

Evaluation of Fair Share Trust in Wansbeck (East Ashington)

February 2013

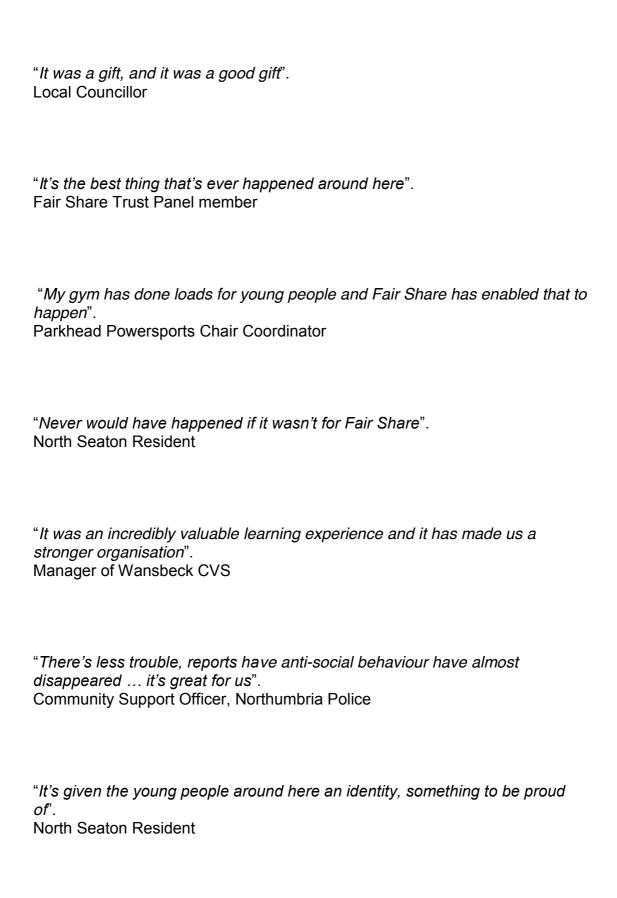






Fair Share Trust is managed by UK Community Foundations and supported by the National Lottery

Comments about Fair Share Trust



Acknowledgements

Doing this evaluation has been an absolute pleasure. In the course of the fieldwork we have met many committed, enthusiastic and decent people who are dedicated to the work they do on behalf of their communities or the communities they serve; both professionals and community members. It has been a pleasure to meet these people and our lives are richer for it. We would like to thank those people who we have interviewed for the time they have given to us to answer our questions.

About Community Foundation serving Tyne & Wear and Northumberland ('the Community Foundation')

The Community Foundation was established in 1988 as a charity and limited company to benefit communities particularly, although not exclusively, in Tyne and Wear and Northumberland. Their vision is: 'effective giving, thriving communities and enriched lives'. Their purpose is to be the hub for community philanthropy in the area, inspiring and supporting giving that strengthens communities and enriches local life. To do this they: enable effective giving by people and business; support organisations and individuals with money, time and expertise; and inform and influence issues affecting communities.



More information: www.communityfoundation.org.uk

About the authors

Barefoot Research and Evaluation is a social research organisation based in Newcastle upon Tyne, working across the North East and Cumbria. They have particular expertise in consultation and research with local communities particularly participatory research with communities of interest. Barefoot Research and Evaluation has carried out work on a diverse range of social welfare programmes in the voluntary and public sector. Dr. Christopher Hartworth, who set up Barefoot, has 20 years' experience of research and evaluation, beginning in developing countries in poverty alleviation programmes and continuing in the North East of England in work with disadvantaged communities.



More information: www.barefootresearch.org.uk

i Executive summary

This is an evaluation of the Wansbeck or East Ashington Fair Share Trust which ran from 2003 to 2013. The objectives of the evaluation are ultimately to look at what has been achieved, whether or not the programme was a success and if the money was well spent. We also look at the local decision making process, the Panel, and see how that has functioned as the mechanism to implement the programme.

This evaluation shows that the local programme has been a success. It has left the local organisations and communities involved, stronger, more diverse and more organised. It has also been a valuable learning experience both for those organisations who have been funded and the local Fair Share Trust Panel members. There have also been considerable benefits to local communities

Fair Share Trust

Fair Share Trust puts change in the hands of communities. In 2003, Big Lottery Fund (BIG) noticed that certain parts of the UK were not receiving equal amounts of their funding because they lacked the resources or experience to put together successful funding applications. So, Fair Share Trust was created when BIG put £50m into a trust. The funds were to be spent across the 80+ areas in the UK over 10 years. UK Community Foundations is the sole Trustee and delivers Fair Share Trust by working with its members and other local partners, called Local Agents, who use their local giving expertise to make sure funding is distributed based on what communities want.

The main programme aims were to:

- Build capacity: the confidence, skills and experience of individuals and communities
- Enhance social capital: the networks, relationships and contacts of individual and organisations
- Improve liveability: the look and feel of the neighbourhood
- Create sustainability: a positive lasting legacy.

Fair Share Trust was not a grants programme, in that it was a local funding resource to which funding applications could be made. Moreover, as the Fair Share Trust states, it was about process rather than projects and 'only in this way can the importance of learning from unsuccessful projects be retained'.

Fair Share Trust activities

The majority of the Fair Share Trust investment has been in the priority aimed at young people: a total of 77 percent of total funds (£677,122) was invested in a range of initiatives and activities for young people. The single biggest investment was in Groundwork North East who received a total of £211,933,

which was for the work to develop and build the skate park. The other significant recipients were Ashington Community Development Trust receiving £188,780 for a range of activities aimed at young people and for capacity development, Wansbeck CVS receiving £173,559 for a community capacity development programme and Hirst Welfare receiving £165,594 for a young persons programme.

There was an attempt made by the Panel to take a strategic position in relation to commissioning and in certain cases this was achieved, most notably in the initiatives delivered by Hirst Welfare and the Paddock Wood skate park work. The remaining projects existed largely as a collection of discrete funded projects which had beginnings and ends.

Evaluation findings

The evaluation makes the following key findings.

1. Positive impact on young people

Children and young people was the first Fair Share Trust priority and evidence indicates that there has been a significant impact on young people in the locality across a range of areas. These impacts include: more activities for young people both during the time of Fair Share Trust, through commissioned projects, and projected activities after the end of the programme; increased locally owned young people's resources; and increased skills and organisational capacity. These impacts are presented below.

Increased activities: more young people have been involved in more activities. This has been as a result of projects such as:

- Trinity Youth who worked with high numbers of young people on a outreach basis, engaging them in activities and events;
- Be Inspired who trained a core of young people who then ran a series of events for young people;
- Hirst Welfare young people's programme engaged high numbers of three
 to 13 year olds in a summer events programme, sports activities and play
 groups. It also enabled the Parkhead Powersports Club to be run for five
 nights a week and the Boxing Club to be available four nights a week. Fair
 Share Trust funding allowed prices to be subsidised to enable people who
 had less money to be able to participate;
- Paddock Wood skate park has attracted and continues to attract multitudes of young people. It is a very well used resource: sometimes it is too well used, with one occasion when it was reported there were 400 young people at the park. It is used by all age groups: by young scooter riders between four and 10; skate boarders between eight and 20; BMX riders between eight and 40.
- There has been an increase in access to play resources for children with disabilities in the Paddock Wood development. Groundwork North East as part of their feasibility study and consultation with the local community installed play resources for children with disabilities. The resources are

now well used by local children and play trips are enjoyed by the Josephine Butler School, a local Special Educational Needs school.

Increased locally owned resources: this refers both to physical and organisational resources. The work in Paddock Wood was a young person led development and they now have an important sustainable resource, providing a focus for social and sports activities that they police, regulate and manage. The young people have taken a high degree of responsibility making sure that the area is clean and that it does not become a focus of anti-social behaviour. The work of Parkhead Powersports has also had a high degree of local ownership, with young members taking responsibility for organising competitions and events, even on an international level. Local ownership is a key factor in sustainability and an important outcome of the Fair Share Trust.

The ownership of local resources has created a pride felt by young people about their local resources. For example, for several years, the young people of North Seaton have wanted a stake park, for BMX, skate boarders and young scooter riders and all three groups have travelled across Ashington and as far afield as Whitley Bay and Guidepost. Now, young people from across the Northumberland and Tyne and Wear come to visit them, to take advantage of the park's 'bowl' shape.

Increased skills and organisational capacity: there is a diversity of evidence which demonstrates this impact, from the capacity generated in the Be Inspired trainees, to the organisational skills developed through the Ashington/Remscheid exchange visit, to the increase in presentation and public speaking skills developed when local young people from North Seaton proposed the skate park development to the Fair Share Trust Panel.

The exchange visit built considerable skills of the group of 20 young people who were involved. They had to organise additional fundraising, transport, accommodation and a timetable of activities. There was a degree of sustainability to the activity as although some of the older participants left Ashington High School (where the group were based) and moved on, the younger ones were keen to maintain the group, invite new members and organise future activities and events

These skills have resulted in a number of young people finding employment. For example, a total of 18 young people from Parkhead Powersports found jobs which were attributed in part to participation in the club and the skills learnt there, including increased confidence and self esteem, coaching qualifications gained and organisational skills learnt. In addition to these, an additional three of the young people who were part of the Be Inspired group have gone on to secure employment.

2. Increased capacity

This was a key objective of Fair Share Trust and was the second objective of the local programme. Again there has been a variety of ways in which this has been achieved, including: contributing to the growth and development of local organisations; strengthening their organisational ability; supporting them in the

development of their programmes. This has occurred both through direct and indirect investment, i.e. through Fair Share Trust funding specific organisations and funding organisations enabling them to support others.

The impact of this increased capacity has been both stronger local organisations in their own right and stronger organisations that are able to deliver sustainable programmes that benefit young people. Thus the local Panel's second priority has both fulfilled itself (i.e. capacity development) and their first priority; young people.

Fair Share Trust has achieved this impact through: funding core costs; funding activities and allowing programme development; providing organisational support; and strengthening links between organisations.

3. Sustainable development

There have been high levels of sustainability to many funded initiatives and considerable evidence of legacy. The most prominent example is the legacy of the work of Paddock Wood; this resource in both its physical and social form (i.e. the people that use it and organise themselves around it) will last for a very long time.

There is also the legacy that comes from investing in local organisations, the most notable example being Hirst Welfare and its young people's programme. As the Ashington Town Mayor said "it will have a lasting benefit ... the Hirst Welfare, Paddock Wood". Indeed, the commissioning of Hirst Welfare represented a wise investment decision as the organisation has gone from "strength to strength" (as commented by one interviewee, reflecting the sentiments of many).

4. Increased services

In addition to the activities and services specifically benefitting young people in East Ashington, Fair Share Trust has resulted in more services available to the local community in general. For example, the portfolio of activities delivered by Groundwork North East has meant the local community of East Ashington have had more access to outdoor-related activities. This not only has direct impact for the participants in relation to enjoyment and health but it also increases community participation in the North Seaton locality. New services also include the activities of the Wansbeck Disability Forum who, in partnership with Ashington Citizens Advice Bureau, have provided support and advice for people with disabilities. They are also planning to develop new services for returning service men from the Armed Forces who have lost limbs.

5. A critical Panel

It is evident that there are differences of opinion amongst past and present Panel members about the effectiveness of Fair Share Trust. There are those who feel that the process of the Panel was often labored and difficult, others felt that they never struck the right strategic balance and others felt the entire process had been unclear and lacking in direction. There was a general agreement that some projects had been more successful than others. There

was also self criticism about the Panel's seeming lack of clarity between its role as a grant making body and strategic commissioner.

What is clear from the research is that Panel members have been self critical and on examination of the impact of the projects, this was largely unfounded. Indeed, the Panel has got much to be congratulated about and even the less successful projects have provided valuable lessons to the recipient organisations.

6. Positive community reactions

Although there have been different reactions from the local community about the Fair Share Trust, the majority have felt it has been positive experience. This is difficult to gauge because of absence of community surveys but in the absence of this we consulted with community representatives and leaders. Community representatives reported generally positive feedback, with some feeling it had been a great success and others feeling success had been more limited. However, most agreed that Fair Share Trust had been a "good thing".

A particular focus of praise was the Paddock Wood skate park development, with community representatives all agreeing it had been a great success in a variety of different ways: from reducing local crime and disorder to improving relations between older and younger residents.

Conclusion

The Fair Share Trust has been different to other models of development or regeneration experienced in Ashington. It has been geographically defined (in the locality of East Ashington) and it has been led by local people. There have been no employees of Fair Share Trust, only support and guidance from the Community Foundation. However, the individuals who made up the group of people who constructed the programme, the Panel, were all experts: community development specialists, community leaders, voluntary sector managers.

As it was a new model of development and working, there was no previous experience to base the work upon. The Community Foundation similarly lacked experience of this way of working. Both parties therefore found their way together. The major difference between Fair Share Trust and other funding programmes was the strategic approach taken; it was not a programme that funded a selection of discrete projects but was meant to start a sustainable development process that benefitted young people and local community organisations.

The experience was not without problems or mistakes. It took some time to "get going" as one interviewee said. There was also some difficulties in constructing a purely strategic programme and sometimes it looked more like a grants programme.

This learning process was framed by a specified time scale and budget. It was also framed by a deprived area which had seen limited investment in the past:

in short there was considerable need. This was amplified towards the latter stages of Fair Share Trust as the recession hit. As the Town Mayor said "we are the first to feel the chill [of a recession] and the last to feel the benefit [of regeneration]". It was also noted that "there are more demands on the voluntary sector [because of the recession]".

The Panel has been self critical, with some members feeling that money may have been wasted, the wrong projects were funded or there was not sufficient scrutiny. The reasons behind this self critique are unknown. Perhaps there was a certain pressure felt by the Panel 'to get it right' (because of the reasons in the previous paragraph). Perhaps there were certain local rivalries. What is clearly evident is the commitment, drive and dedication of the local people who have made up the Panel, evidenced by the strength of feeling and contributions to the local community.

When we have examined the impact of the programme in the light of the locally agreed objectives, we have found a very successful programme with some considerable wins. There has been learning from mistakes and these have arguably been worth the investment. We think that the Panel should be congratulated for a programme well run, if a little challenging at times.

Indeed, if we revisit the aims of the programme:

- Build local capacity: the confidence, skills and experience of individuals and communities
- Build social capital: the networks, relationships and contacts of individual, voluntary and community groups and statutory bodies within communities
- Enhance liveability: the physical space in which communities exist
- Improve sustainability: a positive lasting legacy.

We see that all have been achieved.

In terms of learning, we can take a number of things from the East Ashington Fair Share Trust.

We have learnt that a well conceived project that came from a bottom up process led by young people has achieved significant impacts for both young people and the local community.

The Panel members have learnt how to construct a strategic commissioning programme, to which they will be better equipped to run if the opportunity arises in the future.

We also learn that in an area with such entrenched deprivation, a 10 year capacity development programme will not solve all ills. Indeed, as the Mayor commented: "There needs to be another Fair Share". The evaluation would concur.

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1.0 Introduction

This is an evaluation of the Wansbeck (East Ashington) Fair Share Trust which ran from 2003 to 2013. It is a challenging task to evaluate a 10 year programme, principally because of the length of time involved. The general environment (political, social and economic) has changed so much, many people have moved on and things have been forgotten.

However, the records of the Community Foundation who have administered Fair Share Trust (very effectively) capture all that detail and ensure there is an audit trail. We have presented some of that detail here, but the aim of the evaluation is not to re-present the detail of Fair Share Trust. We have also tried not to make the evaluation overly long.

The objectives of the evaluation are ultimately to look at what has been achieved, whether or not the programme was a success and if the money was well spent. We also look at the local decision making process, the Panel, and see how that has functioned as the mechanism to implement the programme.

We already know that on a national level Fair Share Trust has been a success, as it has led to the development of the current Big Local. The national evaluation carried out by Sally Downs¹ provided the evidence and highlighted the learning and successes of Fair Share Trust. So, the local experience in East Ashington has resulted in Big Local programmes in Lynemouth, Whitley Bay and Jarrow (to name a few).

This evaluation shows that the local programme has been a success. It has left the local organisations and communities involved, stronger, more diverse and more organised. It has also been a valuable learning experience both for those organisations who have been funded and the local Fair Share Trust Panel members. There have also been considerable benefits to local communities.

We hope that this evaluation can be used by those people and organisations involved to demonstrate their performance and impact in the context of a long term local community development programme.

Finally, there is a film which captures the impact of the programme, made by Meerkat Films. We thus encourage readers to watch that film as it visually presents many of the findings in this report. The film can be downloaded from the Fair Share Trust website (www.fairsharetrust.org).

1.1 The structure of the report

The report is constructed in the following way: in the first section we set the scene and present the evaluation, Fair Share Trust, the local area, the level of financial investment, the recipient organisations and the Fair Share Trust

¹ Downs, S. 2009, The first five years of the Fair Share Trust programme, Sally Downs Consulting with Alison Millward Associates BDOR Shared Practice

Panel; following this, we briefly describe the projects that have been commissioned; then we present the evaluation findings, concentrating on the priorities chosen by the Panel (young people and capacity development); we then present the experience of the Community Foundation; and finally a conclusion is offered.

1.2 About the evaluation

The evaluation was carried out between July 2012 and February 2013 by Barefoot Research and Evaluation, a social research organisation based in Newcastle upon Tyne. The emphasis of the evaluation has been to examine the impact of the programme on the local communities and the local voluntary and community sector. As such, the methodology predominantly used qualitative research methods including semi structured interviews, focus groups and participatory research workshops (appendix one provides a list of interviewees and participants).

In this report, we have focused on findings and outcomes, rather than a dedication to project detail. As it was a 10 year programme, the report would be much more lengthy had we had done so.

Nationally Fair Share Trust has been thoroughly evaluated and there are three reports². These reports look respectively at: the background to Fair Share Trust and the Community Fund's open funding programme; how the Fair Share Trust was set up and how it operates in local neigbourhoods; and the experience of the Fair Share Trust over the first five years. It is not the intention here to go over that detail and thus instead, those interested are directed there. Here, we present the briefest of backgrounds to give the reader an idea of what it was all about.

1.3 Fair Share Trust

Fair Share Trust puts change in the hands of communities. In 2003, Big Lottery Fund (BIG) noticed that certain parts of the UK were not receiving equal amounts of their funding because they lacked the resources or experience to put together successful funding applications. So, Fair Share Trust Trust was created when BIG put £50m into a trust. The funds were to be spent across the 80+ areas in the UK over 10 years. UK Community Foundations is the sole Trustee and delivers Fair Share Trust by working with its members and other local partners, called Local Agents, who use their local giving expertise to make sure funding is distributed based on what communities want.

The main programme aims were to:

 Build capacity: the confidence, skills and experience of individuals and communities

² These can be downloaded here: www.nof.org.uk/research/stronger-communities/evaluating-fair-share

- Enhance social capital: the networks, relationships and contacts of individual and organisations
- Improve liveability: the look and feel of the neighbourhood
- Create sustainability: a positive lasting legacy.

To be clear from the outset, Fair Share Trust was not a grants programme, in that it was a local funding resource to which funding applications could be made. Moreover, as the Fair Share Trust states, it was about process rather than projects and 'only in this way can the importance of learning from unsuccessful projects be retained'3.

In relation to how Fair Share Trust was constructed, the Big Lottery commissioned the UK Community Foundations⁴ to manage the Fair Share Trust. UK Community Foundations together with the Big Lottery set up the Fair Share Trust which was a time limited Trust dedicated to the implementation of the Fair Share Trust and the investment of the Fair Share Trust monies. More information on the origins of the programme is shown in box 1.0.

The local administrators of the Trust were the individual Community Foundations across the UK. These set up local Fair Share Trust Panels made up of residents and sector specialists who advised the Community Foundation where to invest the money.

The Fair Share Trust in East Ashington was locally administered by the Community Foundation serving Tyne & Wear and Northumberland. A Programme Officer from the Community Foundation set up the local panel in East Ashington with assistance from the Wansbeck CVS and the Local Strategic Partnership (which was in 2003, the East Ashington Community Partnership). A Community Foundation Trustee chaired the local Panel meetings.

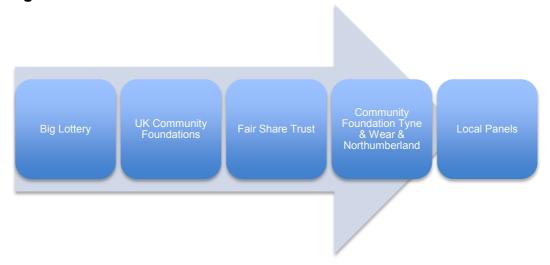
The local Panel was made up of residents and local community development specialists who advised the Community Foundation on where to invest the money. The Fair Share Trust stated that 'the panels created an interface between the Fair Share Trust Local Agents and the communities they serve'5. The following figure shows the direction of travel in the Fair Share Trust.

³ www.FairSharetrust.org/index.php/about/article/history/

⁴ This is the national Community Foundation to which belong the regional Community Foundations: the Community Foundation serving Tyne & Wear and Northumberland is one of

⁵ www.FairSharetrust.org/index.php/about/article/history/

Figure 1.0 Direction of travel



In relation to how the area was chosen, the Big Lottery had identified that Wansbeck District Council local authority was an area that had received few Big Lottery grants and as such had not received a 'fair share'. The entirety of the Wansbeck Local Authority area was too large an area to be covered by the fund; a smaller area was required.

Box 1.0 Origins of the Fair Share Trust initiative

Fair Share Trust developed as a result of two main issues. Firstly, the initiative developed partly out of pressure on Lottery distributors to address concerns about the equity of distribution of Lottery money, and the feeling that many areas were missing out on their 'fair share'. The reasons for the inequalities were complex, and it was clear that addressing the problems would involve changes in the way that funding was accessed and investment in the capacity of target communities to take advantage of what is available. Secondly, in the wider fields of regeneration and social policy, there was an emerging view that communities should be given more say over what was funded in their local area. As part of this, Lottery distributors considered their own role in encouraging and stimulating good quality applications from communities.

In consequence, the then Community Fund and New Opportunities Fund (now merged into the Big Lottery Fund, known as BIG), were charged by the Department of Culture, Media and Sport with developing a joint Fair Share Trust initiative. It was intended to increase successful Lottery applications in selected areas, chosen for their mix of relatively high levels of deprivation and relatively poor history of successful Lottery bids. Fair Share Trust areas are located in all four countries of the UK.

Fair Share Trust thus became an area-based initiative, focused on local authority areas. It became a ten year strategic grants programme ending in 2013 run by the Fair Share Trust on behalf of the former New Opportunities Fund. This was a new approach to Lottery funding, namely an expendable endowment for the benefit of Fair Share Trust areas. There was an emphasis on engaging with local organisations and communities in order to set local priorities and develop strategic approaches to a programme of funding intended to meet local needs.

Source: Downs, S. 2007. Evaluation of the Fair Share Initiative

At that time, Wansbeck (which has now since disappeared as a District Council when the Unitary Authority came into existence in 2010) was divided into 'Community Partnership' areas. These were essentially small Local Strategic Partnerships. The East Ashington Community Partnership existed in the most deprived ward of the District and they were approached by the Community Foundation with the proposition to become a Fair Share Trust area. The Community Partnership was in agreement and individuals were then approached to become members of the East Ashington Fair Share Trust Panel.

1.4 The local area: East Ashington

East Ashington is a densely populated urban area in the South East of Northumberland. It covers an area of 9km² and has a population of approximately 14,000⁶. The area incorporates the two defined areas of Hirst and North Seaton and also includes the Queen Elizabeth II Country Park. East Ashington is an area of high deprivation. In the previous government's Index of Multiple Deprivation, it was covered by two Super Output Areas which put it in the top three percent of most deprived areas in England.

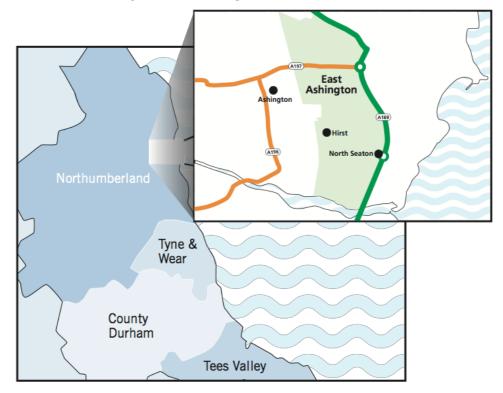


Figure 1.0 Location map: East Ashington and Northumberland

There has been a number of changes to the administration of the locality since the start of the Fair Share Trust. When it started, the locality fell within Wansbeck District Council with the Wansbeck Initiative as the Local Strategic Partnership (LSP). This directed a significant level of regeneration funding

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⁶ Source: East Ashington Community Profile, Northumberland County Council, Northumberland InfoNet. 2008.

across the local authority area, for example, it coordinated a total of £7 million between 2006 and 2008. During the time of the Wansbeck Initiative, the area was divided into six Community Area Partnerships which were community-led and based groupings of local organisations, elected members and partners whose job was to identify local priorities and views and feed these into the LSP. One of these was the East Ashington Community Area Partnership. In 2010, the LSP ended along with the Community Area Partnerships, as the new unitary Northumberland County Council was created. At the same time Ashington Town Council was formed.

The following box presents a series of statistics about East Ashington.

Box 1.1 Key Issues for East Ashington Locality

People and Place

• 18.6% of people are aged 65 or over which is among the lowest rates of all 27 Localities in Northumberland.

Community Involvement and Cohesion

- East Ashington has the lowest rate of people who: agree that people from different backgrounds get on well together in their local area (55.9%, Northumberland 80.5%), feel strongly that they belong to their immediate neighbourhood (49.2%, Northumberland 68.5%), and overall are satisfied with their local area as a place to live (47.0%, Northumberland 80.9%) out of all 27 Localities.
- 38.8% of people agree that people in my neighbourhood can influence decisions that affect the neighbourhood (Northumberland 49.1%), and 62.5% of people believe they have been treated with respect and consideration by their local public services (Northumberland 76.0%) the lowest of all 27 Localities.

Economic Well-being

- 30.4% of people of working age claim a benefit, the second highest rate of the 27 localities.
- 22.7% of people are in employment deprivation, 25.2% are in income deprivation and 39.8% of children aged 0-15 live in a household in income deprivation (the second highest levels of all 27 localities).
- 8.7% of people of working age are unemployed compared to the Northumberland average of 4.1%.
- The largest percentage of people aged 16-74 are employed in manufacturing (20.3%), health and social work (18.1%) and retail (16.2%).

Housing

- 82.7% of houses are in Council Tax Band A and 60.9% of all houses are terraced (Northumberland, 28.9%).
- 79.4% of people are satisfied with their home as a place to live, the second lowest rate in the County.
- East Ashington has the third lowest average house prices in the County (£98,059 compared to the Northumberland £179,852) and the highest percentage of overcrowded households (5.7%) of all 27 Localities.

Transport and Services

• 40.9% of people do not have access to a car/van (Northumberland 25.8%).

Health and Social Well being

• 26.1% of people have a limiting long term illness and 73.0% of people are satisfied with their life as a whole (Northumberland 20.9% and 84.4%).

Community Safety

- East Ashington has some of the highest rates of people who think a range of anti-social behaviour issues are a problem out of all 27 Localities.
- 66.6% of people feel people do not treat each other with respect and consideration and 7.5% of people agree that parents take enough responsibility for the behaviour of their children (Northumberland 26.8% and 34.2%).
- The lowest rate of people in East Ashington feel safe when outside in their local area after dark 22.3% and during the day 70.3% out of all 27 Localities (Northumberland 64.1% and 91.1%).

Source: East Ashington Community Profile, Northumberland County Council, Northumberland InfoNet, 2008

1.5 Investment in East Ashington

In order to frame the evaluation, it is useful to look at the investment into East Ashington and where the money was spent. This is presented in table 1.0.

Table 1.0 Fair Share Trust funding in East Ashington, 2003 to 2013

Description	Recipient organisation	Year	Amount £
Priority one: Young people			
Project scoping/needs assessment	ACDT	2004	19500
Project scoping/needs assessment	Consultants	2005	6992
Young people's sports	Parkhead Sports	2005 to 2006	20670
Young people community development (Be Inspired)	ACDT	2006 to 2008	138780
Youth services	Trinity Youth	2007 to 2010	77294
0 to 13 young persons programme	Ashington Joint Welfare Scheme (Hirst Welfare)	2008 to 2010	148803
Skate park – Ranger scheme	Groundwork NE - Revenue Paddock Wood	2010 to 2011	30000
Young offenders activities	Ashington Joint Welfare Scheme (Hirst Welfare) - Hirst in Bloom	2010	11284
Skate park feasibility	Groundwork NE	2010	12000
Ashington High School/Remscheid German exchange	Northumberland Youth Service	2010	16000
Skate park - construction	Groundwork NE - Capital Paddock Wood	2011	169993
Youth Participation Project	Ashington Joint Welfare Scheme (Hirst Welfare)	2011	5808
Sub total			657124
Priority two: Capacity development			
Capacity development	ACDT core costs	2003	30500
Capacity development	Wansbeck CVS	2007 to 2010	173559
Sub total			204059
Evaluation and film	Fair Share Trust	2012	19998
Grand total			881181

Share of funds

The figures below show how the funds were divided between the young people and capacity development priorities (see following section) in East Ashington and what they funded. Figure 1.2 over page shows the proportion of spending, with 77 percent (£677,122) being invested in the young people's priority and 23 percent (£204,059) invested in capacity development. Figure 1.3 shows the recipient organisations, with Groundwork North East, Ashington Community Development Trust, Wansbeck CVS and Ashington Joint Welfare Scheme (Hirst Welfare) receiving the most funds, in that order of magnitude.



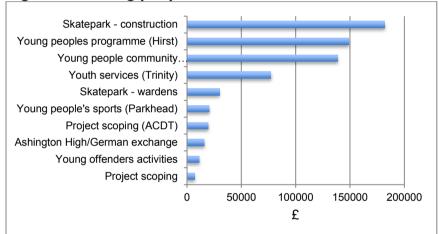


Figure 1.1 Capacity development: 2003 to 2012

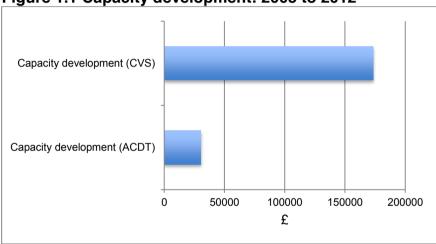


Figure 1.2 Proportion of funding devoted to young people and capacity development

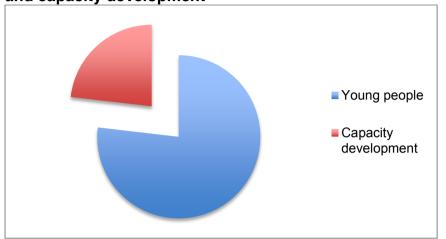
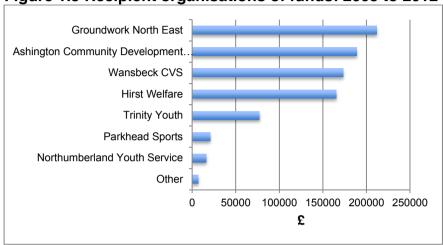


Figure 1.3 Recipient organisations of funds: 2003 to 2012



1.6 The Panel

The Panel was chosen through discussions with Wansbeck CVS, who were asked to identify the most relevant people. The Panel members who were approached were all notable and respected members of the community, many of whom had considerable experience of similar committee work. The individuals identified were then ratified by the Community Foundation. On the Panel, there was representation from all of the main community associations residents, representatives from the local authority, the Local Strategic Partnership and the voluntary sector.

Wansbeck CVS played two roles: firstly identifying and nominating individuals to sit on the Panel; and putting forward an employee (the Network Development Officer) to sit on the Panel as a representative of the Wansbeck Network. The latter was a network of voluntary sector organisations across the Wansbeck District and they formed part of the Wansbeck Initiative (the overarching LSP). The role of the Wansbeck CVS's Network Development Officer was to strengthen the position of the voluntary sector in the Wansbeck Initiative.

The Panel identified the priorities for the Fair Share Trust as young people and community capacity development. These priorities were aligned with those of the Local Strategic Partnership. Specifically the priorities were:

- To add value to existing services for children and young people
- To develop the capacity of the community and organisations to deliver sustainable projects and activities.

During the Panel's 10 year lifespan there has been much debate and a fair degree of conflict. Indeed, it was reported by one interviewee that on many occasions the Panel meetings "were tense".

There has been a relative amount of movement and change in the Panel membership with a number from the beginning who left, although there is a core of committed members who have been present for the 10 years. There was the introduction of a new and important member in 2007 in the form of a representative of the Hirst Welfare. This voluntary sector organisation had been created in 2006 and had a new community venue and was to become a key organisation in the area.

There were reports from a number of Panel members that there was a lack of clarity of purpose about the programme. Members did not understand how the Panel was to operate, what the objectives were and how they were meant to function. One member said "it did not have a clear cut role ... it was piecemeal". Some of the original members said that in the early stages, it was unclear what the panel was set up to do. For example, one early committee member said "it took 15 months to find out what was happening ... there was so much jargon". Another said "we were unsure of the position at first".

It was reported to take a prolonged time at the beginning of the programme to define the role and objectives and this was felt to be frustrating. For example, one interviewee said "they [Community Foundation] kept changing the goalposts ... it took three years before they agreed on what they were doing and which priority they were focusing on".

This uncertainty and lack of clarity was because of the nature of Fair Share Trust, i.e. that it was not set up to function as a grants programme but moreover a strategic commissioning process. As a result of the newness of the programme (as one interviewee said "we weren't sure what we were doing and how to do it"), it did take a few years before the Panel functioned as it should. There were Panel members who questioned whether the Panel ever developed into a true strategic commissioning body, as one said "we were told it wasn't a grant making body ... but that is what it turned into".

Box 1.1 How the funding process worked

The Panels advised the Community Foundation which initiatives to fund. How this worked in practice was, ideas would be brought to the Panels by Panel members or commissions were advertised in the local press or across local networks (through Wansbeck CVS for example). Panel members would discuss these proposals in the context of the general programme and the priorities which had been decided (young people and community development). Panel members would scrutinise the proposals and vote and the successful ones would then form the advice to the Community Foundation. From an idea or proposal coming to the Panel to its funding would take approximately six months. The lengthy time period was due to the Panel quarterly meetings and that they had to be considered by the Community Foundation Board.

It is a complex shift from grant making to strategic commissioning and one which the Panel had no experience in and as such it is no surprise that there was a dissatisfaction and an uncertainty based on an unfamiliarity with the process. Indeed, this may be a key reason why there was a degree of conflict and 'heated debate' at the Panel meetings.

Related to the uncertainty was a feeling from some interviewees that the strength of direction from the Community Foundation was insufficient. As one interviewee said "it didn't have enough leadership". Another Panel member said "we were asked to be in a committee where we were directing the terms".

There were other criticisms of the Panel which included:

- A closed membership
- A lack of process within the Panel
- A lack of transparency
- An absence of a scrutiny function

The Panel did respond to these weaknesses during its lifetime and introduced additional members and better reporting from funded projects. A reporting mechanism was introduced in 2008 where project workers would provide

updates to the Panel and submit progress reports. This was reported to be a considerable improvement. In relation to a lack of direction, early in their life the Panel identified a need for feasibility studies and two were subsequently commissioned. One Panel member who was present at that time commented "there was a high degree of unanimity about those". However, it did not appear that those studies provided a significant level of direction, which contributed to a general feeling of being without focus.

It seems several factors contributed to the Panel struggling to find direction and purpose and these included:

- An unfamiliarity with a strategic commissioning process and more knowledge of a grants process
- All stakeholders, including the Community Foundation, being new and inexperienced in a programme of this nature so were unable to provide direction
- A desire to succeed but not really knowing how to proceed
- A general frustration caused by a combination of all the above factors

Another added ingredient to the challenge of consensus was the political backdrop to the area, which was often referred to by interviewees. There is a long history of competition for scarce resources and voting loyalties in the local area which was amplified by the transition to a Liberal controlled Unitary Authority. As a result of this, conflictual debate was often the default position to negotiations and this did not make the work of the Panel any easier. As a result of this, Fair Share Trust in East Ashington became a mixture of a strategic commissioning process, as members tried as best they could to overcome their problems, and a grants programme, which people were more familiar with and knew how to operate.

For the evaluation, the members of the Panel were involved in a critically reflective participatory exercise which looked back over the 10 years. They answered three key questions:

- What have been the good things about Fair Share Trust?
- What have been the not so good things about Fair Share Trust?
- What would you do differently?

On the last point, Panel members proposed their own areas and then voted and so we get an appreciation of the priorities (the most popular areas).

Panel members felt the best things about Fair Share Trust (see following figure) were having a fund specifically targeted at the area increasing the activities available for local communities (for example, one response was "Provision of new and additional activities for East Ashington"), followed by the Panel itself and how it functioned ("Robust panel meetings"). Panel members also felt that the programme had performed well because it had provided more activities for young people. They also valued the support from the Community Foundation.

Figure 1.4 What were the good things?

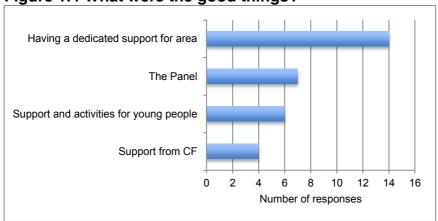
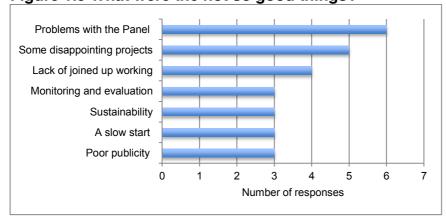


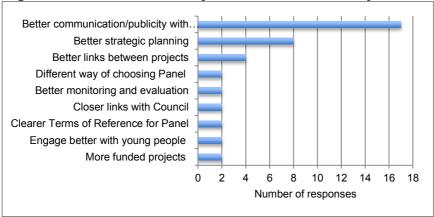
Figure 1.5 shows the responses to the 'not so good things'. Interestingly, problems with the Panel was the top response (for example, "Lack of Terms of Reference for Panel members"). This often happens in exercises of this nature, that participants identify the same good things as the not so good things; this can reflect an awareness of their weakness and a subsequent understanding that this is an area which needs work and investment. Other areas of weakness were felt to be: the under performance of certain projects ("There were some wasted consultations"); a lack of joined up working between projects ("Partnership working was sometimes difficult"); a lack of understanding about impact of funded projects ("Panel didn't know what really was happening/impact, perhaps should have been more evaluation"); poor programme sustainability ("Not enough attention on sustainability of projects"); a slow start ("It took a while for the programme to get going"); and poor publicity associated with the programme ("No Fair Share brand/image and not a high enough profile").

Figure 1.5 What were the not so good things?



In relation to what they would have done differently (figure 1.6), Panel members felt they could have done more to let the local community know about the work of Fair Share Trust, followed by better strategic planning and better links between funded projects.





We can learn much from this exercise. For example, we can see that the Panel has been reflective about its performance and has realised that they have performed well but at the same time recognise their performance could have been improved. We also see that there is a recognition that the Panel could have been more strategic in the way it functioned, including stipulating that links were made between projects and more impact measurement was carried out to monitor performance.

Upon reflection, members felt that they way the Panel had been constructed was the best way, as one member commented "although it was more arbitrary than a democracy, there was no other way to do it". What is clear from figure 1.3 is that Panel members felt that they had performed well. However, they also felt they were the biggest weakness (figure 1.4). It would appear that the individuals chosen to be on the Panel were the most experienced and appropriate for the task of identifying points of intervention for a community development programme. It is felt certain that if the Panel were to continue or a new similar mechanism was to be introduced, the process would work much smoother and as one Panel member reported "we know what to do now and we get on with each other better".

2.0 Fair Share Trust activities

The majority of the Fair Share Trust investment has been in the priority aimed at young people: a total of 77 percent of total funds (£677,122) was invested in a range of initiatives and activities for young people. The single biggest investment was in Groundwork North East who received a total of £211,933, which was for the work to develop and build the skate park. The other significant recipients were Ashington Community Development Trust receiving £188,780 for a range of activities aimed at young people and for capacity development, Wansbeck CVS receiving £173,559 for a community capacity development programme and Hirst Welfare receiving £165,594 for a young persons programme.

There was an attempt made by the Panel to take a strategic position in relation to commissioning and in certain cases this was achieved, most notably in the initiatives delivered by Hirst Welfare and the Paddock Wood skate park work. The remaining projects existed largely as a collection of discrete funded projects which had beginnings and ends.

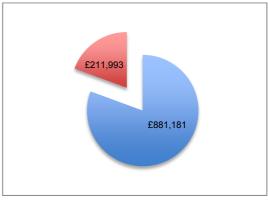
In this section we briefly go through each of the elements that Fair Share Trust has funded, showing the proportion of funding that has been allocated to the major programme elements. Although it is repeated that Fair Share Trust is not about projects but about process and strategic commissioning, it is still necessary to present what the money was spent upon.

2.1 Priority one: young people

2.1.1 Paddock Wood Skate Park and Groundwork North East

This was the most significant commissioned activity in the life of the Fair Share Trust. It was a real example of a bottom-up participatory development process, originating from a group of young people in the North Seaton area of East Ashington who approached the local Councillor and the Chair of the Residents Association to ask for their own stake park.

Proportion of total funding: Groundwork North East



Wansbeck CVS supported the North Seaton Community Centre to engage with local young people and to develop their proposals. This consisted of written proposals as well as making a video and presentations by the young people to the Panel. The young people said that the nearest similar skate parks were all a distance away in Ashington High School, Guidepost, Morpeth and Whitley Bay. The young people who were involved were very specific that they wanted as skate park with a bowl, and not just the half pipes and ramps.

The Chair of the North Seaton Residents Association said "they wanted quality".

The development process was felt to be good and sound as it started with a bottom up process. One interviewee from Ashington Town Council said "the young people said they wanted it ... it was in an area where there was very little, there was a deficiency of community resources". Another from North Seaton Community Centre and the County Council said "The kids used to contact me all the time".

The proposal was finally brought to the panel by the North Seaton Community Association and a group of young people from the area in 2011. The proposal consisted of environmental work to be carried out by Groundwork North East in the North Seaton area of East Ashington. Groundwork North East first carried out a consultation for a scoping exercise with residents of the North Seaton area. The consultation which was completed in mid 2011 led to the creation of a skate park and improvements to a small wooded area and open parkland. Groundwork North East also implemented a portfolio of activities in the area delivered by a Park Ranger such as Woodland Crafts, Campfire Cooking and Bulb Planting.

The work has left a successful legacy in the area and has had wide ranging impacts (discussed in section 3). Not only has the impact been substantial but the way it has been implemented has been excellent. Groundwork North East commented in relation to the work that it was unusual for a capital grant to come in conjunction with a consultation element or to have a Ranger to promote, develop and continue activities. The Manager at Groundwork North East said "a big thank you should go to Fair Share ... the community has been involved, there's a good end product and it has a more sustainable impact".

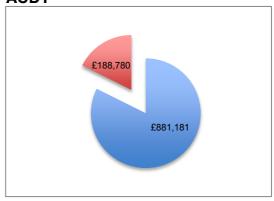
Groundwork North East stated that they now have a commitment to the area of Paddock Wood and the local community. The Manager said "we'll keep working there, running activities ... if we walked away now we'd be missed".

The Chair of the North Seaton Residents Association said "it's the best thing that's ever happened around here". He continued "it's given the kids, from about eight to 19 years old, a focus ... before the park there was nothing for them".

2.1.2 Ashington Community Development Trust

Ashington Community
Development Trust (ACDT –
formerly the East Ashington
Community Development Trust)
and Fair Share Trust started
around the same time in 2003 and
in many respects their journeys
have been intertwined. Wansbeck
CVS wrote the development
proposal for the ACDT and secured
£20,000 for its start up (coming
from Wansbeck District Council,
Northern Rock Foundation and the
Sustainable Communities Fund).

Proportion of total funding: ACDT



ACDT was intended to be the regeneration arm of the Community Partnership with an emphasis on developing Social Enterprise. They have a wide remit which ranges from encouraging social enterprise, training, volunteering, young people's activities, housing and emergency food. One of their key aims is to raise pride in the local area. There was significant political will behind the formation and the development of ACDT. As one senior local politician said "the town needs a development trust". Indeed, there has been much local ambition in the fortunes and success of the Trust.

Fair Share Trust has invested a considerable amount in ACDT since the beginning of Fair Share Trust (and ACDT) and they have been the second biggest single recipient of funds, after Groundwork North East. In 2003, Fair Share Trust gave them funds (£30,500) to pay for salaries for capacity development ("to get on their feet" as one interviewee said). This enabled them to develop projects and ideas. The following year, Fair Share Trust provided funds (£19,500) to undertake research into the needs of young people in the locality in order for both ACDT and Fair Share Trust to shape their priorities. In 2006 they were funded (£138,780) to develop a young persons mentoring project, Be Inspired. All of these costs are presented in the chart above (both the capacity development and the young people's funds)

In 2008, they delivered a capacity development project in partnership with Wansbeck CVS (ACDT received no direct funds as part of this, although Wansbeck CVS did fund the use of rooms at their offices). This was a three year project which ended in 2011. Here, capacity development work was delivered by two employees of Wansbeck CVS who worked out of ACDT offices. It was subject to its own evaluation, a summary of which is presented in section 2.2.1.

Be Inspired

Be Inspired ran between 2006 and 2008 and was a pilot project and the first major project of ACDT. The objective of Be Inspired was to train and build

capacity of a small team of local young people to enable them to run a programme of events, train other young people and be local role models. The project employed four young people who were trained in community development (to NVQ level) and then provided training and leadership to local young people.

It was intended to be a partnership project working with organisations such as North Seaton Community Centre, Wansbeck and Parkhead Powersports Club and Hirst Welfare. They ran one major event, which was a summer fair for young people which included a Wansbeck's Got Talent competition, a bouncy castle and other street games. They also ran a young persons writing project and delivered the C Card from ACDT offices. All Be Inspired workers achieved their NVQ Level 2 in Community Development.

Of the four young people who were part of Be Inspired, three are now in employment: one works for Northumberland County Council as a sessional youth worker, one is a Care Assistant and the other worked for a voluntary sector youth work provider in Newcastle upon Tyne.

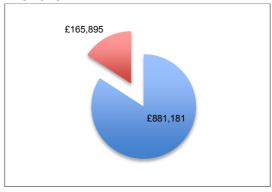
2.1.3 The Hirst Welfare

The original Hirst Welfare was built in 1966 but closed in the late 1990s. The centre was relaunched and a new building was opened in 2004. As such, they did not form part of the original Panel but they did join in 2007.

The Hirst Welfare is now a respected local organisation with a strong reputation, particularly in sport and youth provision. For example, one interviewee commented "Hirst are [sic] a good

organisation, they deliver good projects".

Proportion of total funding: Hirst Welfare



In September 2007, Hirst Welfare, the new organisation on the Panel, was invited to submit a bid to provide support to young people. They proposed that they would be the lead organisation in a four organisation bid. The bid was successful and resulted in a three year programme aimed at children and young people under 13 years old. This programme included the following:

- A programme of Centre-based activities including a 12 week holiday programme, gym sessions, dance and a range of activities including nonsport activities such as jewellery making, crafts, healthy eating, gardening and environmental club identified via taster sessions.
- Delivery of services by three groups operating within the Hirst Welfare Centre: Hirst Mother and Toddler Group running a drop-in; Parkhead and

Wansbeck Powersports Club delivering weightlifting sessions; and Ashington Amateur Boxing Club providing boxing coaching.

- A programme of outreach activities
- Opportunities for young people to undertake volunteer placements of up to 10 hours per week with training covering areas such as playwork, football coaching awards, weightlifting coaching, Child Protection and exercise to music.

The programme has achieved significant impacts which have been evidenced by an independent evaluation. The evaluation of the under 13s programme found the initiative to be highly successful in a number of areas and have significant impact on both beneficiaries and the local voluntary and community sector. These positive impacts included:

- Created provision for under 13s in an area where there was previously very little
- Delivery of high quality services which were enjoyed and appreciated by those who accessed them
- Increased participation in sport, recreational and educational activities for under 13s
- Promoted healthy lifestyles and improved the confidence of service users
- Supported two smaller youth projects (Parkhurst Powerlifting Club and Boxing Club)
- Contributed to the good reputation of a key community resource

The other Fair Share Trust funded initiatives included: work with young offenders and those at-risk of offending and their participation in an environmental project (Hirst in Bloom); and a youth participation project.

The Hirst in Bloom project was a one year initiative which aimed to divert young people away from offending and demonstrate their contribution to the local community. The Hirst Welfare now has a proven track record in reducing crime and disorder through working with young people which again has been independently evaluation. For example, its cumulated 2009 to 2011 youth outreach work resulted in a fall in local youth-related anti-social behavior and no new entrants into the Criminal Justice System.

The youth participation project aimed to build the capacity of local young people in a contribution to sustainability efforts. In conjunction with Northumberland County Council, the project created a young peoples participation group of users of the Hirst Welfare Centre. These young people were supported to meet, undergo training and distribute up to funds of up to £5000. All the funds were distributed by December 2012 and the process was reported to have progressed well in terms of the young people designing and distributing the funds.

The Hirst has received a sizeable proportion of funds since 2007 and Fair Share Trust has contributed to the general growth, capacity and expertise of the organisation. This in turn has contributed to the general increase in community activity that has been created by the Hirst Welfare. This has

mostly been activities for young people but there has been broader, more unexpected impacts. For example, it was reported that on Sunday mornings, there has been an increase in the congregations at Crossroads Church, which has been caused by parents dropping their children off for football practice and then going to church whilst they are waiting.

The investment from Fair Share Trust has also enabled considerable funds to be levered in from elsewhere. For example, the £148,803 invested in the 0 to 13 programme enabled a further £600,000 to be levered in from elsewhere (this is discussed further in section 3.0, point 2).

2.1.4 Trinity Youth

Trinity Youth is a young people's charity based in Bedlington in Northumberland, formed in 1986. They had been providing detached youth work (outreach) in the Hirst area since 2006 where they were delivering a summer programme of events for Northumberland's Youth Offending Service. This was known locally as Splash and consisted of a summer programme of events mostly concentrated in the local parks.

Proportion of total funding: Trinity Youth



In 2007, an application was made to Fair Share Trust to continue to run and expand their detached youth programme, opening it out to all young people, not just offenders or those at-risk of offending.

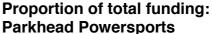
In 2007, the East Ashington Community Partnership fed into the Fair Share Trust panel saying that there was a need for detached youth work in the area. The Panel created a sub group to look into the issue, with input from Northumberland Youth Service. There was a considerable amount of work from the sub group and others in developing the idea, including input from the regional lead on detached youth work. An outline for the programme was developed and advertised and Trinity Youth were awarded the contract. Trinity Youth employed a Senior Youth Work Coordinator with the support of some sessional workers. The work was delivered from Thursday to Saturday and concentrated on street work and in the local park.

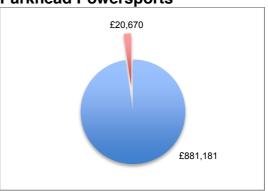
The work was reported to have been an effective programme of detached outreach which was successful in developing relationships and engaging young people from the locality (it was noted that these relationships and trust developed over a 12 month period). The project surpassed its targets, working with a greater number of young people than was originally planned, clearly demonstrating local need. There were some concerns expressed however by other local organisations that felt that more work could have been done by Trinity to link into existing youth provision.

The project ended in 2010 and Trinity Youth ceased all outreach work in East Ashington.

2.1.5 Parkhead and Wansbeck Powersports

Parkhead and Wansbeck
Powersports is a weightlifting club
which began in 1999 and ran from
the old Catholic primary school in
East Ashington. The Hirst Welfare
approached them to ask if they
wanted to locate themselves in the
new Hirst Welfare Community
Centre and in 2005 they moved in.
They have received funding directly
from Fair Share Trust and as a
member organisation in the Hirst
Welfare young peoples
programme.





They have grown significantly as a club and have seen their membership grow from 400 members in 2000 to approximately 1200 active members today. They are a very successful local club which has produced national and international power lifting champions. They have also succeeded in bringing the European Junior Lifting Championships to Newbiggin in 2012, where they produced medal winners.

In 2005, Fair Share Trust funded them to deliver a one year project aimed at increasing the number and range of activities for young people in East Ashington. They provided gym studio based sessions of aerobics, circuit training and team work and gym-based sessions using cardio equipment-based exercise. The sessions were aimed at young people aged between eight and 15 years old. All sessions took place after school or at the weekend.

Parkhead Sports was funded again in 2008 for two years, under the lead organisation of the Hirst Welfare. The funding here was used for a similar purpose, to contribute to the overall programme of activities, with the addition of a training element to train young people as power lifting coaches.

Box 2.0 Reflections of the Chair of the Parkhead and Wansbeck Powersports

Thanks to the Fair Share Trust funding Parkhead has been able to maintain and develop their work with young people. The coaching and mentoring which the money paid for, has been a key factor in the development of some of their young athletes.

Some of the activities that young people have been involved in helping to organise and run are: Tri Nation Championship for young people; arranging trips to Norway to compete in the Norwegian Junior Powerlifting Championships; costing and fundraising for attending the British Junior Championships in Birmingham, Bournemouth and Coventry; running the European Junior Championships hosting 20 countries. All this has helped create a strong work ethic and team work spirit.

From a sports excellence perspective, their young powerlifters have achieved high praise throughout the country and in Europe for their standards of performance and good behaviour. They have produced 39 British Commonwealth and European Champions. This is no small achievement for their young people, giving them the opportunity to broaden their outlook on life, creating self awareness, confidence in their ability and developing greater social skills.

Parkhead has mentored young people seeking employment and to date have managed to get 18 young people into work and encouraged many others to return to education to prepare for work. Parkhead is continuing to work toward encouraging young people for the betterment of their community.

Source: Chair Coordinator, Parkhead and Wansbeck Powersports

2.1.6 Youth Exchange Programme

There has been a history of exchange visits between Ashington and its twin town in Germany, Remscheid dating back 30 years. Ashington was the first twin town in the United Kingdom after the second world war. The Youth Exchange Programme was a project of Northumberland County Council's Youth Service, funded in 2010. It consisted of support provided to a group of school children between 14 and 18 years old from Ashington High School to enable them to carry out an

exchange visit with children from Remscheid in Germany.

Proportion of total funding: NCC Youth Service



The visit of 20 students from Ashington to Remscheid took place in April 2012 for one week; the return visit from German students took place in July 2012, also for one week. The funds paid for the Ashington students' travel between Ashington and Amsterdam and accommodation and meals in Germany and the German's accommodation and meals in Ashington and travel within and around Ashington.

Although Fair Share Trust had contributed £16,000 to the trip, the costs were much higher and a substantial level of additional funding had to be raised. The young people involved started a fundraising campaign which raised a total of £5000.

The young people who were involved formed a strong group of 20 individuals and met regularly both before and after the exchange. There were some in the group from Ashington who had not travelled overseas and because of their families' financial situation would not be likely to travel. The Northumberland Council Youth Worker said "about a third of the group had poverty issues, with some who couldn't afford a passport".

The legacy of the work of the exchange will endure with the young people who participated in the project in terms of more self confidence, broader horizons, higher expectations and improved academic performance.

Fair Share Trust was felt to have contributed to the strong links between the two towns. Ashington Town Mayor said "it has re-energised a dormant thing".

2.2 Priority two: capacity development

This was the smaller of the two priorities, receiving approximately 20 percent (£204,059) of total funds over the 10 years. This was invested in two organisations: Wansbeck CVS for a capacity development programme over three years; and Ashington Community Development Trust as a contribution to core running costs and for a needs analysis.

Box 2.1 What does 'building or increasing capacity' mean?

Building capacity means strengthening local voluntary and community organisations, making them better, or helping people organise themselves into organisations, to help them fulfill common goals.

Strengthening existing local organisations means improving their ability to identify needs, carry out local research and consult with people and find funding. It also means strengthening the organisation with the necessary agreements, processes and protocols, such as constitutions, minute taking, health and safety and child safeguarding processes.

Outside of organisations, building capacity means the ability of people to organise themselves, to unite over a common theme and be able to vocalise their needs. It gives people the tools and skills to be able to create an organisation.

Fair Share Trust talks about 'community capacity', they say⁷ 'community capacity means building factors within a community such as skills, imagination and the ability to address that community's needs. The Fair Share Trust was designed to identify, harness and target the ability to address local needs. The ideal of sustainability is embodied in the outcome of communities developing the capability to find solutions to their own problems'.

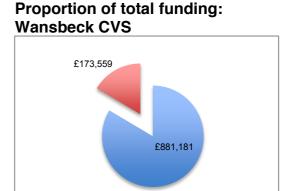
Voluntary and community organisations play a major role in building community capacity. Thus a strong local voluntary sector implies a local community with high levels of 'capacity' and in many ways these reinforce one another.

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⁷ www.fairsharetrust.org/index.php/about/article/history/

2.2.1 Wansbeck Centre for Voluntary Services (CVS)

Wansbeck CVS is a voluntary sector organisation that provides infrastructure support to other voluntary and community sector organisations in the local area. They also deliver a range of projects, from employment services to volunteer brokerage (finding and placing volunteers). One of the main roles of the organisation is identifying gaps in voluntary sector provision, nurturing small organisations and supporting them in their development.



In 2008, Wansbeck CVS and ACDT were approached by the Community Foundation and asked to develop a three year capacity development programme for East Ashington. The objectives of the project included: to develop the capacity of the voluntary and community sector in East Ashington: to increase community activity and services; and to provide additional resources for the local community. The target group was both existing and new groups, plus individuals who were keen to be more involved in their community. Wansbeck CVS employed a full time Project Development Worker and part time Community Support Assistant who was local to the area, both were managed by the CVS but based at ACDT. This was to ensure that the workers were visible in the area and best placed to know what is happening 'on the ground' but had the management support of an existing organisation with a good track record.

The initiative was the subject of its own independent evaluation⁸, which identified a number of positive impacts including:

- An increase in the membership of the Voluntary and Community Sector Alliance: this is a network of voluntary sector organisation in Ashington. As a result of the capacity development work, there was an increase of four members.
- There has been considerable learning: as a result of the implementation of the capacity development project. The Chief Executive Officer from Wansbeck CVS reported "I have learnt more from this bit of work than from any other". This learning related to project implementation, partnership working and project management. This learning ultimately strengthens the organisations and the projects it delivers.
- The work has strengthened relationships between organisations: the capacity development project has improved and strengthened

⁸ See: Steward, A. 2011, Evaluation of the Capacity Building Programme, Assist Consulting and Wansbeck CVS; and Yates, C. 2012, Final evaluation of the Youth Sector Development Fund Project, Hirst Welfare Centre

relationships between the Wansbeck CVS and ACDT and other voluntary sector organisations in the locality. For example, Wansbeck CVS said "we've done a lot more work with the Hut [in North Seaton]".

However, the evaluation also identified a number of areas where the project did not perform as expected and overall project performance was found to be 'disappointing'⁹. The evaluators found a number of issues with the project including inconsistent engagement with all local voluntary organisations, a lack of targets, poor planning and an absence of strategy.

There were a series of issues that were identified by interviewees for this evaluation about why the project was not as successful as it could be, with respondents feeling it was poorly managed and promoted. The problems of management were attributed to a turnover of management staff and infrequent meetings between the project team and management. Because of this, there was a lack of surveillance of project progress and direction given to the work. It was generally felt that there was much potential which was not capitalised upon, as one Panel member commented, "[the project] did not achieve as much as it could".

However, there were also project gains and positive impacts which accrued to local communities. The Manager of Wansbeck CVS stated that "the development of Paddock Wood Skate Park would not have come about if Wansbeck CVS had not invested time into its development [that was] as a result of the work done through the Capacity Building project" and this has had considerable impacts as is discussed in section 3.1.

2.2.2 Ashington Community Development Trust

As was presented in section 2.1.2, ACDT received funds which contributed to their core running costs in 2004. The fund was used to: support the Trust, and to enhance the East Ashington's voluntary sector infrastructure and bring added value to the neighbourhood renewal process; and to produce a needs analysis as a basis for developing services for children and young people. At the time this represented an investment from Fair Share Trust into a new local community development organisation, which could fulfill both the capacity development priority and contribute to the young people's priority.

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⁹ Page 23 (Steward, A. 2011, *Op. Cit*).

3.0 Evaluation findings

This section of the report focuses on the impact of the East Ashington Fair Share Trust. This is based on interviews with community members, representatives and members of recipient organisations. The first two findings relate to the two main priorities of the Panel: young people and capacity development.

3.1 Positive impact on young people

Children and young people was the first Fair Share Trust priority and evidence indicates that there has been a significant impact on young people in the locality across a range of areas.

These impacts include: more activities for young people both during the time of Fair Share Trust, through commissioned projects, and projected activities after the end of the programme; increased locally owned young people's resources; and increased skills and organisational capacity. These impacts are presented below.

Increased activities: more young people have been involved in more activities. This has been as a result of projects such as:

- Trinity Youth who worked with high numbers of young people on a outreach basis, engaging them in activities and events;
- Be Inspired who trained a core of young people who then ran a series of events for young people;
- Hirst Welfare young people's programme engaged high numbers of 0 to 13 year olds in a summer events programme, sports activities and play groups. It also enabled the Parkhurst Powersports Club to be run for five nights a week and the Boxing Club to be available four nights a week. Fair Share Trust funding allowed prices to be subsidised to enable people who had less money to be able to participate;
- Paddock Wood skate park has attracted and continues to attract multitudes of young people. It is a very well used resource: sometimes it is too well used, with one occasion when it was reported there were 400 young people at the park. It is used by all age groups: by young scooter riders between four and 10; skate boarders between eight and 20; BMX riders between eight and 40.
- There has been an increase in access to play resources for children with disabilities in the Paddock Wood development. Groundwork North East as part of their feasibility study and consultation with the local community installed play resources for children with disabilities. The resources are now well used by local children and play trips are enjoyed by the Josephine Butler School, a local Special Educational Needs school.

As an illustration of impact on activities and numbers, the Powersports Chair Coordinator said, "the funding we got increased the numbers of young people in the gym, it helped us train local people and increase the number of qualified

trainers so they could help more young people". It is impossible to estimate numbers of young people who have benefitted from the Fair Share Trust funded activities but estimates of use would run into thousands.

These activities have been provided in a variety of different ways, both inreach (i.e. in established venues) and outreach. The latter has been particularly beneficial for engaging with young people who may not otherwise have accessed venue-based activities. As one funding recipient said "it's allowed us to do outreach with kids which has meant we've engage with those young people who are hardest to reach and get them involved". The inreach has been provided from a range of venues ensuring a good spread of provision across the area, including North Seaton Community Centre, Ashington High School and Hirst Welfare.

Many of the Fair Share Trust funded activities have considerable sustainability, for example the stake park will be there for many years to come; the Hirst Welfare will endure as it has become a strong voluntary sector presence in Ashington and because of Fair Share Trust it has become stronger; the young people's group at Ashington High School which was created as a result of the exchange visit is continuing strongly; and there is a core group of young people who were involved in the skate park development who continue to meet regularly at the North Seaton Community Centre on a Friday evening.

Increased locally owned resources: this refers both to physical and organisational resources. The work in Paddock Wood was a young person led development and they now have an important sustainable resource, providing a focus for social and sports activities that they police, regulate and manage. The young people have taken a high degree of responsibility making sure that the area is clean (they have organised litter picks themselves) and that it does not become a focus of anti-social behaviour. As one member of the North Seaton Community Association said "the kids are looking after it". There have also been skills developed in conflict resolution by the young users of the stake park: there was a conflict between the younger age group scooter riders and the older BMX-ers, although this will be an enduring issue, young people have negotiated and found solutions to a mixed use resource and competing agendas. The work of Parkhead Powersports has also had a high degree of local ownership, with young members taking responsibility for organising competitions and events, even on an international level (European Powerlifting championships both in Northumberland and in Europe). Local ownership is a key factor in sustainability and an important outcome of the Fair Share Trust.

The ownership of local resources has created a pride felt by young people about their local resources. For example, for several years, the young people of North Seaton have wanted a stake park, for BMX, skate boarders and young scooter riders and all three groups have travelled across Ashington and as far afield as Whitley Bay and Guidepost. Now, young people from across the Northumberland and Tyne and Wear come to visit them, to take advantage of the park's 'bowl' shape. They have regular *jams* (informal events

and competitions) and the informal local grouping of young people have a name *28 Something BMX* and there is considerable internet traffic about the park (see: http://vimeo.com/46546885).

This pride and local ownership results in self governance and skate park users self regulate and police themselves. Young people who use the park display high levels of responsibility in controlling behaviour and taking care of the local area, they have even arranged litter picks themselves. The Chair of the local Residents Association said "they have a mutual respect for one another".

There has also been a reduction in anti-social behaviour and an improvement in inter-generational relations: there were reports by the local Neighbourhood Policing Team of a reduction in incidents of anti-social behaviour as a result of the skate park. One Community Support Officer explained "we have had a problem with mini motos in that area but the young people that use the stake park won't let them on. Anti-social behaviour has gone down and we don't get any trouble from there … there's been a massive decrease [in Police reports]". The skate park has displaced youth disorder from around North Seaton shops, where young people used to gather; now they no longer do so. The Neighbourhood Beat Manager commented "if it wasn't for the skate park, there would be more anti-social behaviour". The older residents were reported to be happy that the young people have a resource for themselves.

Increased skills and organisational capacity: there is a diversity of evidence which demonstrates this impact, from the capacity generated in the Be Inspired trainees, to the organisational skills developed through the Ashington/Remscheid exchange visit, to the increase in presentation and public speaking skills developed when local young people from North Seaton proposed the skate park development to the Fair Share Trust Panel.

The exchange visit built considerable skills of the group of 20 young people who were involved. They had to organise additional fundraising, transport, accommodation and a timetable of activities. There was a degree of sustainability to the activity as although some of the older participants left Ashington High School (where the group were based) and moved on, the younger ones were keen to maintain the group, invite new members and organise future activities and events

These skills have resulted in a number of young people finding employment. For example, a total of 18 young people from Parkhead Powersports found jobs which were attributed in part to participation in the club and the skills learnt there, including increased confidence and self esteem, coaching qualifications gained and organisational skills learnt. In addition to these, an additional three of the young people who were part of the B Inspired group have gone on to secure employment.

Indeed, the Chair Coordinator of Parkhead and Wansbeck Powersports said about their work "it has allowed us to broaden their horizons". This is a recurrent theme: that Fair Share Trust sponsored work has broadened the

horizons of young people, allowing them to see possibilities that they may not have seen before.

3.2 Increased capacity

This was a key objective of Fair Share Trust and was the second objective of the local programme (the meaning of this is discussed in box 2.1). Again there has been a variety of ways in which this has been achieved, including: contributing to the growth and development of local organisations; strengthening their organisational ability; supporting them in the development of their programmes. This has occurred both through direct and indirect investment, i.e. through Fair Share Trust funding specific organisations and funding organisations enabling them to support others.

It is important to note that this objective has been achieved not only through funding activities under the priority two heading of increasing capacity, but also has been significantly contributed to through funding activities that fell under the young people's priority. Examples of this are provided below.

The impact of this increased capacity has been both stronger local organisations in their own right and stronger organisations that are able to deliver sustainable programmes that benefit young people. Thus the local Panel's second priority has both fulfilled itself and their first priority; young people.

Fair Share Trust has achieved this impact through: funding core costs; funding activities and allowing programme development; providing organisational support; and strengthening links between organisations.

Core costs: The main recipient of funds for core costs was ACDT. Through investing in the core running costs for the newly created ACDT, Fair Share Trust helped them become established and develop as a local community development organisation. The investment also allowed them to investigate local needs of young people which ultimately led to the creation and subsequent funding of the Be Inspired project, which further strengthened the organisation and 'built their capacity'.

Fair Share Trust funding paid for the core operating costs of the nascent boxing club at Hirst Welfare (although this came under the young people's priority and not the capacity development priority) and allowed them the time and space to be able to become an established organisation. As the Director of the Hirst Welfare reported "it took them three years to get settled and sorted". In that time the Fair Share Trust funds allowed volunteers to become trained as coaches and supervisors and paid for the costs of a Project Worker. They are now a well attended and successful sports club.

A similar thing took place with the Powersports Club; the funds from Fair Share Trust were their first substantial piece of funding which allowed them to grow, invest in their staff and volunteers through training and ultimately to provide a better service to young people. The Club Manager said "[Fair Share

Trust] has contributed to the development of the club". There was a feeling that the investment had contributed to the quality of the club. For example, the Manager said "if we hadn't got the money, we'd just be another club".

Programme development: Fair Share Trust has enabled local organisations to develop their portfolios, increasing their skill base and experience and thereby grow as organisations. An important example of how Fair Share Trust has enabled organisations to grow and develop through funding programmes has been the Hirst Welfare's youth programme. Fair Share Trust, through initially funding their three to 13 years children's service, allowed the Hirst Welfare to develop further successful bids to develop their 13 to 19 youth programme. They successfully applied for nearly £600,000 to expand and continue their children and young people's programme. Thus, Fair Share Trust's 'seed funding' was instrumental in the development of a children and young people's service covering nought to 19 years old. The Hirst Welfare Director commented "on the back of our Fair Share funding we got funding from the Football Foundation and the Department for Education".

Now, the Hirst Welfare runs a full programme for young people which consists of: a holiday time portfolio of activities; four weeks in the summer, two weeks over Easter and two weeks over the two school half terms; youth activities through employing a Senior Youth Worker and sessional workers who provide a range of activities both outside of the centre and on the premises which engage young people. Importantly, these include both sport and non sport based activities. Prior to 2009, they had no provision for over 13 year olds.

The investment of nearly £140,000 over three years helped the ACDT develop a new young people's workstream. The implementation of this project enabled ACDT to attract further funding from Working Neighbourhoods Fund to deliver Youth and Employability services across South East Northumberland in collaboration with ICCQ and Lynemouth Community Trust. The ACDT Manager said "it's [Fair Share Trust] has been invaluable to us, it has got us to where we are now".

Fair Share Trust has enabled these local voluntary sector organisations to demonstrate their financial viability to other funders. For example, one recipient organisation said "it's shown other funders that we have a track record [in receiving funds]".

There has also been other impacts of the Fair Share Trust investment in programmes. For example, the investment in Wansbeck CVS, although there were reports of project underperformance, did lead to important organisational learning. As the Manger reported "it was an incredibly valuable learning experience and it has made us a stronger organisation".

Another impact of the Fair Share Trust investment was increasing the public and professional profile of local organisations. For example, the ACDT Manager stated "the B Inspired project got us known in the area". This is also the case for those other organisations that received core funding support. For

example, the Parkhead Sports investment contributed to their profile through producing more competition winners and through attracting more members.

Organisational support and development: Fair Share Trust has also contributed to the growth and development of voluntary sector organisations through the work that it commissioned. For example, the capacity development work implemented by Wansbeck CVS and ACDT resulted in the creation of four new voluntary sector organisations, including Wansbeck Disability Forum and supported the development of a series of others. For example, without the support of the Wansbeck CVS capacity development project, the Manager of the Disability Forum reported it would have taken them much longer to become an organisation. They reported "if [name of Community Development Worker] hadn't supported us, we wouldn't be here now and we wouldn't have got our Big Lottery grant. She helped us with everything, setting up, a constitution, loads of training".

The Paddock Wood skate park investment has resulted in the young people of the area wanting to extend and develop the resource. Again with the support of Northumberland County Council, a group of young people meet at the North Seaton Community Centre and are looking for further funding opportunities. Although the young people are not constituted into a formal group, they represent a fluid group of young people who have demonstrated their ability of organising events

There is also evidence that the Ashington/Remscheid exchange project has created a level of sustainability within the group of young people who were involved in planning the project. This young person's group continues to exist, meet and plan activities with the support of Northumberland County Council and the High School.

Strengthened links: Stronger links are evident in a number of areas because of Fair Share Trust. For example, there are stronger links between voluntary sector organisations and between organisations and the local infrastructure organisation. A Salvation Army representative said "because of the work we've got stronger links with CVS". The Manager of the Wansbeck Disability Forum said "we've got strong links with NCDN [Northumberland Community Development Network] and CVS now because of Fair Share". Links have been created between voluntary sector organisations and statutory services. For example, the Chair of the Residents Association in North Seaton is in discussions with the Special Educational Needs school and Groundwork North East to develop more woodland activities in the Paddock Wood area. The Chair commented "it's made the links [between us] stronger".

The work in Paddock Wood has strengthened the links between the North Seaton Community Centre and other provider organisations: these include the Northumberland County Council's Youth Service, Groundwork North East and local schools. This increased communication and cooperation is leading to more activities and more plans for activities.

Stronger links have also been created between local community communities, voluntary organisations and statutory services. In North Seaton these have focused around physical resources. Northumberland County Council's Youth Service is working more closely with the local community at North Seaton Community Centre because of the skate park development. This has given them a focus for youth work activities and resources around which to build youth work. In the current era of austerity and cut backs, this is a welcome addition to the work of the Local Authority.

Stronger links have strengthened the capacity of the local voluntary sector and increased community capacity (see box 2.1).

Thus, there is clear evidence to indicate that Fair Share Trust has strengthened the community infrastructure in East Ashington and those organisations that did receive financial investment are stronger because of it. Indeed, it would appear that, at least in one case, Fair Share Trust in East Ashington has resulted in exactly what it was created to do: helped create organisations that were able to identify local need and subsequently apply to the Big Lottery for funding.

3.3 Sustainable development

There have been high levels of sustainability to many funded initiatives and considerable evidence of legacy. Indeed, there was much discussion during the evaluation of leaving a legacy. Some interviews felt strongly that a legacy would remain, for example, one Panel member reported "the impact [of Fair Share Trust] will be there for a long time", although others were less sure.

This evaluation finds that there is considerable evidence of a legacy. The most prominent example is the legacy of the work of Paddock Wood; this resource in both its physical and social form (i.e. the people that use it and organise themselves around it) will last for a very long time.

There is also the legacy that comes from investing in local organisations, the most notable example being Hirst Welfare and its young people's programme. As the Ashington Town Mayor said "it will have a lasting benefit ... the Hirst Welfare, Paddock Wood". Indeed, the commissioning of Hirst Welfare represented a wise investment decision as the organisation has gone from "strength to strength" (as commented by one interviewee, reflecting the sentiments of many).

There have been contributions to the sustainability of initiatives such as the Ashington/Remscheid exchange. This continued the momentum of a town twinning process which in the absence of Fair Share Trust would not have occurred. There will be continuing twinning work in the future, as testified by the Town Mayor. Within this work there is also the sustainability of the group that meets to plan further activities.

However, there are others with more limited sustainability, such as the investment in Trinity Youth where it was a discrete three year project which

came to an end. To a certain extent the same can be said for ACDT and the Be Inspired work, although the work did lead to another young people's project.

3.4 Increased services

In addition to the activities and services specifically benefitting young people in East Ashington, Fair Share Trust has resulted in more services available to the local community in general. For example, the portfolio of activities delivered by Groundwork North East has meant the local community of East Ashington have had more access to outdoor-related activities. This not only has direct impact for the participants in relation to enjoyment and health but it also increases community participation in the North Seaton locality. As the Chair of the community association said "there's people out and about, planting bulbs, cutting back ... doing stuff, it's good for the area".

New services also include the activities of the Wansbeck Disability Forum who, in partnership with Ashington Citizens Advice Bureau, have provided support and advice for people with disabilities. They are also planning to develop new services for returning service men from the Armed Forces who have lost limbs.

The Salvation Army who received support from the capacity development work delivered by Wansbeck CVS reported considerable benefits and services to the wider local community. A representative of the Salvation Army said "They helped us run events and arrange for day trips for older folks, they [Wansbeck CVS] have been great for us and the community".

3.5 A critical Panel

It is evident that there are differences of opinion amongst past and present Panel members about the effectiveness of Fair Share Trust. There are those who feel that the process of the Panel was often labored and difficult, others felt that they never struck the right strategic balance and others felt the entire process had been unclear and lacking in direction (some of these issues are discussed in section 1.5).

There was a general agreement that some projects had been more successful than others. For example, one Panel member commented "I thought that one was a waste of time". Another member felt that there were too many feasibility studies carried out and that they were also "a waste".

It was felt that this was due to an absence of process and management structure within the Panel (although this was introduced in 2008). For example, it was felt that there was no scrutiny function and no specification of individual outputs and outcomes. It was felt that in a normal funding/funded relationship, organisations would be monitored to see if they were achieving their targets and if they were not without adequate explanation then further funding would be withheld. It was felt that this function was absent. It was also

felt that there was little coordination and cooperation between projects: this was identified as a weakness and a missed opportunity.

There was also self criticism about the Panel's role as a grant making body or a strategic commissioner. For example, one interviewee stated "It was realised too late in the day that Fair Share was not a grant making body". It was also felt that the significant capacity development work came too late in the programme with one Panel member commenting "it came in so late and it was so separate".

What is clear from the research is that Panel members have been self critical and on examination of the impact of the projects, this was largely unfounded. Indeed, the Panel has got much to be congratulated about and even the less successful projects have provided valuable lessons to the recipient organisations.

Some Panel members were reflective about the experience, particularly after a wider discussion with the evaluator and the emerging findings. One such member reflected about their input into a programme which had a local community development aim and was satisfied. They said "I had my ten penneth and I'm reasonably happy with that".

3.6 Positive community reactions

Although there have been different reactions from the local community about the Fair Share Trust, the majority have felt it has been positive experience. This is difficult to gauge because of absence of community surveys but in the absence of this we consulted with community representatives and leaders. The evaluators firstly returned to the community forum where Fair Share Trust was first introduced, the East Ashington Community Area Partnership (now Forum) and canvassed opinion there. The community representatives at the Forum produced a generally positive feedback, with some feeling it had been a great success and others feeling success had been more limited. However, most agreed that Fair Share Trust had been a "good thing".

We also interviewed locally elected Town and County Councilors who unanimously agreed that Fair Share Trust had been highly beneficial to the locality. It was felt that local communities had benefitted greatly, particularly those of North Seaton and the users of the Hirst Welfare. There were also many positive reports from individuals who had directly benefitted from Fair Share Trust funded activities.

A particular focus of praise was the Paddock Wood skate park development, with community representatives all agreeing it had been a great success in a variety of different ways: from reducing local crime and disorder to improving relations between older and younger residents.

Amongst interviewees with community members and representatives there was some discussion about the trade offs between funding a multitude of smaller projects or fewer large projects. There were also discussions about

the need to invest in capital projects in order to ensure longevity and with the exception of Paddock Wood, this had not happened with Fair Share Trust. Other interviewees felt that more funds should have gone to specific organisations, for example, one interviewee commented "it would have been better if they'd have put their money into here ¹⁰ [Hirst Welfare]"

There was some disappointment that Fair Share Trust did not continue to support the projects it had funded. It was felt that the success of projects or their pilot nature should have justified further funding, but did not. One interviewee said "those projects could have done with continued support". It was also noted that the application and funding process took a long time and was "drawn out and long winded" as one Forum member noted.

The difference of opinion is inevitable in a community development programme with limited resources and a specific focus and as one interviewee said "you can't please all the people".

¹⁰ This interviewee was external to the Hirst Welfare organisation.

4.0 The experience of the Community Foundation

In this section we look at both the experience of the Community Foundation at administering Fair Share Trust and also the community reaction to the Foundation.

Administration

Administering a community development grant was a new venture for the Community Foundation f Tyne and Wear and Northumberland. Generally, they are a grant making body and not a commissioner of services. They have had little experience, as an organisation, of running a long term community development programme. However, some of their staff do have substantial community development experience, with the current Head of Policy, Projects and Programmes who has been involved with the Fair Share Trust for a number of the 10 year period, having significant community development experience.

The Community Foundation were paid an administration fee for the management of the programme. This equated to approximately £6000 per year and was reported not to be reflective of the work that was carried out, i.e. more time was spent on Fair Share Trust than was budgeted for. An area which required significant time investment was setting up the administration systems for the programme.

The Community Foundation nominated one staff member to manage the programme which included: administering the Panel meetings; monitoring outs and spend; arranging payments; engaging in meetings and discussions with community organisations in both areas; and reporting to the Fair Share Trust. There were a number of staff who took this role over the 10 years; six in total. Towards the end of the programme, one staff member took this role, providing a level of continuity. A Community Foundation Board member chaired the meetings which were held quarterly. There have been two different people acting as Chair.

In relation to funding decisions, after the Panel had received and scrutinised proposals, the Community Foundation took the ultimate decision to fund proposed initiatives.

Experience and learning

The experience of the Community Foundation in administering the Fair Share Trust was a good one and it has been based upon strong experiential learning. Indeed, the Foundation has overcome a series of challenges to delivering Fair Share Trust including the additional workload, the development of administrative systems and dealing with the Panels with skill and diplomacy.

In relation to learning, it gave the organisation an opportunity to develop experience in running a long term community development programme in two

different areas with different demographic profiles. One of the Foundation's staff who managed the programme in the early stages commented "we had a good time frame ... it was a good case study about how long community development takes". Particular experience was developed coaching voluntary organisations through significant budget spends and supporting their financial systems; they have been a supportive community development fund manager. Indeed, if they had been less so and more risk averse, then the substantial outcomes demonstrated here would not have been achieved. They have been an effective intermediary between the Big Lottery and local communities with the most important variables being support and flexibility.

The changes in personnel has not affected overall administrative performance. Indeed, those Programme Officers had responsibility for several years each and one Officer in particular took responsibility for a total of five years . If anything the change in personnel added a freshness to running the programme. It also served to build capacity of those Officers, giving them valuable community development experience.

The cumulative experience over 10 years has resulted in experience in a workstream that did not exist before the advent of Fair Share Trust. It has put them in a good position to administer other community development programmes and they have already used the learning to successfully become an administrator of a Community Benefit Fund¹¹ in Northumberland. As one senior member of the Foundation reflected "we have performed really well, we have been a competent and effective manager". On the basis of the evidence in this evaluation, our findings support that reflection.

In relation to external relations, the Community Foundation has developed new and strengthened existing relationships with community organisations through their involvement in Fair Share Trust. This strengthens the organisation as one element of its work is having strong networks of potential recipient organisations for its funders. It has also made the organisation "better informed and more knowledgeable" as one staff member commented.

Relations with the Community Foundation

As part of the evaluation, we asked community organisations about their relations with the Community Foundation during and after the Fair Share Trust process. Responses were mostly positive with many organisations reporting that they had received good levels of support from the Community Foundation; one community organisation representative said "we've had fantastic support".

It was felt that being involved with the Fair Share Trust had improved relationships with the Community Foundation. Spending time with Community Foundation staff who sat on the panel had the dual impact of organisations

¹¹ A community development fund provided by renewable electricity generation (wind farms) in rural areas.

getting to know the Community Foundation and vice versa. This familiarity was reported to have improved relationships.

There were two main areas of negative reaction: firstly the turnover of Community Foundation staff; and secondly a feeling the a stronger direction and steer could have been given. However, the current Chair was identified on several occasions as having been effective at managing sometimes tense and difficult Panel meetings. Again, a senior representative from the Community Foundation commented "Chris has done far more than could reasonably be expected. We have benefited greatly from having a Chair of the Panel who understands local communities, community development and the local and national policy framework in which Fair Share was located". Similarly, the support from the current Community Foundation Programme Officer was also highlighted, with one Panel member saying "she's done a really good job, which has been difficult at times, but she's done it well".

5.0 Conclusion

The Fair Share Trust has been different to other models of development or regeneration experienced in Ashington. It has been geographically defined (in the locality of East Ashington) and it has been led by local people. There have been no employees of Fair Share Trust, only support and guidance from the Community Foundation. However, the individuals who made up the group of people who constructed the programme, the Panel, were all experts: community development specialists, community leaders, voluntary sector managers.

As it was a new model of development and working, there was no previous experience to base the work upon. The Community Foundation similarly lacked experience of this way of working. Both parties therefore found their way together. The major difference between Fair Share Trust and other funding programmes was the strategic approach taken; it was not a programme that funded a selection of discrete projects but was meant to start a sustainable development process that benefitted young people and local community organisations.

The experience was not without problems or mistakes. It took some time to "get going" as one interviewee said. There was also some difficulties in constructing a purely strategic programme and sometimes it looked more like a grants programme.

This learning process was framed by a specified time scale and budget. It was also framed by a deprived area which had seen limited investment in the past: in short there was considerable need. This was amplified towards the latter stages of Fair Share Trust as the recession hit. As the Town Mayor said "we are the first to feel the chill [of a recession] and the last to feel the benefit [of regeneration]". It was also noted that "there are more demands on the voluntary sector [because of the recession]".

The Panel has been self critical, with some members feeling that money may have been wasted, the wrong projects were funded or there was not sufficient scrutiny. The reasons behind this self critique are unknown. Perhaps there was a certain pressure felt by the Panel 'to get it right' (because of the reasons in the previous paragraph). Perhaps there were certain local rivalries. What is clearly evident is the commitment, drive and dedication of the local people who have made up the Panel, evidenced by the strength of feeling and contributions to the local community.

When we have examined the impact of the programme in the light of the locally agreed objectives, we have found a very successful programme with some considerable wins. There has been learning from mistakes and these have arguably been worth the investment. We think that the Panel should be congratulated for a programme well run, if a little challenging at times.

Indeed, if we revisit the aims of the programme:

- Build local capacity: the confidence, skills and experience of individuals and communities
- Build social capital: the networks, relationships and contacts of individual, voluntary and community groups and statutory bodies within communities
- Enhance liveability: the physical space in which communities exist
- Improve sustainability: a positive lasting legacy.

We see that all have been achieved.

In terms of learning, we can take a number of things from the East Ashington Fair Share Trust.

We have learnt that a well conceived project that came from a bottom up process led by young people has achieved significant impacts for both young people and the local community.

The Panel members have learnt how to construct a strategic commissioning programme, to which they will be better equipped to run if the opportunity arises in the future.

We also learn that in an area with such entrenched deprivation, a 10 year capacity development programme will not solve all ills. Indeed, as the Mayor commented: "There needs to be another Fair Share". The evaluation would concur.

Appendix one: Interviewees¹²

Name	Position	Organisation
14 representative professionals and residents from East Ashington		East Ashington Community Forum
Audrey Pepper	Panel member	East Ashington
Bill Gale	Panel member	East Ashington
Bob Poxon	Manager	Trinity Youth
Cath Carnaby	Manager	Women's Health Advice Centre
Chris Drinkwater	Chair of Panel	Community Foundation
Derek Gardener	Senior Youth Worker	Northumberland County Council, Ashington
Derry Nugent	Head of Philanthropy Services	Community Foundation
Fred McKensie	Panel member and Chair Coordinator	Parkhead and Wansbeck Powersports East Ashington
Gail Ballance	Director and Panel Member	Ashington Joint Welfare Scheme.
Jaimie Prime	Youth Worker	Northumberland County Council
James Turner	Senior Head of Region - North East	Big Lottery
Janet Cresswell	Manager	Ashington Development Trust
Jim Laing	Chair	North Seaton Community Centre
John MaCormack	Ashington Town Mayor	Ashington Town Council
Karen Cook	Manager	Wansbeck Disability Forum
Karen Daglish	Fund Development Manager responsible for the Fair Share Trust	Community Foundation
Libby Howard	Youth Worker	Northumberland County Council
Mark Pierce	Head of Policy, Projects and Programmes	Community Foundation
Maureen Findlay	Coordinator	Top Tots Toddlers Group, Salvation Army
Rob Williamson	Chief Executive Officer	Community Foundation
Suzi Goncu	Community Development Worker	Northumberland County Council
Wayne Jones	Resident	North Seaton

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There may be some omissions to this list, of people who have been part of meetings or workshops and to those we apologise.



Lottery money where it's needed most

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