



Annual Report 2012 / 2013



Registered Company No: 5860971
Registered Charity No: 1116430

**Community and Voluntary Action
Blyth Valley
Annual Report 2012 / 2013**

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Chairman's Report

Whilst the board members at CVABV may be convinced we have a very skilled, experienced and well qualified staff team, it is always gratifying (and reassuring) that others share that view.

And whilst there are a few testimonials within this report from local groups, I am particularly keen to draw your attention to the evaluation recently completed into the capacity building work provided by CVABV to the Fair Share programme in Seaton Valley.

The Seaton Valley programme was a significant piece of work for CVABV which ended in December 2012. Towards the end of 2012, the Community Foundation for Tyne & Wear and Northumberland commissioned an evaluation into the programme of activity as it came to a close.

The report identified the Seaton Valley Fair Share programme to be a success, more than this, the report suggests it as been a remarkable success, with the support provided by CVABV to be exemplary and a model of good practice.

This report covered the initial work with the community in identifying priorities, in developing activities and in delivering capacity building support, in line with the views and expectations of the local community.

Copies of the evaluation report are available from CVABV or via our website to fully appreciate the extent of the development work undertaken in Seaton Valley.

Alongside the evaluation there is a video, which highlights many of the activities developed and hopes for the future as the Seaton Valley community now looks forward to the challenges ahead with optimism now that the Fair Share funding has ended.

However, the success of the Fair Share Programme and the quality of support provided by CVABV staff is no guarantee of future funding.

Chairman's Report (continued)

As well as the Fair Share funding coming to an end, we also saw the BIG Lottery BASIS funding come to an end, and despite consultations on a replacement funding programme to be introduced, no such fund, as yet has been introduced, we also continued to receive very limited funding from the NCC Commission for VCS support, via the c4c partnership.

With all of these factors in mind, the board, working with the staff team, are looking at any and all opportunities to fund and resource the services and support we provide for the coming 12 months and beyond.

We have the proof that this work is greatly needed, is extremely effective and is delivered by a highly qualified and experienced staff team and is highly appreciated by VCS groups across Blyth, Cramlington and Seaton Valley.

It is the appreciation of the services and support provided, from our local groups that reinforces our view that the long term future of CVABV is well worth fighting for.

On a personal note, I would like to pay tribute to Mike Dungworth, who, despite being gravely ill over the last few years, remained a staunch supporter of CVABV, through until his passing earlier this year.

Prior to being a trustee with CVABV Mike had been long service member of the Blyth Valley CVS board and had stuck with the CVS through thick and thin.

Mike had, in recent represented the VCS in SE Northumberland on the Northumberland Local Strategic Partnership, using his tremendous knowledge of local community action and local authority mechanisms to ensure the voice of the VCS in SE Northumberland was heard. His insight and contribution to the local community is greatly missed.

Dave Johnston
Chair



Treasurer's Report

As signalled in my report to the previous AGM, a number of our larger longer term funding agreements came to an end during this financial year. Thankfully, those agreements were in place until December 2012, however, for the final 3 months of this year the real impact of this loss of funding is a stark reminder of how difficult the next couple of years could be.

Once again, I am pleased to be able to report to you, that through careful financial management we have continued to utilise the restricted reserves held in our accounts from the previous financial year, in particularly those reserves held from the BASIS and Fair Shares funding programmes, with all of those particular restricted reserves expended by February 2013.

From the figures in the report we can see that overall CVABV received £202,753 funding during 2012/13, spending £274,854, an overall deficit of £72,101. However, through the use of £54,251 of restricted reserves already held, the actual reduction in CVABV funds was £17,850, with the majority of this happening in the last 3 months of 2012/13.

CVABV still holds £104,798 in unrestricted reserves, which equates to approximately 4.5 months of running costs, still within our Reserves Policy target of having a minimum of 3 months unrestricted reserves available.

Difficult choices still face us as we move forward into 2013/14, the stark reality is that there are increasing needs to be met, less funding available and greater competition for what funding is available.

However, the board remains determined to identify and successfully apply to appropriate sources of funding to continue meeting the needs of as many local groups as possible.

David Vaughan
Treasurer



Summary of Accounts

Statement of Financial Activities (Including Income and Expenditure Account) For the Year Ended 31 March 2013

	Notes	<u>2013</u>		<u>2012</u>
		<u>Restricted</u>	<u>Unrestricted</u>	<u>Total</u>
<u>Incoming Resources</u>		£	£	£
Activities to further our objects:				
Grants Received etc		142,652	59,673	202,325
Investment Income:				
Bank Interest Received		-	428	428
TOTAL INCOMING RESOURCES		142,652	60,101	202,753
<u>Resources Expended</u>				
Charitable Activities		196,903	76,361	273,264
Governance Costs		-	1,590	1,590
TOTAL RESOURCES EXPENDED		196,903	77,951	274,854
<u>Net Movement in Funds</u> 3		(54,251)	(17,850)	(72,101)
Total Funds Brought Forward		69,789	122,648	192,437
Total Funds Carried Forward	£	15,538	104,798	120,336

None of our activities were acquired or discontinued and there were no recognised gains or losses other than as shown above during the above two financial years.



Project Report

It is very clear that in difficult austere times, CVABV, alongside many other VCS groups are facing difficult times for the future. It is however, very clear that in austere times, the services CVABV provide are more important than ever, training to develop skills leading to greater self reliance, developing opportunities for networking and partnerships where expertise and resources can be shared for mutual benefit, providing information to ensure good practice is promoted and shared and in generating income whether that be via grants or in charging for services.

Charging for services is well established in many VCS environments, a perfect example being local community centres, indeed, we could argue that CVABV has always charged for the services and the support we provide. In the case of CVABV, however, we have charged the funders to enable us to deliver services and support to our local groups at no direct cost to them.

CVABV, amongst others, have long argued that this approach provides continuity of service and provides value for money to those funders paying for the services and support we provide, but that argument now seems to be being lost and a new approach to funding advice and support is developing.

CVABV have adapted our working to include funders looking to fund VCS groups directly to enable them to choose for themselves what support they require and to choose who they want to provide that service or support. This can presume a lot, in that VCS groups know what their development needs are, as well as knowing who is best placed to meet those needs.

For many established groups, they may well have very clear ideas as to their needs, but this may be more difficult for new and emerging groups, and similarly for knowing who would be best placed to meet those needs.

Project Report (continued)

CVABV staff are able to work with new and established groups to accurately assess their development needs, to develop a programme of training and support to meet those needs and to identify potential funders to support this work.

Some of this work may be delivered by CVABV staff, with many groups happy with that arrangement, however, some of the work may be delivered by other bodies, it is the choice of the groups themselves who they 'employ' to deliver this support.

CVABV have and will continue to embrace this 'choice' agenda, as we feel it does bring benefits, in the sense that groups get a real sense of the support being provided, after all, they are paying for it. The groups do feel a greater onus to make informed decisions and it benefits CVABV as it challenges us to measure up and continue to provide services and support of the highest quality to ensure VCS groups want to keep coming back to us for there next stages of development and support.

We look forward to the challenge.

T S Bradley
Chief Executive Officer



Fair Shares

In 2003 the then 'National Lottery' identified a number of areas around the country that had not had their 'Fair Share' of lottery funding, with Blyth Valley being one of those areas.

In the case of Blyth Valley, this was principally in the areas of Sports, Arts and Heritage lottery funds.

The Blyth Valley Local Strategic Partnership were asked to identify the most appropriate area for the Fair Share to be allocated, and on the basis of arts, sports and heritage needs, they chose Seaton Valley.

Blyth Valley CVS (now CVABV) were asked to work with the local community to develop a local decision making panel, to determine local priorities and to produce a plan that would build the capacity of local VCS groups and that would be used to draw down the funding from the Community Foundation, who had been employed to administer the funds in Blyth Valley.

Towards the end of 2012 the Community Foundation commissioned an evaluation report into the Seaton Valley programme to see if it had met its identified objectives.

The outcome from the independent evaluators was that '.....the local programme has been a success. More than this, it has been a remarkable success and we think it is a model of best practice.'

The report examined the specific aims of the project, which were to:

- Build capacity: the confidence, skills and experience of individuals and communities
- Build social capital: the networks, relationships and contacts of individuals, voluntary and community groups and statutory bodies within communities
- Enhance liveability: the physical space in which communities exist

Fair Shares (continued)

And to:

- improve sustainability: a positive lasting legacy.
- the report identified a number of key findings including that
- the high quality of community development delivered by CVABV staff,
- the capacity of the local VCS groups had been built
- the civil society in Seaton Valley had been strengthened
- there had been increased use of community facilities
- local services had improved
- the programme had 'levered in' substantial funds from other bodies
- local services and activities had increased
- organisational diversity had increased
- community safety had improved and risk had been reduced
- public health had improved... and
- the development work that had taken place was sustainable beyond the end of the Fair Share funding programme

The conclusion from the report states that 'The Fair Share Trust in Seaton Valley has been a considerable success and a model of how good community development can happen: in our opinion it has been a model of best practice'

The full evaluation report is available via the Seaton Valley on-line web site, along with a short video that was commissioned as part of the overall evaluation, which highlights a number of areas of activity and shows this community development work in action.

The logo for Fair Share, featuring the words "fair" and "share" stacked vertically in a bold, lowercase, sans-serif font. The "f" in "fair" is slightly larger than the other letters.

Lottery money where it's needed most

Training

CVABV have had a very busy year delivering a series of training courses throughout the year with funding from Big Lottery's BASIS programme as well as an Awards for All grant for 'How To' courses. These courses were held at various community venues in Blyth, Cramlington and Seaton Valley, using facilitators from a variety of quality training providers as well as our own Capacity Building Team.

Course topics included:

- Health & Safety
- Risk Assessment
- Supporting and Supervising Volunteers
- Safeguarding / Child Protection
- Food Hygiene Level 2
- Management Committee Roles and Responsibilities
- Manual Handling
- Emergency First Aid
- How to Chair an effective meeting
- Minute / Note Taking
- Effective Report Writing
- How to get started with Publisher
- How to search for funding for your community group
- How to improve your funding applications
- How to organise a community event
- How to undertake basic financial management for small community groups
- How to apply for funding
- How to apply to Awards for All

"Excellent course, very simply and concisely explained and met all my requirements"

"This course was absolutely fabulous – full of excellent information"

"First time funding, course helped a lot and I hope to be able to put all learnt to the test"

During this financial year (2012 / 2013) we had 180 delegates attending the above training sessions, building the capacity of local VCS organisations.



"Very interesting and easy to understand – well presented"

Funding Advice

CVABV specialises in giving practical, grassroots funding advice to community groups and voluntary organisations in Blyth, Cramlington and Seaton Valley. We work closely with all of the people we help, enabling them to do it themselves rather than doing things for them. In this way we build their personal capacity and also the capacity of the community groups they are involved with.

We offer support to develop the skills, knowledge and capacity of local VCS organisations in relation to funding and this continues to be the greatest concern and the highest priority for the groups we work with.

Our funding advice service is tailored to the needs of each individual organisation, enabling them to produce quality funding applications and ensuring they have all of the necessary policies and procedures in place to be fit for funding. We also support groups to identify opportunities for generating their own income becoming less grant dependent at a time when grant funding is increasingly difficult to secure.

This includes advice and support with:

- **Producing a project budget**
- **Full cost recovery**
- **Identifying appropriate funders**
- **Direct help with understanding application forms**
- **Checking grant applications before they are sent to funders**
- **Ensuring that applications match the grant-giving criteria of funders**
- **Empowering community groups to speak the funders' language**
- **Independent referee support**
- **We have also produced a range of fact sheets in partnership with WCVS and CAN, providing information to help give your applications the greatest chance of success.**

Our funding service continues to respond to the demands of our local groups and is as busy as ever, providing advice, information and training to help local VCS organisations become more confident and self-reliant in fundraising.

This year over £1.5 million in external funding was received through funding applications made by groups we have helped. This figure is based on feedback from funders and groups we have helped and can only be approximate as groups do not always tell us of their funding successes. In today's difficult funding climate this is an exceptional achievement.



Community Development

CVABV have a small, experienced, well qualified and dedicated team who are extremely effective in delivering a wide range of capacity building and community development services, with the stated aim of enabling our local VCS to make a sustained impact in the local community. We have a successful track record in supporting local groups to develop new initiatives and in attracting the necessary funding and resources to address local needs and in making a real difference in their local community.

CVABV adopts a flexible approach to our work, which is tailored to the needs of each individual group, targeting our resources where they are most needed, often working in hard to reach communities who need one to one support.

CVABV community development services are designed to equip local groups with the knowledge and know how to make a real difference in their local community, including:

- **How to form a community group**
- **Management committee development**
- **Drafting and adopting constitutions**
- **Policies and procedures**
- **Safeguarding**
- **Basic financial controls and systems**
- **Project development**
- **Publicity and promotion**
- **Monitoring and evaluation**
- **Organising events**
- **Legal issues**
- **Health and Safety**

This year we have helped many local VCS groups with one to one development sessions with the aim of passing on our “how to” skills so that next time the group identifies issues they wish to address they are able to do it themselves or with minimal appropriate support. As a result of this approach we have a more informed, more qualified and more experienced VCS equipped with many of the necessary skills they need to deliver their services more effectively.

Testimonials

“The CVA team has unlimited time, patience and experience to help you to get the help you need. We’d be lost without them.”

**Lindsay Durward,
Secretary, Blyth Battery
Volunteers**

“CVA has helped us for many years now to get funding for running our club and improving our facilities. While we know we are eligible for many grants, it is quite a different matter finding out which ones and then filling in all the right forms correctly. Their expertise has been invaluable and has helped our growth and success immensely.”

**Sandra Orr, Chair,
Blyth Town Football Club**

“The Town Team has grown from an idea into a fully formed organisation with Charitable aims thanks largely to the dedicated staff at CVABV. As a not for profit social enterprise the only way to survive the current economic situation is through proven partnerships that engage the community on a weekly basis. Our aims are to encourage more people to work with the community and to make Blyth a better place for all who live here.

Whilst our group is starting to gain momentum now in terms not only of our structure but also our reach into the community itself, I personally, on behalf of the Town Team know we wouldn’t be able to do any of this without the support of CVABV staff. Blyth can be a better place to live, work and play but only if CVABV continues to be part of the South East Northumberland landscape; without whom dozens (if not hundreds) of charities and community groups would cease to exist.

A team of silent and diligent workers who have always looked to make the lives of others better often without recognition because more importantly than anything else at CVABV, these people care. Something the Town Team believe Blyth needs now more than ever and as a result an organisation we will always support and look to promote. Thank you for your help getting us off the ground and the invaluable advice you’ve given throughout. We truly hope 2013/2014 sees CVABV get the credit, recognition and more importantly the funding it deserves.”

Steve Bradley, Chair, Blyth Town Team Ltd

Testimonials (continued)

“If it wasn’t for the help and guidance from CVA staff I wouldn’t be where I am today with Bright Beginnings in Northumberland. The training workshops have been a godsend to me as they have given me so much confidence in myself, I need a bit more but I’m getting there and I have all staff of CVA to thank for that as I’ve found the more I have got to know everyone the more I have come out of myself, I have always thought of myself to be a bit of an unworthy person with no brain but a big heart, and after having meet everyone from CVA they have made me realise I am neither of those things, and they believed in me, so for that I will be forever grateful.”

Dawn Hood
On behalf of Bright Beginnings
in Northumberland

“I can honestly say that we would not be here today if it were not for CVA Blyth Valley.”

Christine Mullarkey, Chair,
SMILE mental health peer
support group.

“We can go to them with any query, no matter what it is. They are a lifeline for groups that are run by volunteers who all have busy lives.”
Val Ellis, Secretary,
Astley Park Community

“As a Sporting Club in Blyth we have benefitted from the support of CVA Blyth Valley over the last 10 years. However over the last 3/4 years we have had much closer contact with them when the need for the Club to update and/or replace vital cricketing equipment became apparent. We have been assisted in making a significant number of grant applications and due to their knowledge and skill a high proportion have been successful!

CVABV have helped to secure the future of the Club for which we are extremely grateful. Obviously we hold CVA Blyth Valley in high regard and regard them as skilled professional colleagues but also friends of the Club.”

Ossy Lawrence
(on behalf of) Blyth Cricket Club

Publications

E-zines, Newsletters, Funding News and Fact Sheets

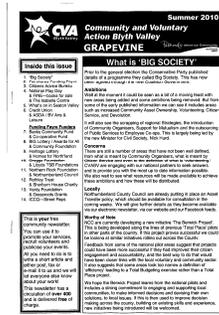
CVABV communicates with local voluntary and community groups in Blyth, Cramlington and Seaton Valley by producing the following:

- **Newsletters - a publication delivered free of charge to approximately 400 VCS contacts. We include information about local VCS organisations in the newsletter free of charge. We can also insert flyers on members' behalf which is a very cost-effective way of promoting local activities to all our member groups, including those without access to online facilities.**
- **E-zines – this electronic bulletin is produced fortnightly with updates and information on current issues, emailed to 380+ contacts. The e-zine is a great mechanism to inform our local groups about imminent events and activities as well as funding deadlines.**
- **Northumberland Funding News – a quarterly funding bulletin full of funding opportunities for local VCS groups.**

Both our newsletters and our e-zines can be used to promote local events and meetings, distribute flyers and inserts (newsletters), obtain funding advice, seek information on funders' criteria, find out what training courses are available, see what's on in the area and to find out about other local projects.

CVABV welcomes contributions from local VCS groups and local authorities who may have items of interest which is relevant to the areas of Blyth, Cramlington and Seaton Valley. If you would like to be included on our database please contact us by emailing info@cvabv.org.uk

CVABV together with Community Action Northumberland and Wansbeck CVS help produce a quarterly Funding News Bulletin. This publication is available on our website and is added as an attachment to our regular e-zines. The Funding News is full of potential funding opportunities for our VCS groups as well as a General Advice section.



Publications (continued)

CVABV have also teamed up with Wansbeck CVS and Community Action Northumberland to provide a range of new FACT sheets covering a variety of topics to enable effective management for Northumberland voluntary and community groups.

These are available on our website at:

<http://www.cvabv.org.uk/meetings/default.asp>

Fact sheets are under the topics of:

- Starting a New group
- Who can be a Trustee
- Legal Structures
- Charitable Status
- Roles and Responsibilities of Management Committees and Trustees
- Good Governance / Effective Management
- Policies and Procedures
- Financial Management
- Project Planning
- Fit for Funding
- Searching for Funding
- Monitoring and Evaluation
- Organising a Community Event
- Useful Contacts
- Applying for funding for the first time
- Annual General Meetings
- Fundraising Do's and Don'ts
- Chairing a Meeting
- Minute Taking
- Report Writing



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CVABV Website

Our website address is:

www.cvabv.org.uk

Our website contains information regarding the services and support offered by CVA Blyth Valley. We continually keep the website up-to-date.



Web-page headings identify:

**About Us / Services / CVA Membership / Gallery
Network & Partnerships / Contact Us / Communication
Resources / Funding / Training / Events
Information Sheets / Useful Links / Fair Shares / Volunteering
News / Within Blyth Valley / All Communities Together
Blyth Valley Arts & Leisure / Blyth Valley Children's Centres
Community Centres / Community Forums / Extended Services
Homes for Northumberland / Northumberland Libraries
Warm Zone / What's On in the Area / Credit Union / Venues for Hire**

CVA Blyth Valley have had numerous visitors to the website during the year totalling 239,591 hits.



Events

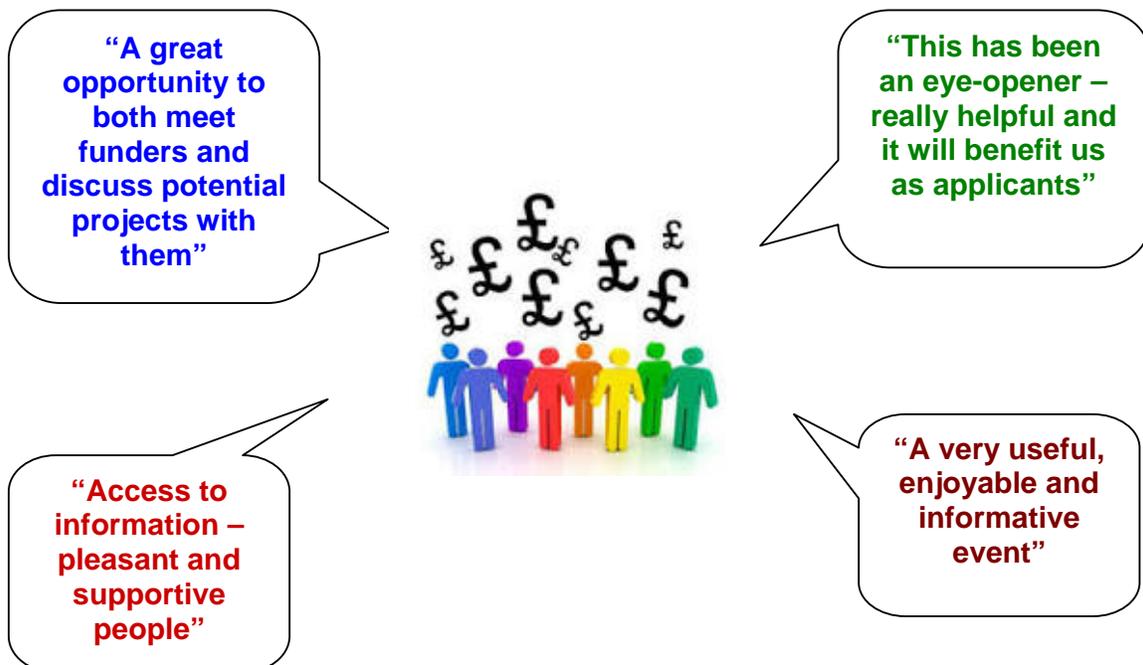
South East Northumberland Funding Event

Once again CVA Blyth Valley held a joint funding event with Wansbeck CVS for VCS groups in South East Northumberland. The day was very successful with 17 funders attending talking to groups about their projects during their 15-minute one-to-one appointments. 85 people attended the event representing 70 different organisations.

Our Funding Events are very popular occasions with groups and Funders alike. They promote, encourage and enable groups to make high quality funding bids to the most appropriate funders.

There was also a 'Market Place' with representation from 15 different community organisations. This was a great networking opportunity stimulating much conversation about the services on offer to our VCS groups.

Jim Mackison was on hand to give expert advice during his training workshops designed to help improve the quality of future funding applications.



Events (continued)

Children's Festival

CVABV held a Children's Festival in October with a Halloween theme at Seaton Sluice Community Centre. The event was extremely well attended with approximately 300 children and parents / carers in attendance.

Activities included:

- Magician / balloon modelling
- Scientist Boffin
- Face painting
- Cook and eat
- Drumming sessions
- Arts and crafts workshops
- Trampoline / bungee
- Pumpkin / lantern / carving
- Story Telling / singing
- Dancing with Jo Jingles
- Cheer leaders
- Soap making
- Soft play
- Sensory Tent
- Soft Play
- MUGA
- And much more

There were so many events and activities that it was a very action packed day. Many thanks to those organisations donating toys to make this such a successful event. Toys, gifts and funding were received from Ikea, Wilkinsons, Asda and Northumberland County Council. After the event the toy were donated to 8 local children's community groups who were delighted to receive them.



Events (continued)

Red Nose Day – March 2013

Staff from CVA Blyth Valley hosted an open afternoon in aid of Comic Relief's Red Nose Day on Thursday 14th March 2013.

Home made cakes were baked for the day and groups popped down to show their support and to have a cup of coffee or tea and cake / biscuits. We had a great afternoon with our local groups and raised the sum of £92, which went to the Red Nose Day Appeal.



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Trustees

CVA Blyth Valley Executive Committee Members for 2012 / 2013:

David Johnston	Chairman
Mark Beresford	Vice Chair
David Vaughan	Treasurer
Mike Dungworth	Executive Committee Member
Paul Smith	Executive Committee Member
Rob Bailey	Executive Committee Member
Rick Young	Executive Committee Member
Craig Nicholson	Executive Committee Member
Grant Davey	NCC Representative

Staff Team

Thom Bradley	Chief Executive
Pauline Blake	Capacity Building Officer
Sybil Pattie	Administrator
Gina Robson	Fair Shares Capacity Building Officer
Jill Oxnard	Capacity Building Officer
Fiona Wardlaw	Fair Shares Community Involvement & Engagement Officer

Acknowledgements

CVABV would like to acknowledge that the services and support we provide and ongoing projects would not have been possible without the dedicated help of voluntary workers, the provision of funding, community organisations and establishments in Blyth, Cramlington and Seaton Valley.

Our sincere thanks go to:

- Big Lottery - BASIS
- Community Foundation
- Awards for All
- Fair Shares Trust
- Funding Information North East
- Northumberland County Council / Connect 4Change partnership
- Joicey Trust
- Rothley Trust
- William Leech Charity
- R W Mann Trust
- Sherburn House Charity
- Barbour Trust
- Hadrian Trust
- 1989 Willan Charitable Trust
- Cramlington Town Council
- Co-operative Community Fund
- Sir James Knott Trust
- And all the local funders who attend our Funding Fayre's / Events

And last but not least, the officers and members of the Management Committee, the staff at CVA Blyth Valley and other members of the community who have contributed during the year.

Thank You