

WELCOME TO



DURHAM
COMMUNITY
ACTION

Durham Community Action Overview

About Us

Durham Community Action (formerly known as Durham Rural Community Council) is recognised as the leading infrastructure organisation for County Durham; providing advice, support and assistance to frontline groups operating in the Voluntary and Community Sector (VCS) and to various communities of interest. We enjoy national influence and presence along with 37 similar rural community councils, through our membership of ACRE (Action with Communities in Rural England).

Our Offer

Our varied work is divided into five main themes as described below. We offer a bespoke service - a large proportion of our services are free but some are on a paid for basis; we will discuss this with you in detail when you make your initial enquiry.

ENABLING COMMUNITIES

- **Community Support:** a specialist support service for individuals looking to set up a VCS organisation, and to volunteers and committee members of established VCS organisations or community buildings. We also provide access to factsheets and toolkits to assist volunteers and staff with running their organisations, and facilitate a regular programme of events and training.
- **Share and Learn Network:** establishment of a network of community businesses and groups who run local buildings/assets and local services who meet on a regular basis to discuss specific topics. We have also introduced an online forum to allow network members to share and learn from each other.
- **Community Led Planning:** facilitation, support and guidance for organisations looking to produce a community plan.
- **Funding Advice and Support:** provision of advice and support to groups to help them access funding to develop their work.
- **Social Enterprise:** we offer bespoke support and guidance on all aspects of setting up and running a social enterprise including guidance on structures such as Social Enterprises, Company Limited by Guarantee, Company limited by Shares and support groups looking to register as a Community Interest Company.
- **Business Planning:** we have a wide range of experience drawn from across the business, charity and social enterprise sectors and can guide organisations through the business planning process.
- **Wellbeing for Life:** this is a service commissioned by Durham County Council and delivered by five experienced partners including Durham Community Action. It is a free service for adults sixteen years and over, who live or work in County Durham and would like to help change their lifestyle.
- **Growing Durham:** Growing Durham is helping more people across the county to grow some of their own food. It is creating a network of new and diverse community growing schemes that will help to improve access to fresh vegetables, herbs and fruit.

GETTING VOICES HEARD

- **County Durham Compact:** we helped to develop this document which outlines the principles for a working relationship between the public sector and the Voluntary and Community Sector (VCS) sometimes known as Civil Society Organisations (CSOs). It is designed to enable them to work together more effectively to strengthen communities and improve people's lives.
- **Campaigns and Consultations:** we participate in local and national campaigns and consultations and encourage the individuals and groups we work with to input their views and experiences to help try and make a difference.

PROMOTING ACTION

- **Food Durham:** hosting of the County Durham Food Partnership that works to support and grow a 'fairer, greener, healthier' food system in County Durham. It has produced a Sustainable Local Food Strategy and Food Charter, and runs two main projects: Growing Durham and the Durham Food Hub.
- **Durham Food Hub:** the Durham Food Hub is building a more efficient and resilient local food supply chain by linking local producers with businesses wanting to buy local food (hotels, restaurants, cafes etc.)
- **Insurance:** we work with a local insurance broker to provide competitively priced cover for local community organisations.

SUPPORTING VOLUNTEERING

- **I want to Volunteer:** we provide support and advice to those wishing to volunteer including arranging a confidential one to one interview with a trained volunteer adviser to find out what opportunities may be available, providing information about volunteering and current opportunities and assistance with filling out any required paperwork.
- **Involving Volunteers:** we offer practical help to those organisations wishing to recruit volunteers including finding volunteers through our brokerage service and advertising volunteering opportunities through www.do-it.org.uk (the national volunteering database).
- **County Durham Volunteers Coordinator Forum:** we facilitate this forum which provides the opportunity for staff and volunteers who are responsible for volunteer management in their organisation to network with staff and volunteers from other organisations who have similar responsibilities.
- **ROAD:** we are working as a partnership of 12 voluntary and community sector organisations working on the Reaching Out Across Durham (ROAD) Building Better Opportunities (BBO) programme. ROAD is funded by the Big Lottery Fund and the European Social Fund until 2019, and aims to provide support to the most disadvantaged groups in Durham, who are furthest from the labour market and who experience significant barriers to work.

The following sections outline each of our areas of work in more detail

ENABLING COMMUNITIES



COMMUNITY SUPPORT

We offer a specialist support service directly to individuals looking to set up a voluntary or community organisation, and to volunteers and committee members of established voluntary or community sector organisations or community buildings.

Our service provides a wide range of practical help, resources, advice and support in areas including accounting systems, asset transfer, charity registration and charity law, committee procedures, deeds and leases, employment law, governing document review, health and safety requirements, incorporation as a company or CIO, insurance, land registration, licensing requirements, management committee responsibilities, marketing opportunities, policies and procedures, trustees roles and responsibilities and village surveys.

We are keen to support groups and develop new ideas and innovation. We can assist with conflict resolution, developing an appropriate governing document and organisational structure, funding advice, policy development, charity registration, strategies for development and resourcing the work, business planning, nurturing partnership working, trustee development and providing training opportunities.

SHARE AND LEARN NETWORK

We also run a Share and Learn Network online forum which focuses on three key areas – Fundraising, Marketing and Running Your Building and there is also an area for Volunteer Coordinators to share information. We encourage groups to use the forum to share ideas, news and suggestions, request information and ask questions. Members of the network are also invited to regular meetings to discuss specific topics.

COMMUNITY LED PLANNING

We have a long and unrivalled background in helping to support communities across County Durham to produce a Community Led Plan for their area. Community Led Plans can support local communities, Parish Councils and partner organisations to fully understand the issues that are faced by and important to local people. We can provide specialist support and invaluable experience to help any organisation looking to produce a plan. Our staff can facilitate community meetings, support steering groups, provide template documents, offer guidance on consultation, and help to support the drafting of the final document.

FUNDING ADVICE AND SUPPORT

We provide advice and support to groups across County Durham, both large and small, to help them access funding to develop their work. We encourage groups to develop a funding strategy to ensure they are looking at a sustainable model of fundraising which addresses a range of income including grant funding, tendering for contracts, provision of services, donations and fundraising, and trading if appropriate.

SOCIAL ENTERPRISE

- **Governance Structures:** we offer bespoke support and guidance on structures including Social Enterprises, Company limited by Guarantee, Company limited by Shares and support groups looking to register as a Community Interest Company. We discuss governance options and offer support in selecting the most appropriate option for the type of work a group is looking to carry out. We then guide groups through the process including drafting governing documents and registering with the appropriate governing body e.g. Companies House, Charity Commission.

- **Business Planning:** Our team of staff have a wide range of experience drawn from across the business, charity and social enterprise sectors. We are able to guide organisations through the business planning process; in particular we offer support by providing model templates and facilitating workshops or discussions to help you make decisions on an appropriate model of operation.
- **Signposting:** we work alongside a wide range of private, public and voluntary sector organisations that can provide support, services or advice on the development of enterprises. We also provide extra support by creating links to other organisations that have similar ambitions, allowing peer to peer support.

WELLBEING FOR LIFE

This is a service commissioned by Durham County Council and delivered by five experienced partners including Durham Community Action. It is a free service for adults sixteen years and over, who live or work in County Durham and would like help to change their lifestyle. The Wellbeing for Life partners provide both advice and support to connect them to a range of opportunities in their local community including smoking cessation, cancer awareness, volunteering and training opportunities and accessing services in the community. As part of the project, Durham Community Action supports community groups looking to maximise the opportunities to sustain health and wellbeing activity within their community.

For more information please contact Kate Burrows, Community Support Manager on 01388 742051, email kate.burrows@durhamcommunityaction.org.uk or visit <http://www.durhamcommunityaction.org.uk/general.html>

GROWING DURHAM

This is helping more people across the county to grow some of their own food. It is creating a network of new and diverse community growing schemes that will help to improve access to fresh vegetables, herbs and fruit. Our support includes working with individuals and groups to look at different approaches to community growing projects and help them choose the best approach, identifying suitable land and advising on infrastructure, planting, maintenance, helping to write funding bids, linking people and projects who are doing similar things and delivering skills development sessions and sharing information.

For more information please contact Hannah on 01388 742048 or email hannah.murray-leslie@durhamcommunityaction.org.uk or Peter on 01388 742054 or email peter.samsom@durhamcommunityaction.org.uk) or visit <http://www.durhamcommunityaction.org.uk/food-durham.html>)

GETTING VOICES HEARD

COUNTY DURHAM COMPACT

We helped to develop this document which outlines the principles for a working relationship between the public sector and the Voluntary and Community Sector (VCS) sometimes known as Civil Society Organisations (CSOs). It is designed to enable them to work together more effectively to strengthen communities and improve people's lives.



CAMPAIGNS AND CONSULTATIONS

We participate in local and national campaigns and consultations and encourage the individuals and groups we work with to input their views and experiences to help try and make a difference.

HEALTH AND WELLBEING ENGAGEMENT

We facilitate and encouraged conversations between North Durham Clinical Commissioning Group, Public Health and the Voluntary and Community Sector (VCS) about local health services. The project uses a variety of engagement methods to give VCS groups the opportunity to feed in their views and opinions on how local health services can be improved, developed or best organised.

For more information please visit <http://www.durhamcommunityaction.org.uk/getting-voices-heard.html>

PROMOTING ACTION

FOOD DURHAM

We host a project to support the production and consumption of sustainable food in County Durham. The project places food at the centre of policy making as a driver of community, economic and environmental development. It is about encouraging a healthier, greener and fairer food system that supports our local economy. Food Durham is the working name for the County Durham Food Partnership and it is a member of the Sustainable Food Cities network. The project has produced a Sustainable Local Food Strategy (2014 – 2020) and Food Charter. It is now actively implementing the Strategy by developing and running new projects and by partners in member organisations working on issues including Food and Health, Public Sector food procurement, and Food Poverty. More details about the partnership can be found at www.fooddurham.net



DURHAM FOOD HUB

This involves building a more efficient and resilient local food supply chain by linking local producers with businesses wanting to buy local food (hotels, restaurants, cafés etc.). This enables a single point of ordering for businesses and an easier route to market for producers.

For more information please contact Liz Charles, Project Manager (Food) on 01388 742044, email liz.charles@durhamcommunityaction.org.uk or visit <http://www.durhamcommunityaction.org.uk/food-durham.html>

INSURANCE

We work with a local insurance broker to provide competitively priced insurance for local community organisations which is underwritten by Ansvar; a leading global insurance group. We can arrange most types of insurance cover including buildings, contents, public liability, employers' liability and insurance for special events and activities. We can provide no obligation quotes.

For more information please contact Russell Hayward, Head of Business and Finance on 01388 742042 or email russell.hayward@durhamcommunityaction.org.uk or visit <http://www.durhamcommunityaction.org.uk/insurance-services.html>

SUPPORTING VOLUNTEERING



I WANT TO VOLUNTEER

We provide support and advice to those wishing to volunteer including arranging a confidential one to one interview with a trained volunteer adviser to find out what opportunities may be available, providing information about volunteering and current opportunities and assistance with filling out any required paperwork.

We also offer support and training to those who are already actively volunteering providing local services or co-ordinating local clubs and groups.

INVOLVING VOLUNTEERS

We offer practical help to those organisations wishing to recruit volunteers including finding volunteers through our brokerage service and advertising volunteering opportunities through www.do-it.org.uk (the national volunteering database).

We also interview potential volunteers and match them to suitable volunteering opportunities, offer practical help and support including recruitment processes, DBS checks, training opportunities, expenses and insurance, and support and access to publications and useful resources.

COUNTY DURHAM VOLUNTEERS COORDINATOR FORUM

We facilitate this forum which provides the opportunity for staff and volunteers who are responsible for volunteer management in their organisation to network with staff and volunteers from other organisations who have similar responsibilities.

Presentations are regularly given by organisations on new initiatives or overviews of volunteering programmes. Training and support are also offered to forum participants to enable them to be effective in their roles as volunteer coordinators.

ROAD (REACHING OUT ACROSS DURHAM)

We are working as a partnership of 12 voluntary and community sector organisations working on the Reaching Out Across Durham (ROAD) Building Better Opportunities (BBO) programme. ROAD is funded by the Big Lottery Fund and the European Social Fund until 2019, and aims to provide support to the most disadvantaged groups in Durham, who are furthest from the labour market and who experience significant barriers to work. Support will be offered to those aged 25 years and above, unemployed or economically inactive, to move forward into volunteering, training, job search and employment by accessing a range of opportunities and specialist support including IT, money management and health and wellbeing.

For more information please contact Abby Thompson, Volunteering Manager on 01388 742055, email abby.thompson@durhamcommunityaction.org.uk or visit <http://www.durhamcommunityaction.org.uk/supporting-volunteering.html>

CONTACT US

TELEPHONE 01388 742040

EMAIL info@durhamcommunityaction.org.uk

WEBSITE www.durhamcommunityaction.org.uk



Durham Community Action



@DurhamComAction

ADDRESS

9 St Stephen's Court

Low Willington

Crook

County Durham

DL15 0BF