

Empowering People

Strengthening

Communities

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Annual Report 2022 –2023

Chairman’s report

NCDCs activities have been severely curtailed in terms of face to face work with community groups due to the  ongoing sanctions determined by the COVID Pandemic. Local residents are still wary of leaving their homes for any community gatherings

The directors however have continued to maintain our profile with both Public Sector and VCS through on line sessions, news bulletins and the maintenance of our on-line presence (thanks to Pat – who has also maintained our Policy Portfolio and compliances) All policies are available for free to VCSE organisations through our website.

The groups we have maintained regular contact with are listed below with Jim constantly promoting our passion for rural work -when it is often overlooked by urban focussed groups , VCS Health Network [Monthly] ,VCS Assembly (NCVA) and Executive,  Health Network Conference. County Inequalities policy work,  NCC -VCS link groups,  VONNE Rural Design Centre.  {Participated in Monthly Cafe Meeting} , National Design and Rural Design Centre

Contact with Faith Community Development Initiatives. Introduction event of New FIC Worker in Wooler.  [5 Year Appointment] and Cof E, URC and Catholic Churches Trust, Chapels Trust on-going projects. Community Local Economic CLES}.  Community Wealth Building. Local Village Hall and Community Hub groups in Featherstone, Haltwhistle and Wylam

Plans for 2023 include looking to develop through working very closely with other rural focussed organisations and reviewing our training offers. Practical Health and Poverty initiatives, Refreshing Lets Get Together-our village based activity programme once we can attract funding to the area. As with every other VCS organisation we are always keen to talk about our work and seek to involve new directors

If you would like to find out more about working with NCDC, please contact me. John McGough, Chair. **07885303166**



Pat Barber

 John McGough

Jim Robertson

Our Work 2022-2023

**Inclusion**

NCDC continues to be a recognised UK Online Centre offering IT support to individuals across the county to increase their access to IT skills.

NCDC is a champion of rural services activity alongside Community Action Northumberland. We are focused on working in the very sparsely populated areas, which often have little or no public transport, virtually no adult learning, debt advisory services more than twenty miles away, and with a population which is becoming isolated and destitute through the lack of public service provision. We are collaborating with local people to assist them provide services they want within easy travel /time.

**Networking**

Whilst locally we are developing enterprise and community networks NCDC is also involved countywide in the VCS networks through which major policy can be seen to emerge. We are elected on the VCS Assembly Executive as representatives for the west of the county and on VONNE’S VCSE focus group which through its relationship with the NELEP informs and works alongside public sector partners in designing and delivering services for the counties/regions residents. We have also assisted Northumberland Care/NCC in their new Locality posts by meeting up and providing detailed local information. Our All-Aboard project brought the tiny hamlets and villages in the outer west together exploring Local History and produced a beautiful poster which has been distributed to residents

**Learning**

NCDC is a registered training organisation for NOCN (previously the National Open College Network) and One Awards and continues to offer training and support to individuals in skills involved in developing communities. We worked with learners from remote areas in West Northumberland to offer an Award in Community Development. This was successful with most gaining a qualification.

On a diverse cultural thread two of our team supported and curated an online art exhibition with over a dozen local artists relating to our rural environment. This is still active as a U-Tube link as due to COVID we have yet been unable to take it on tour in local community venues. The link is <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=68o_X8PeieM>

**Economic Enterprise**

Collaborating with local residents we have undertaken two research projects through which we have identified needs, skills, local business ideas and generated a culture of organisations working to generate their own sustainable wealth rather than be completely reliant on grant funding. We have reported locally on the Skills needs in the hospitality sector and in rural/farming businesses We have offered specific business support, mentoring, marketing expertise to assist new rural business to thrive. This is now developing into a local marketplace for business-to-business trading thus reducing economic leakage of wealth. NCDC has been a visible force in raising a campaign banner for rural community.

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Minutes

2022-23 AGM meeting for Northumberland Community Development Company

Took take place on Friday 22th September. It stared at 1.30pm and was ended at 3.45pm

The venue was held atThe Hub at Halbankgate, and Light refreshments were made

available-thanks to The Hub.

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On the agenda:

1. **Acceptance of Accounts**:

The Accounts were presented and accepted; John will ask Pat to update our website with most recent accounts.

1. **Proposals for changes in Mem and Arts Clauses:**

It was agreed that these can be drafted and presented to an EGM in the New Year. Legal support has been engaged with John Lyon of Cartmell Shepherd Solicitors for checking final draft wording before its agreed and sent to Companies House.

1. **Nominations of Directors:**

This would be put forward as an agenda item for the EGM.

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1. **A discussion on the Covid Situation:**

The meeting was informed that due to the ongoing problems caused by Covid Pandemic, NCDC activities are still severely affected.

1. **Policies**

John reported to the board that pat had completed the updates to the policies and had made them available through the website.

1. **Web Site**

The board has ask pat to look at the website to see if it’s possible to update and to look at placing new adds for directors.

John McGough

Chair NCDC

Attendees:   John McGough, Jim Robertson, Cath Robinson

Margaret Watts, David Bell, Peter Knight