

Potential Projects  
Middlemoor Community Benefit Fund

Report by Community Action Northumberland for the communities in Eglington  
Parish and RWE Npower Renewables.

Marc Johnson  
Community Development Officer  
Community Action Northumberland  
Company No. 7805401 Registered Charity No. 1144604

Local Office: The Centre, 27 Fenkle Street, Alnwick, NE66 1HW.  
Tel: 01665 605540, Email [marcjohanson@ca-north.org.uk](mailto:marcjohanson@ca-north.org.uk)

Registered office: Tower Buildings, 9 Oldgate, Morpeth NE61 1PY  
Tel: 01670 517178, Email: [info@ca-north.org.uk](mailto:info@ca-north.org.uk), Website: [www.ca-north.org.uk](http://www.ca-north.org.uk)

## Background

Middlemoor wind farm is currently being constructed in Eglington Parish, the 18 turbines are due to be operational in Summer 2013 and is estimated to produce enough electricity to supply the average needs of 27, 600 homes.

RWE Npower Renewables will be providing a community benefit fund of £81,000 per annum to support the local community. The fund is index linked. In addition a sum of money will be made available to administer the fund. The preferred option to administer the fund is to use an external body such as the Community Foundation serving Tyne & Wear and Northumberland or Community Action Northumberland. Decisions on how the fund will be spent will be made by a decision making panel made up of local representatives.

## Consultation Events

On the 15<sup>th</sup> and 16<sup>th</sup> of May 2013 Community Action Northumberland organised consultation events in Eglington and South Charlton, the events were publicised locally using existing networks. Turn out at the events was good with over 30 people attending each evening.

The events provided some basic information on the fund and enabled people to suggest projects that could come to fruition using the community benefit fund, this was through four topic areas – Environment & Transport, Economy, Community and Housing; additional comments were collected on the area of benefit and any other issues. Some further comments were received by email. All of the comments recorded at the events have been transferred as accurately as possible to a word document and are at the end of this report.

## Area of Benefit

The majority of comments regarding the area of benefit are to keep the fund within Eglington Parish for the early years of the fund, this went up to a maximum of 10 years.

### CAN Comment

The area of benefit should focus on the Parish of Eglington but should not be so inflexible that projects outside of this area cannot be supported if there is good reason to do so. For example – transport projects that cross boundaries.

## Potential Projects

Potential projects have been summarised below, the majority of these projects will need further research to ensure they are feasible and there is a need or demand for them to be implemented. A reasonable sum of money should be allocated to conduct this research, in some cases a professional feasibility study may be required, while in other cases further community based research will be needed.

The Community Benefit fund should not be seen in isolation but should be used to access other funding sources to maximise the benefit to the community.

A large number of these projects could be delivered by existing organisations within the parish, such as the parish council, village halls etc. Some of the projects will need either a new organisation to be created or an external organisation to deliver on behalf of the area.

**The inclusion of any project below does not indicate that it should be supported nor does it exclude any other project from coming forward.**

## Quick Hits!

With any new fund it can be useful to have a selection of projects that could be completed fairly quickly to show that something is happening as other projects may take longer to be realised.

**Project Q1:** Interpretation panels at North Charlton for mediaeval village remains.

**Project Q2:** Support for small environmental projects. E.g. purchase bird boxes.

**Project Q3:** Support small scale enhancement projects. E.g. Notice boards, litter bins, benches etc.

**Project Q4:** Funding to support and expand the parish magazine / website.

**Project Q5:** Develop a land / garden share scheme for people to grow vegetables on land that other people aren't using.

**Project Q6:** Defibrillators at the village halls and associated first aid training

Some of these quick hit projects could be led by the Parish Council.

## Infrastructure

**Project IN1:** Provision of mains gas at North Charlton

**Project IN2:** Provision of mains sewerage or improvement to existing sewerage plant at North Charlton.

**Project IN3:** Provision of a car park in Eglington Village

**Project IN4:** Provision of traffic calming and road safety measures in both villages.

A number of comments were received around the general state of the roads:

Potholes cause significant problems on a number of roads in Northumberland, this is the responsibility of Northumberland County Council, spending Community Benefit Funds on something that is the responsibility of the Local Authority sets a precedent and should be avoided.

Any roads damaged by the developer should be put back to their original state as part of the planning permission. Community Benefit Funds should not be used for this purpose.

## Community Facilities

**Project CF1:** Support for fairly major renovation of Eglington Village Hall.

**Project CF2:** Support for ongoing improvements to South Charlton Village Hall.

**Project CF3:** Support for improvements to churches in Eglington, South Charlton and Old Bewick. Including refurbishment, toilet provision and structural repairs.

**Project CF4:** Eglington Cricket Club. Refurbishment of cricket pavilion and purchase of equipment such as training nets.

**Project CF5:** Sport & Recreation Facilities. Explore the potential for additional sport and recreation facilities in the area, including the future use of the community field in Eglington. This could include all weather surface for tennis courts or football pitches, provision of a playground, village green etc.

**Project CF6:** Identify and develop land for allotments or a community orchard. Link to project Q5.

### CAN Comment

These are fairly standard community based projects and should not be too difficult to deliver. The community benefit fund should be used as pump-priming to draw in additional resources including Lottery Funds, funding from Northumberland County Council and grant making trusts. CAN are able to provide advice on other funding sources.

## Supporting Community Activity

**Project CA1:** Set up a youth forum to ensure young people have a voice on the community benefit panel.

**Project CA2:** Set up a youth club and provide support through a professional youth worker.

**Project CA3:** Support local history projects archaeological digs, recording oral history etc.

**Project CA4:** Community Cinema. Support the creation of a community cinema in the village hall(s).

**Project CA5:** Support for local clubs and societies to continue and expand their activities through small grants.

## Supporting Education

**Project E1:** Education Trust. Small grants to help both school aged children and adults with costs related to education & training. For example, cost of books, travel, visits, broadband etc.

This could be an allocation of funding available through the administrator with a very simple application process.

**Project E2:** Grants for Little Acorns (pre-school group) for equipment.

## Broadband

**Project BB1:** Broadband Development. Funds could be used to provide gap funding to enable an improved service to homes and businesses in the area. Fibre to the Premise (FTTP) or a new cabinet closer to centres of population.

**Project BB2:** Alternative Broadband Technology. Support the provision of broadband for properties unable to connect to fibre, using the technology that is most appropriate. Explore the potential to link to fibre connection provided to the turbines.

### CAN Comment

It would be advisable to wait and see what the plans are for the roll out of broadband under the BDUK programme before committing to spend funds when it may not be necessary.

As part of the Broadband Development UK programme, Northumberland County Council has a £19m agreement with BT to roll out superfast broadband to 95% of residential and business properties in Northumberland. In most areas this will be Fibre to the Cabinet (FTTC).

Some premises may not be able to connect to fibre if they are too distant from the exchange or a cabinet. In these cases wireless or satellite may provide an alternative solution. See Bywell as a local case study - [www.newtonandbywell.org/broadband-scheme.php](http://www.newtonandbywell.org/broadband-scheme.php). Northumberland County Council have a scheme where the up-front costs of installing alternative technology are provided by a loan to the installer but clawed back by higher monthly charges.

## Supporting Businesses & Economic Activity

**Project EC1:** Business Club. Support to start-up and co-ordinate a business club to support businesses in the area and home workers.

**Project EC2:** Business units. Support the development of business units for start-up or established businesses.

**Project EC3:** Business Start-up / Expansion. Support for people who want to start up or expand their businesses through advice, training and grants.

**Project EC4:** Provision of a shop for the community. Fixed premises, mobile or deliveries were all suggested. This could be community owned and run or on a commercial basis.

CAN does not have expertise in economic activity and so to make any comments or suggestions would be unwise.

The following are organisations that may be able to offer advice and support:

### **Northumberland County Council – Local Growth Team**

The Local Growth Team seeks to focus on supporting the development of a robust and diverse economy and sustainable communities across Northumberland.

[www.northumberland.gov.uk/default.aspx?page=318](http://www.northumberland.gov.uk/default.aspx?page=318)

Main contact: Tim Kirton T: 01670 623918 E: [tim.kirton@northumberland.gov.uk](mailto:tim.kirton@northumberland.gov.uk)

### **Northumberland Business Service Ltd**

NBSL is a BIS approved Enterprise Agency and works to assist pre-start, new and existing business by providing information, advice and support on running and developing a business.

[www.nbsl.org.uk](http://www.nbsl.org.uk)

### **Social Enterprise Northumberland**

A social enterprise is a business with primarily social objectives whose surpluses are principally reinvested for that purpose.

Main contact: Tony Kirsop T: 01670 624744 E: [Tony.Kirsop@northumberland.gov.uk](mailto:Tony.Kirsop@northumberland.gov.uk)

## Energy & Environment

**Project EE1:** Community Owned Renewable Energy. Support for community owned renewable energy solutions, with any profits going into funding further community activities. Each solution will need expert appraisal to assess the practicalities of implementing them, possibilities suggested at the events include solar power & hydroelectric.

**Project EE2:** Energy Saving. Support to improve the energy efficiency of residential, community and business related properties in the parish.

**Project EE3:** Install an electric car recharge point, potentially linked to renewable energy supply.

**Project EE4:** Creating a nature reserve at the quarry

There are a large number of communities that have been involved in renewable energy projects, for example Ingram was successful with a bid to British Gas Green Streets which enabled them to improve the efficiency of homes and install solar panels on a number of households and the village hall.

Hexham have been successful with a bid to Energysshare to research the potential for developing a hydroelectric power plant on the river Tyne. A concern would be that the river in Eglington is too small to provide a reliable power source.

A group in Belford are looking at the possibility of a community owned biomass power station, the details are still being worked up but they are looking at sites on the industrial estate.

The experience of these and other communities will be invaluable when working up your own projects.

### CAN Comment

The community may want to consider supporting renewable energy projects outside the boundary of Eglington Parish, especially if the options in the local area are limited. For example, Hexham River Hydro are looking at issuing community shares, this would result in a financial return on investment as well as supporting a renewable energy scheme. Belford may look at a similar share issue.

## Housing

**Project H1:** Explore the need for social housing in the local community, investigate possible solutions and delivery mechanisms.

### CAN Comment

Providing affordable housing is a large scale project which is not reflected in the short project description above. It would be advisable to discuss with Tom Johnston and Neil Wilson at the Glendale Gateway Trust about the affordable housing they have developed in Wooler.

**Project H2:** Support for Robertson's Housing Trust, which provides housing for retired agricultural workers, to enable them to acquire properties in the parish for local people.

**Project H3:** Crisis fund to support individuals in need e.g. unforeseen crises, housing repairs, respite care etc.

## Transport

**Project T1:** Investigate the need for additional transport in the Parish and pilot a service using existing community or commercial transport providers.

**Project T2:** Purchase and operate a community owned car. This could be an electric car, see Humshaugh [www.humshaughshop.co.uk/?page\\_id=1442](http://www.humshaughshop.co.uk/?page_id=1442).

**Project T3:** Car share. Develop a formalised car sharing scheme with people using their own cars to provide transport to those without access to their own vehicle.

**Project T4:** Wheels2Work. Green Light to Work is a car and scooter loan project operating in Northumberland to provide transport to help people get to work and training, a discussion with ADAPT will help to determine how vehicles could be made available for people in Eglington.

Northumberland County Council has a fund for community transport that could be used as match funding for the first year of any community transport project. Although the focus will be on people in the Parish a transport project will cross boundaries and could benefit a wider area.

### CAN Comment

There were a number of suggestions of the community owning its own minibus, this is not something that should be entered into lightly as the legislation around operating a community minibus is complex. It would be much simpler to buy in services from existing operators.



<u>Topic Area</u>			
Housing			Eglingham
Issue	Short-term actions Within 3 years	Medium-term actions 3 to 7 years	Long-term actions 7 years +
<p>No Social Housing whatsoever in the village</p> <p>Lack of movement in the housing market – housing stock remaining unsold and standing empty.</p> <p>Aging community</p>	<p>Creating a local Development Trust to explore ways of providing social housing for young families with local connections, and for retired local people.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- needs to link with other issues eg lack of broadband, poor bus service etc.</li> <li>- may need social emergency fund to support people on low incomes in supported housing eg with repairs etc.</li> </ul> <p>Partner with the Glendale Gateway Trust on Housing provision</p>		
Affordable housing – due to house prices - very few young families in the village	Feasibility study	Land acquisition & construction	Nomination rights to ensure local families are housed in the community
Lack of housing for retired agricultural workers	Donate to existing charitable trust that rehuses agricultural workers	Acquire / build to house as above	Nomination rights to ensure local families are housed in the community
Poor standards of insulation	Insulation, green energy		
New houses and younger people with cheaper water and electricity supplies	About ¼ or 25% increased in the water & electricity bills (made cheaper)	More houses and more countryside with cheaper bills	Lots more houses with bout 50% knocked off bills. (charlotte age 11 yrs)
No veggie plant	To make it easier for 'older residents to get vegetables quicker	Have small growth place	Have one! (charlotte age 11 yrs)
No broadband yet			

<u>Topic Area</u> Housing,		South Charlton	
Issue	Short-term actions Within 3 years	Medium-term actions 3 to 7 years	Long-term actions 7 years +
Look at solutions to provide housing for young people (10 under 18 in South Charlton who will not be able to stay if nothing is done)			
Housing for retired farm workers	Link with Robertson's housing trust	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>
Renewable energy schemes, pv panels etc			
Low cost housing	feasibility studies re subsidising land or existing property conversions		
Partnership Glendale Gateway Trust for housing provision			
Loans / grants to refurbish homes - fabric - roofing - energy - water - sewage	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>
Insulation, Double Glazing			
New Sewage Plant for 10 houses in N Charlton			

Grants to reduce energy usage, eg solar panels			
More housing for young people			
To improve houses to encourage local people			

Topic Area			
Community			Eglingham
Issue	Short-term actions Within 3 years	Medium-term actions 3 to 7 years	Long-term actions 7 years +
Church - Roof - Stone floor - Minor Refurb - Toilets	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>		
Quarry Development into nature area	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>
Superfast Broadband			
Village Hall tarmac parking			
Respite Care for local people			
Grants for equipment Little Acorns pre-school			
Community Minibus			
Providing opportunitie for children from urban areas to experience outdoor learning development.			
Tennis courts or football courts			
No or very poor Internet throughout the parish. (I second this)	Infrastructure funding to provide fibre to all houses in parish	Extension to meet future technology needs	
Use of Village Hall (Eglingham)	Modernisation: heating, meeting space	Re –roof hall	

Limited by Fabric & facilities	accessibility, catering facilities, internet enabled for education / recreation, loos.+	Provision for emergency centre	
Support to provision of affordable housing	Feasibility studies	Land acquisition	Construction
Community energy schemes - renewables	Feasibility and awareness raising	Implementation	
Hydro-electric power schem using burn for community power sited near village hall	Feasibility study (including building of dam)		
Provision of enhanced healthcare needs in rural areas	Within 3 months? Defibrillators for Eglington & S Charlton, first aid training in addition to Persons willing / able to use units	Ongoing	
No toilet in Eglington Church, Used by whole community at some time, not just Sunday Services (3 votes)	Planning and Installation ASAP		
Decoration of interior of church	ASAP		
Rewire of Old Bewick Church & Structural repairs of this Grade 1 Listed Building.			
Radio Signal – no DAB signal locally – only way to listen to the radio is through a computer but broadband is rubbish			
Benches in village (Tarry Lane)			

Toilets for playing field All weather surface, - tennis, football	Changing block Astro turf, floodlights		
Purchase of school building would solve toilet issue for field			
Refurbishment of cricket pavilion & nets for youth training	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	
Remove / rebuild the weir – combine with hydropower unit – ie submerged water turbine			
Mobile phone mast to improve reception			
Apprenticeships – subsidising local people			
Support extended education			
Youth / young people's provision. Eg funding for a youth worker to run a youth club			
Pavement over bridge to act as traffic calming and safeguard pedestrians			
Land / garden share scheme (as per Hugh Fearnley- Whittingstall campaign)	Needs a co-ordinator		
Mobile Shop			
Consultation with bigger community, only a small number of residents	Pay organisation to do consultation		

represented			
<u>Topic Area</u> Community			South Charlton
Issue	Short-term actions Within 3 years	Medium-term actions 3 to 7 years	Long-term actions 7 years +
Support for Local Health Issues			
Support for 'Little Acorns' early years group			
Support for 'Shak' Dog Rescue Centre			
Support for Grovewood House older people			
Support for Community Projects: eg - Allotments - Community orchard - Community workshop - Community time bank - & other resources (eg laptops)			
Sports Bursaries			
Local History Projects eg oral histories done by young people			

Support for community infrastructure. In Eglingham village, priority for renovation of village hall and support for village hall in South Charlton			
Also in Eglingham support for Community Field			
Community energy initiatives for all villages			
Support for superfast broadband			
Support for development and maintenance of parish website-			
Footpaths - signage, routes			
Purchase of hardware and consumables for village halls – eg new computers.			
Playground with sports equipment			
Shop - mobile			
Renovate South Charlton Village Hall to provide day time facilities such as drop-in or office space (once we have broadband)			
Repairs to Church			
Community Computers with superfast broadband			



Subsidise education, books, laptops,etc, trips.			
Set up Youth Forum			
IT suite			
Village Hall Cinema			
Fairy Lights in Churchyard			
Sensored lights for driveway into Village Hall			
Subsidise broadband for those off mains			
Broadband at the turbines			
Dog exercise area			
<p>Small grants fund (max £500) eg :</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- New parish notice boards, litter bins</li> <li>- To support local clubs / societies: leek club, cricket club, WI</li> <li>- Defibrilators at village halls and first aid</li> </ul>	Annual & continuing grants to established local community societies		
Maintain churchyards and buildings			
Develop a village Green / community field for sports & events use in South Charlton			

Funding for historic research / archaeology digs			
Funding support to expand parish magazine			

<u>Topic Area</u> Economy – Eglington 14 <sup>th</sup> May 2013			
Issue	Short-term actions Within 3 years	Medium-term actions 3 to 7 years	Long-term actions 7 years +
Education Trust	Retraining, college costs / university (mature people as well as school leavers), business support, training needs, Apprenticeship support.	ongoing	ongoing
Business Start-up / incubator units	Within the parish	ongoing	ongoing
No possibility of business start-ups without 21 <sup>st</sup> Century Broadband (Fibre)	Fibre to all premises		
Trying to start up an internet based business at the moment & it's almost impossible	Fibre to all premises as above		
Local business club for self employed / home workers	Start-up early / co-ordinate start-up		
Subsidise respite care for infirm (to give carers a break) in parish care home in South Charlton		→	→
Fuel or Food Poverty / Crisis fund.			
Village Shop (find Premises) – Church Premises			

Apprenticeship Skills (Access to training Business support)			
Village Car Park (to support shop & potential business developments)			

<u>Topic Area</u> Economy – South Charlton 15 <sup>th</sup> May 2013			
Issue	Short-term actions Within 3 years	Medium-term actions 3 to 7 years	Long-term actions 7 years +
Encouragement for Local Businesses to become involved in training & apprenticeships			
Support economic activity eg. Shared facilities / services educational trust & training			
Develop Office space for local business / self employed (old steading renovations etc)			
Partnership with other local trusts eg. Glendale Gateway Trust for training etc			
Buy old school at Eglington, Community Centre, office space, business units			
Buy up vacant & unused properties – for community housing			
Apprenticeships. Education & Training Bursaries	Transport Support Costs		

(Sport camps)	Individuals & Employers		
Business Support Capital & Revenue in particular if it creates jobs.			
Faster Broadband to support local businesses. Also applies to education as well as businesses. PRIORITY.			
Support for home workers.			
Support for business start ups. Grants or other.			
Business Start-up units			
Community Shop / Mobile Shop. Community Pub.			
Community Advisor for funds i.e. Access funds and other funding.			

<u>Topic Area</u>			
Environment & Transport – Eglington 14 <sup>th</sup> May 2013			
Issue	Short-term actions Within 3 years	Medium-term actions 3 to 7 years	Long-term actions 7 years +
Loss of bus service. Essential Services Can't access shopping  Winter services	Explore Community Transport Solution. Door to Door Shopping, Hospital Appt / Visits, Doctors, Young People.  Delivery Service. Prescriptions, shopping for vulnerable people.  Car share scheme	Community car Possibly electric Electric car charging point	
Cars in village		Potential for village car park	

Cars clutter up space and pollute the air	50% of parking bay space	the car park	
Pedestrian Safety	Explore pedestrian access & safety	Improve safety on the bridge	
Traffic calming (not speed bumps)	Physical road chicane?		
Education Transport Post 16	Help with transport costs		
Lack of Broadband speed	Explore what BT will do. BDUK.	Bridge gap from average to good service.	
Road from North Charlton to West is impassable due to wind farm traffic causing damage		Major structural repairs / improvements	
Repairs to potholes in Eglington and environs – resulting from the wind farms.			
Shared scooter / cars to facilitate young people accessing employment			
Community Energy Schemes	Feasibility	Community solar / Hydroelectric scheme.	

<u>Topic Area</u>			
Environment & Transport – South Charlton 15 <sup>th</sup> May 2013			
Issue	Short-term actions Within 3 years	Medium-term actions 3 to 7 years	Long-term actions 7 years +
Lack of public transport	Hire taxi / bus service into Alnwick / Berwick / N'cl 3 x week  Car share scheme	Review / consider buying own bus	
Renewable energy	Grants for renewable energy for households. Insulation, Double glazing		
Interpretation panels at North	Erect soon		

Charlton for mediaeval village remains			
Mains Gas supply for North Charlton			
Mains sewerage for North Charlton			
Bridle path / footpath maintain & improve	Employ and acquire equipment for purpose		
Community Taxi / Bus Contracts Eg. <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• For shops</li> <li>• For Little Acorns</li> <li>• For older people who need the transport.</li> </ul>			
Routes into the village support for enhancement projects			
Stop flooding down North Charlton Lane	✓		
In Eglingham, traffic calming chicane at northern end / new pavement at bridge crossing.			
Support for environmental projects. Eg purchase bird boxes (swifts) Purchase grey squirrel traps.			
Roads are dangerous between & into villages	Repair potholes Cut grass Trim hedges		
Replace Sewage treatment plant for castle close (North Charlton) Residents	✓	Keep doing it	

## **Any Other Issues**

### **Eglingham**

We have an oil buying group. Is it possible to have an electricity buying group?

### **South Charlton**

Like to see a balance between short & long-term projects.

Where possible £ to be used to facilitate access to funds from other sources.

Use the fund as pump priming to facilitate large scale projects.

Use the fund to derive long-term benefit not short term gain.

North Charlton affected most by development they should benefit

Does interest get added to funds held by Community Foundation?

Should be able to benefit local good causes such as Barndale School in Alnwick.

## **Comments / Suggestions on Area of Benefit**

### **Eglingham**

Should be restricted to the Parish Boundary for a number of years.

Ellingham parish already has a fund. All other affected properties are in Eglingham Parish. North Charlton, South Charlton & Eglingham (As the focus).

Focus on the strong community of the parish (Eglingham, North & South Charlton)  
As covered by the magazine "Hear Abouts"

There are no significant community facilities outside the parish (until you get to Alnwick etc) So no demand to fund projects outside the parish boundary.

## South Charlton

Focus especially in the early years on the parish. North Charlton, South Charlton and Eglington with the flexibility to support initiatives outside this area if it is appropriate.

Strictly within the Parish Boundary, but taking care to allow other rural parishes to use the facilities – sports etc.

Parish area for at least 10 years administered by Community Investment Fund

Reasonable to use 5km boundary around & only around perimeter of “site” as drawn on map now.