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Forward By The Chair

Welcome to this fourth issue of our newsletter. Summer is nearly upon us and it's great to see so much activity organised by Development Trusts across Northumberland. Despite current economic conditions, Development Trusts continue to strive to improve their communities.

From affordable housing on Holy Island to the Border Green Festival in Berwick to the Toy Library based in Ashington great things are happening. I hope you enjoy finding out about FoNDT members and their activities.

Janet Cresswell

Holy Island Housing Northumberland Leads The Way!

On 27th April the Trust on Holy Island became the first community group to receive a social housing grant from the Housing & Communities Agency (HCA). The grant of £212,000 has now been put with a Tudor Trust grant of £200,000 and a Triodos Bank loan of £250,000 to build four 3-bed houses for rent to island residents. This will bring the total number of homes owned and managed by the Trust to eleven.

Accessing the HCA funds was a red-tape nightmare, including a 256 page grant agreement. More Community Land Trusts across the country are now looking to follow and the lessons learnt on Holy Island will be included in the DTAs "CLT Housing Practical Guide" which is due out in the summer.



Pictured right are Trust Chairman Dick Patterson cutting what he described as "hopefully the last bit of red-tape". Joining him was Sir Alan Beith MP and other scheme supporters.

For more information please contact Holy Island Trust on:
Telephone: 01289 389004 Email: lindisfarne-centre@uk2.net

Morpeth Northumbrian Gathering

This year's Morpeth Northumbrian Gathering (17-19th April) was a great success. The theme was "Heritage Heroes" with an 18th century flavour, including Northern Historic recreating events from the first Jacobite rebellion and special appearances by Sir John Vanbrugh, architect of Morpeth's 1714 Town Hall, portrayed by actor Ray Alexander. It was a jam packed 3-day extravaganza with plenty of fun for all the family. We would like to say a huge thank you to everyone that was involved in the Gathering and to everyone who participated in the events.

Emily Davison Education Programme

Greater Morpeth Development Trust has worked with Beamish and Woodhorn museums to develop and deliver the education programme relating to Emily Davison, funded by the Heritage Lottery Fund. One hundred and twenty students from local schools have taken part in a research trip to Woodhorn followed by a visit to Beamish for an opportunity to re-enact a suffragette rally and debate. The final stage of the project was achieved during this year's Morpeth Northumbrian Gathering when students appeared in costume in the procession and then recreated an anti-suffrage debate with the help of visitors to the Gathering.



The event was a great success and the students were very reluctant to take off their suffragette costumes at the end of the day! Thank you to Beamish and Woodhorn museums and also to Victoria Najafi, the Student Voice, Leadership & Enrichment Co-ordinator at King Edward VI School who helped to co-ordinate the project.

"I loved the educational debate and getting your points of view across about women's rights, I loved dressing up, seeing the old houses and I was disappointed it didn't last longer!" (Laura James aged 14)

EWD education programme

For further information please contact Gemma on:

Telephone: **01670 503866**

Email: gemma.gadomski@gmdt.org

Lynemouth Resource Centre

Charity Workers Set Up Chocolate Factory

Willy Wonka has got competition from the North East after enterprising charity workers came up with a delicious idea to raise much-needed funds. With grants drying up and faced with fewer and fewer ways to get the money they need to keep going, staff at Lynemouth Resource Centre have decided to set up their own chocolate factory to boost their coffers. It will be a professional operation with specialist machines being imported from America and Europe, a well-designed website, and some interesting and local flavours.

The new company will be called Ken Speckle - a Northumbrian phrase meaning easily recognised, or distinctive. It will be run by the resource centre's trust manager, Andrew Gooding, along with Dawn Watts who currently works in the community cafe, and another person yet to be recruited.



Dawn Watts
and Andrew
Gooding

Mr Gooding said: "I think it's going to be fantastic when it all gets going.

"We are a charity but access to charitable funds is diminishing, so we've got to find other ways of doing our charitable work. We've run the community cafe for a good number of years and at one point we found things were slow at certain times of the week, but we didn't want to reduce people's hours. So we thought we should make something. We thought about jams and preserves but the world and his wife were doing it, so we asked a firm in Amble what people were after, and they said fudge."

The Resource Centre then began producing its own fudge and supplying it to many places along the coast of Northumberland. They then realised people would pay more for chocolate so changed direction, attending chocolate training courses in Manchester. Getting money from Esmee Fairbairn, the Coalfields Regeneration Trust and Castle Morpeth Borough Council, the workers were able to buy three molding machines and a fudge cooker.

All profits will go back into the Community Trust. Andrew said: "We saw it as a separate entity to the cafe operation, so we set up a separate unit. We're just getting the machines installed. It will be demand-led and the first year will be difficult to anticipate, but we're hoping to grow, to six to eight staff. We've got to find things that give value added, with giving people skills and involved in something more meaningful than just packing bags. The cafe is quite unusual - we do meals on wheels and outside catering - so most of what we do has an entrepreneurial feel."

The chocolates might also have a Northumbrian theme, with local liqueurs and regional fruits such as locally-grown raspberries and lavender. For more information please contact Andrew at the Lynemouth Resource Centre on:

Telephone: 01670 863000

Email: andrew@lynemouth.org.uk

*Thanks to 'the Journal' for this article

Glendale Gateway Trust

Old Co-op New Business

One year on from the purchase of the former Co-op foodstore in Wooler the doors are open again and a new business is operating from the property.



The Co-op foodstore before the refit

Within weeks of taking ownership the Glendale Gateway Trust had replaced the modern frontage with something more akin to the special and traditional facades adorning the High Street shops. The refit of the shop is now complete, thanks to a grant from the Rural Development Programme for England, and the new tenant *Gear for Girls* has moved in.

Alison Wright, owner of the business, is delighted with the move and commented:

"Gear for Girls is a unique business in Britain - the first Outdoor Store for women only in the country offering an exceptional selection of walking, running, biking, climbing and skiing clothing. The new store will be perhaps the largest retail space in Britain dedicated purely to women's outdoor clothing and footwear. Thanks to the Trust we have been able to find the space we need in Wooler to keep our growing business in the town where our families live and where we have had a presence for the last 5 years."



After the refit

The Trust has, over a number of years, focussed its efforts on the regeneration of Wooler High Street and, in particular, improvements to the retail infrastructure in the belief that new business could be attracted. "The property was advertised and we are pleased that a forward looking company - *Gear for Girls* - were able to take up the tenancy securing local jobs and employment within the Market Town for the foreseeable future." said Tom Johnston, Market Town Programme Manager.

The Trust bought the property in March 2008 through a grant from Northumberland Strategic Partnership and will be carrying out further improvements to the exterior of the building in the next few months.

For further information please contact Tom at Glendale Gateway Trust on:

Telephone: 01668 282412

Email: mti@wooler.org.uk

Berwick Community Trust



Berwick Community Trust was established in 2003 following the Market Towns Initiative Healthcheck process, which showed the need for a local delivery body. It is the partnership body for the Berwick Market Towns Initiative. It is a registered charity, (number 1109088) and a company limited by guarantee (number 5290088). The Trust has 100 members, and the day to day management is carried out by a voluntary board overseeing a small staff team. Working groups made up of members and board members are set up to carry out each project and the Trust owns and manages a building providing office space and meeting rooms while also running an annual green festival.

Telephone Number: 01289 303366

Email: russellsandbach@berwicktrust.org.uk

Greater Morpeth Development Trust



Greater Morpeth Development Trust (GMDT) is an Independent Trust initiated by Castle Morpeth Borough Council (CMBC) as part of the 2.6 million pound grant received from the Office of the Deputy Prime Minister, to develop a 6-mile corridor from Mitford to Bothal along the river Wansbeck now known as 'Castles Woods & Water' (CW&W).

Part of the grant was used to set up the GMDT. The Trust will develop Morpeth to become a premier market town in the north east by promoting and improving the town and countryside, for public benefit and economic and social well being of people working in Morpeth and the surrounding areas of the County through the promotion of urban and rural regeneration.

Telephone: 01670 503866 Website: <http://www.gmdt.net/>

Northumberland Toy Library



Northumberland Toy Library is based in the centre of Ashington and caters for all children and families in Northumberland. At the Toy Library you can loan toys, games and outdoor play equipment for a small hire charge. The Toy Library is managed by a voluntary committee and there are currently 10 staff working in the Library and at outreach sites in the local area.

The Toy Library also provides other services; mobile toy library, room hire, equipment hire, play sessions, allotment group, craft shop, story sessions, baby play group and Krafty Kidz creche.

Telephone Number: 01670 523539

Website: <http://www.ntrlrc.co.uk/>

Woodlands Scheme Gets Funding Boost



Cockshot Dene

A Prudhoe woodland is set to be transformed with the help of local residents, thanks to funding awarded to the Volunteer Centre Prudhoe. Cockshot Dene in Castlefields Woods has been earmarked for exciting improvements including a Woodland Play area funded through the Northumberland Playbuilder programme, and sculptures reflecting the history and wildlife of the area supported by the Arts Council and Northern Rock Foundation.

The biggest funder of all though is the Big Lottery Fund, which has awarded the Volunteer Centre Prudhoe £56,935 over three years to support volunteering in the area.



The work begins!

Andrea Lyons, from the Volunteer Centre Prudhoe, based at the Prudhoe Community Partnership said: "We are delighted with the award from the Big Lottery Fund - it means we can plan longer term projects for Prudhoe and involve many more people throughout the area in volunteering. On the strength of this major grant, we have managed to bring in other funding for our Cockshot Dene project which we hope will transform neglected woodland into an area for all residents to enjoy."



"Cockshot Dene, which the old pit road runs through, is virtually on the doorstep of both West Wylam and Castlefields estates but is mostly only used as a cut-through and a dog-walking route. It is rich in wildlife and industrial history, as the former site of West Wylam Pit and the brickworks, and could be a lovely place to visit. It just needs some attention. We would love residents to join us to restore the woodland and help design play features and sculptures - similar to what has been done in Chopwell Woods. There has been a lot of interest in the project. It has gathered momentum from the seeds of an idea by local councillors concerned about anti-social behaviour, and developed into to a larger environmental and play project. The early stages have involved residents groups, Prudhoe Children's Centre, Northumberland County Council which owns the land, and Tyne and Wear Museums. Now we are ready to get going on the real work of making it happen."

Prudhoe Community Partnership

Woodlands Scheme Gets Funding Boost



Some of the volunteers

Artist Ira Lightman will be working with local children and adults to generate ideas for a first sculpture and play feature for the Dene, and Tyne and Wear Museums are inviting residents to create 2-minute digital videos about the area and its history as part of its CultureShock programme. Residents can join in the planning and design, practical work in the woods, researching the Dene's history - or just sharing memories and impressions of the area which will then be incorporated into artworks and information boards.

If you would like to volunteer, or find out more, contact Andrea Lyons at the Volunteer Centre Prudhoe:

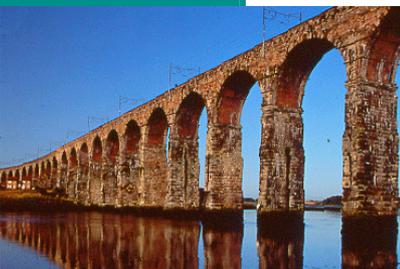
Telephone 01661 836668 or email volunteering@prudhoe.org

Berwick Community Trust

Stephenson 150

Berwick History Society and its partners have put together a major programme of events, Stephenson 150, for May to October of 2009 to celebrate and remember the great engineer Robert Stephenson on the 150th anniversary of his death, in October 1859.

Robert Stephenson, the son of George, is arguably the greatest British engineer ever; his greatest civil engineering work is widely regarded as being the iconic, 28-arch Royal Border Bridge, built in 1850, spanning the River Tweed at Berwick, which completed the East Coast Main Railway line from London to Edinburgh and is still as important as it ever was, daily carrying some of the most famous trains in the world including *The Flying Scotsman*.



The Royal Border Bridge

Berwick History Society has assembled 26 different events from May to October 2009 including exhibitions, lectures, showings of classic films with a railway connection ("Brief Encounter", "The 39 Steps", "The General", "Night Mail", "Snowdrift at Bleath Gill", and many others), family fun days, Railway Walks along closed former lines in the Borders, and drama. The Society is also looking into the possibility of permanently illuminating the Royal Border Bridge

itself. Full details can be seen on the website: www.berwickmuseum.org.uk/stephenson150.html

or by contacting:

Bernard Shaw on 01289 308005

Tim Kirton on 01289 301760 or emailing stephenson150@googlemail.com

Local Events In The Region



Border Green Festival Sunday, 28th June



Exploring and celebrating all that makes modern life sustainable. Exhibitions, live music, solar cinema, local food and workshops. For more information please visit:
www.bordergreenfestival.net



Hotspur Festival 2009 26th, 27th, 28th June at Alnwick



Friday 26th - Farmers' market with entertainers. World premiere of commissioned music at the Playhouse, based on travels & industries in Northumberland.

Saturday 27th - Medieval entertainers & jugglers, live music, weaponry displays and more in the Market Place. Banner and Armed Forces Day parade at 12 noon. Art, photographic & ICT exhibitions and prize giving. Tug of war at The Pastures. Another chance to listen to the specially commissioned music at The Playhouse. Activities at The Alnwick Garden and the Castle.

Sunday 28th - Local produce market, medieval entertainers, weaponry displays in the Market Place. Exhibitions continue. Alnwick Castle only free entry all day Sunday.

Further information & free programmes from:

[Alnwick Community Development Trust, 01665 606093](http://www.alnwickdevelopmenttrust.org.uk) or visit
www.alnwickdevelopmenttrust.org.uk



The European Agricultural Fund for Rural Development: Europe investing in rural areas



Federation of Northumberland Development Trusts

Contact details for FoNDT's Development Officer:
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Northumberland NE66 1HW
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