottery Community Fund The National Lottery Heritage Fund Thropton War Memorial Hall Tees Valley Combined Authority Ulgham WI United Reformed Church Upper Coquetdale Community Transport V Vaughan Voluntary Organisations Network North East Wall Village Hall S Walker Wark Mechanics Institute & Town Hall West Northumberland Community Buildings Consortium Whalton Village Hall Whittingham Memorial Institute Wingates Wind Farm Community Fund Wylam Institute Community Association</p> |
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