

West Northumberland VCS Assembly network meeting Friday 25 September – Hexham Community Centre

In attendance:

Rachel Turnbull	Northumberland CAB
Jacqui Hogg	Hexham Community Centre
Lisa Robinson	Albemarle Barracks - Army Welfare Service
Paul Adamson	Number 28 - Hexham East Regeneration Office
Sue Ashmore	Northumberland Assembly/Business & Professional Women UK
Georgia Evans	Northumberland Domestic Abuse Services
Carolyn Reynolds	Northumberland Age UK
Tom Gillanders	HTC
Pete Woods	Core Music & Schoolhere Ltd
Bruce Howorth	Natural Ability
Pat Devlin	Action Against Poverty
Sue Chapman	Forum Cinema/Core Music
Chris Baker	Health Watch Northumberland
Rosemary Theobalds	West Northumberland Food Bank
Anne Kidd	Northumberland CVA
Claire Heaviside	Number 28 - Hexham East Regeneration Office
Jill Wilkinson	WECAN
Liz Holmes	WECAN
Julie Byers	Business & Professional Women UK
David Ratcliff	Hexham Abbey/West Northumberland Food Bank
Tamsin Beavor	Hexham Community Partnership
Jude Garrow	Hexham Community Partnership
Sarah Kemp	TSF

Round up from group members:

Tamsin Beavor asked everyone to share information further afield about this group as we want to encourage people from Haltwhistle, Prudhoe etc so that we are not so Hexham-centric.

Annie Evans is the representative for West Northumberland on the VCS-CVA Assembly.

Sue Ashmore – Northumberland Assembly/Business & Professional Woman UK is also on the assembly – there is a liaison meeting in November of the non-executive committee of the Assembly with NCC – please ask groups to join the Assembly – it is all free and it doesn't matter how small the group is.

Anne Kidd - Northumberland CVA – easy to register online and everyone who registers receives the e-newsletter. The next Assembly meeting is on 20 October, 9.30am – 2.00pm at Kirkley Hall. This meeting will be on volunteering – safe recruitment, the law around it, how to keep volunteers once you've recruited them.

Anne also does presentations to 6th formers on volunteering – please get in touch if you know of an upper school who would like such a presentation.

Carolyn Reynolds – Age UK – just launched another advocacy project with MacMillan – offering advocacy support to people over 50 who have been diagnosed with cancer.

They also run the Age UK advocacy service which is free to users and provides paid advocates to visit the elderly to help them with a range of issues such as housing, care etc.

Georgia Evans – NDAS – since May's meeting, where the situation was looking very worrying, NDAS has secured core funding from Big Lottery which will fund two new workers for two years.

The Police and Crime Commissioner Vera Baird has funded one worker and there is funding for a male worker from Ballinger Trust, NCC and Northern Rock Foundation.

They hope to be able to expand the children's service to the same level as that for the adults and are working more in partnership so hopefully the funding will continue to come through. A new perpetrator programme about safety of children and young people will be coming to West Northumberland.

Rosemary Theobalds – Gateway into the Community – this is an organisation which helps people with learning disabilities find a way into the community. They have received a Garfield Weston award and have launched the Pilot Light scheme which runs for a year. The organisation needs a drop-in centre in Hexham where people can meet and gather and will have some kind of retail facility (but not a charity shop) to help give some of the people access to learning and to make a bit of money. The four organisations – Pilot Lights – who are helping Gateway to realise the plan will be making a visit to Hexham in October.

David Ratcliff – West Northumberland Food Bank

The food bank serves as far out as Prudhoe and Haltwhistle and has now been extended to Allendale and there is still very much a need for it to continue.

Two extension services recently added: Eat Well for Less initiative and the advocacy venture which offers support to people who have benefits issues.

The food bank also helps to support the West End Refugee Service and the Diocesan Justice and Peace Refugee Project.

Fair Share – supermarkets' distribution of surplus fresh produce.

Claire Heaviside – Hexham East Regeneration Office No. 28

Now down to 1 project worker but advertising for a part time receptionist/admin worker to open up when Claire is not at the office.

Rooms available for groups to use for meetings – please contact Claire on 01434 605553

Heather Alabaster – Alabaster Publishing (sent via email)

The Golden Guide Northumberland website is now up and running at www.goldenguide.org.uk

Currently working on the 2016 guide for January and taking all enquiries for advertising to over 50s either in print or online – heather@alabasterpublishing.co.uk

Sarah Kemp – TSF

Sarah reported that there is to be a meeting at the auction mart next Tuesday with NCC and their commissioned consultants on a new cultural strategy for Northumberland (apologies for not getting these notes out to you all in time for that)