

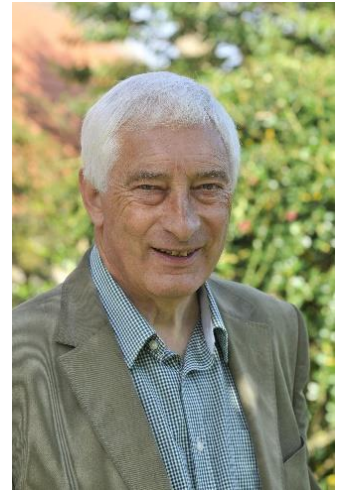
# ANNUAL REPORT 2020-21

## CHAIRMAN'S FOREWORD

I am pleased to present the Annual Report of Community Action Northumberland for the year to 31<sup>st</sup> March 2021.

I always feel that it is important to mention CAN's purpose. Our purpose is to benefit and help sustain rural communities in Northumberland by:

- **Promoting Rural Issues** – providing and supporting a 'rural voice' to influence policy, programmes and action.
- **Empowering Communities** – supporting and developing local communities, their key groups and organisations.
- **Delivering solutions** – identifying, developing and managing projects to address the needs of individuals.
- **Addressing climate change** – delivering projects and influencing behaviours to help meet climate action requirements.



As the Northumberland member of the national ACRE Network (Action with Communities in Rural England) we have undertaken a wide range of projects and worked with a number of existing and new key partners. I cannot report to you without mentioning the COVID pandemic. The lockdowns have affected the whole community but particularly those living in rural areas where it has had a detrimental impact on all aspects of life. CAN's services were needed more than ever. Our staff met these challenges and quickly adjusted to working from home, communicating by telephone and virtually by Zoom, but above all continuing to organize help for those who needed it, especially the disadvantaged.

Our links with the village hall network in Northumberland and the two Consortia is a fundamental to our purpose and is highly valued. Our work in helping people into employment has grown through our partnership with the Bridge Project, running weekly Rural Employment Hubs in a number of locations.

Our Warm Hubs programme continues to go from strength to strength but adapted for the conditions brought about by the pandemic. We have also been active with Ofgem and other partners in relation to the 350 properties in Northumberland that are not connected to the electricity network, and we have conducted programmes aimed at energy efficiency, fuel poverty and renewable energy.

Our key partnership with the Northumberland Association of Local Councils (NALC) is hugely valued. We work with NALC and directly with many Local Councils on a range of topics and issues, hosting the online Parish Council portal. Through our wholly owned trading subsidiary, Communities CAN, we have supported many rural communities and expanded to become the Community Led Housing Hub for the whole North East. I would like to express thanks to the Directors of Communities CAN who are taking forward this activity. OilCAN continues to offer low-cost heating oil to assist the fuel poor and we have continued to manage the Wingates Community Fund.

Financially we have had another good year. Income rose by 9.6% to £449,899 and our unrestricted funds increased by £21,469 to £170,755, which has again enabled further expansion in our staffing to take up new opportunities to benefit rural communities.

Our staff, led by our CEO Andy Dean, have done an outstanding job over the last year in continuing and enhancing our services needed by the pandemic. On behalf of the Board, I would like to offer my sincere thanks to them all.

I would also like to thank the Board of Directors for their unstinting support and leadership. During the year the Venerable Dr Catherine Groves the new Archdeacon of Lindisfarne joined the Board, and I would especially like to welcome Catherine and the continuing link with the Diocese of Newcastle.

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

**Adrian Hinchcliffe, Chair**

## OPERATING DURING A PANDEMIC

The covid-19 pandemic has had an unprecedented impact on all areas of life, on all communities and on all organisations regardless of sector. Many lives have tragically been lost. The physical, mental, social, financial and economic impacts of the pandemic will be felt for a long time to come.

During the Pandemic, CAN has been determined to maintain our services and support for Northumberland's rural communities. Actions have included:

- Maintenance of our full staffing complement – as a small charity, our staff are our key resource. Without them we cannot deliver anything. One of our first decisions was not to take the option to furlough any staff. Whilst this would have assisted CAN's financial position by reducing direct costs, it would have led to a reduction in services at the very time when they are needed the most.
- Reviewing our financial position – we analysed all our projected income and contacted our main funders. Many activities were subsequently either delayed or extended over a longer timeframe to take account of the restrictions in place. The resulting financial gap was filled by accessing emergency and new funding streams, often reflecting new activities delivered in direct response to the issues caused by the pandemic.
- Remote working – our office was closed, along with the delivery points for specific services including our Rural Employment Hubs and Warm Hubs when required by government restrictions. All staff worked remotely from home using laptops and other equipment already supplied. The office base was maintained for occasional individual use when necessary and as a mail and large-scale printing location.
- Risk assessment – CAN's board reviewed and updated our Risk Assessment based on the impact of the pandemic and potential recurring events in the future.
- Maintaining and adapting our services – CAN's staff have worked incredibly hard to adjust our services to deliver remotely wherever possible including via online, telephone and video communications. This has enabled all our services to continue and allowed support for new approaches and initiatives. For example, we supported many of our Warm Hubs to deliver local support during the crisis, communicated with our Employment Hub clients through group and individual sessions and a new fortnightly newsletter, supported Northumberland's village halls to close and re-open as allowed as well as assisted over 120 Halls to access the government grant support delivered through Northumberland County Council. Through our partnership with NALC, we maintained clear communication, advice and support to all Parish and Town Councils across Northumberland and Newcastle at all times.
- Developing new services – the pandemic has thrown a number of community needs into sharp focus but also demonstrated a range of opportunities to do things differently in the future. The growth and adaptation of volunteers has been exceptional, many more people have begun to embrace the potential of online services and levels of commuting have dropped considerably. This is all balanced by the increased loneliness and isolation felt by many, loss of employment, the increased marginalisation of those unable to engage with the digital world and uncertainty about the future. Within this context, CAN has developed new solutions and activities which will act as a springboard to work during the period of this Business Plan.

CAN's resilience, adaptability and sustainability have been demonstrable throughout the pandemic. During these turbulent times, CAN has expanded rather than contracted. This represents a significant strength which will be built upon.

For more information about our activities during 2020/21 and our plans for the future, please view our website or contact [info@ca-north.org.uk](mailto:info@ca-north.org.uk)



## CAN'S FINANCES

2020-21 saw CAN maintain a small surplus for the fifth consecutive year running – despite the covid-19 pandemic. No staff were furloughed at all during the pandemic.

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 have come 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 understanding and flexibility 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 2021)

INCOME	£	EXPENDITURE	£
<b>Voluntary Income</b>		<b>Raising Funds</b>	
Donations & legacies	3,685	Cost of generating income	4,497
Other trading activities	1,496		
Bank interest received	805		
<b>Charitable Activities Income</b>		<b>Charitable Activities</b>	
DEFRA	42,405	Salaries, NI, pension	191,528
NALC	30,000	Project direct costs	200,202
OilCAN/EnergyCAN	6,738	Support costs	8,415
Rural Employment	2,000		
Wingates	2,872		
Northern Gas Networks	20,000	<b>Governance Costs</b>	
Community Buildings Officer	15,424	Salaries, NI, pension	7,867
Rural Connect (NEEAL)	3,500	Administration	3,020
Haltwhistle Partnership	9,000		
Energy project sundry income	3,417		
Community Housing Fund	28,422		
NE Community-led Network	5,000		
Empowering Communities	1,000		
BBO Project	156,820		
Community Foundation	5,000		
Berwick Community Trust	2,700		
National Lottery Community hub	64,925		
VCS Skills and Opportunities	9,790		
N'land Estates/Big Night In	19,900		
Village Hall Portal (WNCBC)	2,000		
VCS EP Local Intelligence Network	3,000		
NCC Covid 19 Support	10,000		
<b>TOTAL INCOME</b>	<b>449,899</b>	<b>TOTAL EXPENDITURE</b>	<b>415,529</b>
		<b>SURPLUS FOR YEAR</b>	<b>34,370</b>

## **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 Jan Ashdown  
Mrs Elizabeth Elliott  
Mr George Hepburn OBE  
Mr Adrian Hinchcliffe (Chairman)  
Mr Tony Hood  
Mrs Jean Humphrys  
Mr Miles Middleton CBE FCA (Vice Chairman and Honorary Treasurer)  
Councillor Anthony Murray MBE until 20.11.20  
Ven Peter Robinson until 30.06.20  
Mrs Valerie Vaughan  
Mrs Lesley Tudor -Snodin  
Ms Sian Armstrong

## **Staff**

Louise Currie – Community Initiatives Officer  
Carol Davison – Finance & Admin Officer  
Andy Dean – Chief Executive Officer  
Christine Nicholls – Community Development Officer  
Julia Plinston – Community Development Officer  
Stephen Rickitt – NALC Chief Officer  
Margaret Tweddell – Finance & Admin Assistant  
Andrew Beresford -Bridge Worker  
Alex Scott- Bridge Worker

## **Marketing Consultant**

Carrie Brookes

## **Work Coaches**

Caroline Armstrong  
Michelle Awburn  
Lisa Douglas  
Joy Pacey  
Sarah Sunderland  
Janet Turnbull

## Members and Supporters 2020-21

<p>Action with Communities in Rural England (ACRE)</p> <p>AF Affinity Ltd</p> <p>AFC Hunter</p> <p>Age UK Northumberland</p> <p>Allenheads Trust Ltd</p> <p>Alnwick Town Council</p> <p>Ancroft Memorial Hall</p> <p>S Armstrong</p> <p>J Ashdown</p> <p>Association of Northumberland Local History Societies</p> <p>Beadnell WI</p> <p>Berwick Community Development Trust</p> <p>Birtley Village Hall</p> <p>S E Black MBE</p> <p>Bowsden Village Hall</p> <p>The Breamish Hall Powburn</p> <p>B Burston</p> <p>Bywell Parish Council</p> <p>Capheaton Parish Council</p> <p>CLA North</p> <p>Coal Industry Social Welfare Organisation</p> <p>Colwell Village Hall</p> <p>Cornhill Village Hall</p> <p>Community Foundation</p> <p>Craster Community Trust</p> <p>Cresswell Village Hall</p> <p>Crookham Village Hall</p> <p>Lord Curry</p> <p>Dalton Village Hall</p> <p>Dept of Environment, Food &amp; Rural Affairs</p> <p>Diocese of Newcastle</p> <p>Duke of Northumberland</p> <p>Ellingham Parish Council</p> <p>Ellington Social Welfare Centre</p> <p>Ellington Village Hall</p> <p>L Elliott</p> <p>Elsdon Parish Council</p> <p>Embleton Parish Council</p> <p>European Social Fund Community Grant Programme</p> <p>FoNDT</p> <p>Forestry Commission</p> <p>D Francis</p> <p>M Gibbs</p> <p>R Gibbs</p> <p>Gilsland Village Hall</p> <p>Great Whittington Village Hall Committee</p>	<p>Greenhead Parish Council</p> <p>Haltwhistle Partnership Ltd</p> <p>T Hawkin</p> <p>Haydon Parish Council</p> <p>The Hearth Centre (Horsley) Ltd</p> <p>Hedley Parish Council</p> <p>Hepple Parish Council</p> <p>G Hepburn</p> <p>A Hinchcliffe</p> <p>High Forest Community Association</p> <p>Hindmarsh Village Hall</p> <p>T Hood</p> <p>Horsley WI/Village Hall</p> <p>Howick Village Hall Trust</p> <p>J Humphrys</p> <p>W D Johnson</p> <p>Jubilee Hall, Newton on the Moor</p> <p>The Jubilee Institute, Rothbury</p> <p>Karbon Homes</p> <p>Kirknewton Village Hall Trust</p> <p>Kirkwhelpington Memorial Hall</p> <p>Knarsdale with Kirkhaugh Community Hall</p> <p>Knarsdale with Kirkhaugh Parish Council</p> <p>B Langley</p> <p>Langley Village Hall</p> <p>Lesbury Parish Council</p> <p>Lesbury Village Hall</p> <p>J F Lewis</p> <p>Longhoughton Community &amp; Sports Centre Trust</p> <p>Longhoughton Parish Council</p> <p>Lowick Parish Council</p> <p>A Lowrie</p> <p>LSI Energy</p> <p>D Morgan</p> <p>C G Matthews-Maxwell</p> <p>Merton Hall Recreation Centre</p> <p>M Middleton</p> <p>G E Miller</p> <p>Mind Active</p> <p>Morpeth Town Council</p> <p>N Mundy</p> <p>National CAB</p> <p>National Energy Action</p> <p>North East Community-led Development Network</p> <p>Netherton Village Hall</p> <p>Netherton War Memorial Hall</p> <p>Netherton Village Hall</p> <p>Newbrough Parish Council</p>
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<p>Newcastle City Council  NICRE  Northern Gas Networks  North Northumberland Village Hall Consortium  North Northumberland Voluntary Forum  Northumberland Assoc of Local Councils  Northumberland County Council  NCC Community Chest Scheme  Northumberland CVA  Northumberland Estates  Northumberland Federation of Women's Institutes  OilCAN Members  Otterburn Memorial Hall  Otterburn Parish Council  Ovingham Parish Council  Ovingham Reading Room  Ovington Community Group  R Poppleton  Prudhoe Community Partnership  Prudhoe town Council  Rennington Village Hall  S Richardson  Riding Mill Parish Council  Rochester &amp; Byrness Parish Council  Ros Freeman  Rural Connect NEEAL  K Rushworth  Shilbottle Community Hall  Simonburn Parish Council  Slaley Commemoration Hall  Slaley Parish Council  South Charlton Village Hall</p>	<p>Stamfordham Village Hall  Stannington Village Hall  Stocksfield Community Association  C Sourbut-Groves  H Talbot  Taret Village Hall  L Tudor- Snodin  The 1989 Willan Charitable Trust  The James Knott Trust  The Joicey Trust  The Rothley Trust  The National Lottery Community Fund  The National Lottery Heritage Fund  Thropton War Memorial Hall  Ulgham Parish Council  United Reformed Church  Upper Coquetdale Community Transport  V Vaughan  VCSE  Voluntary Organisations Network North East (VONNE)  Wall Village Hall  S Walker  Wark Mechanics Institute &amp; Town Hall  Warkworth Parish Council  West Northumberland Community Buildings Consortium  Whalton Village Hall  Whittingham Memorial Institute  Wingates Wind Farm Community Fund  Workers' Educational Association  Wylam Institute Community Association</p>
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**Charity No:** 1144604

