

# INFRASTRUCTURE SERVICE REQUIREMENTS WITHIN THE NORTHUMBERLAND VOLUNTARY & COMMUNITY SECTOR:

## A REPORT TO THE VCS CONSORTIUM

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### The Northumberland Information Network is a partnership between:

ONE North East, Northumberland Strategic Partnership, Northumberland County Council, Northumberland Learning & Skills Council, Business Link for Northumberland, Connexions, Northumberland Care Trust, Northumberland CDRPs, Northumberland DAAT and GO-NE.



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## **EXECUTIVE SUMMARY**

The InfoNet was asked by the Northumberland Voluntary & Community Sector Consortium to undertake a demand and supply assessment of infrastructure services: support and advice designed to improve service delivery by frontline voluntary and community groups. A postal survey of almost 400 Voluntary & Community Sector Organisation (VCOs) in Northumberland was undertaken to elicit views on past and future use of infrastructure services; complemented by a telephone survey of the 10 main infrastructure service providers in the County to uncover plans for future provision.

### **Past Usage of Infrastructure Services**

In all, 96 VCOs responded to the postal survey. All 96 had accessed at least one type of external support over the previous three years. The most common type of service accessed was Funding Information & Advice, accessed by almost two-thirds of organisations. Other key areas of support include Policies, Procedures & Regulations (41%) and Networking with Others (38%).

Funding Information & Advice was the main area of support accessed by VCOs across all six districts. Propensity to access services was higher amongst VCOs with paid employees and lower amongst branch organisations, which Research Solutions (2004) attributes to different phases of organisational development and maturity.

Services were received from a number of sources, the most common of which were the local council, cited by almost three quarters of respondents; and national organisations such as the Charities Commission. Satisfaction with infrastructure services was highest amongst those provided from elsewhere within the recipient organisation.

Over one third of respondents said that they had experienced barriers in accessing infrastructure support over the previous three years. The main barrier cited was perceived cost of accessing external support. Also of note was the number of VCOs that did not know where to access support or were not aware that services existed; whilst follow-up telephone surveys highlighted a lack of coherence within the sector, with one VCO in particular reporting an occasions when he was continually referred to different organisations.

## **Future Demand**

Survey respondents were asked to indicate the likelihood that they would access each of the infrastructure services in the future. This was completed by 86 of 96 respondents.

Overall:

- 48 (76%) of VCOs said that they were likely or very likely to access Funding Information and Advice over the next 2-3 years. Other services expected to attract notable interest include Attracting New Members & Users (66%), Networking with Others (66%) and Policies & Procedures (63%).
- More than half of respondents that scored each of the services said that they were unlikely or very unlikely to access support on Managing Money, Recruiting & Retaining Staff, Office Administration and Forming Your Group.

The number of VCOs anticipating barriers to access to infrastructure services in the future is higher than the number that experienced difficulties over the past three years, rising from 29 to 36 respondents. Cost is expected to remain the main barrier to access, followed by time constraints, unawareness of services and uncertainty over where to access support.

With regards to modes of access, the main preference is for the majority of infrastructure services to be delivered via a website or by email. The exceptions to this are Business & Strategic Planning and Selling Services to Public Bodies, for which the preference is delivery in person on the VCO's own premises.

## **Supply of Infrastructure Services**

In order to establish the extent to which future demand for infrastructure services will be met by future supply, telephone surveys were undertaken with the 10 main service providers in the County, as identified by the VCS Consortium. A joint response was provided by two organisations, taking the total down to nine.

The main infrastructure services provided over the past three years include Researching Needs of Users, Having Your Say and Training, (all 78%). In contrast, Funding Information & Advice services, which attracted most interest from VCOs that participated in the demand survey, were only provided by four of the infrastructure suppliers. Generally speaking there would appear to be some evidence of a

mismatch between demand and supply, although without a fuller consideration of all suppliers and the capacity of each to deliver services, this cannot be stated with any degree of certainty.

Email and websites are becoming more prevalent as medium of delivery, largely due to the resource implications of delivering services in person.

Whilst specific gaps in service delivery have been identified, particularly relating to ICT, finance, training and mentoring, the biggest issue with the service delivery in Northumberland is the lack of coherence and uncertainty over who does what in Northumberland. This needs to be tackled in order to ensure that VCOs requiring support do not slip through the net. There are a number of solutions: certainly a directory of provision would be useful to help both suppliers and VCOs understand what services are available and from whom. From a demand point of view, this will reduce barriers to access and from a supply perspective, would help improve referrals between organisations. Secondly, there is also the need for a more proactive approach to marketing of infrastructure services, which the production of a directory will help to facilitate.

With regards to the future, anticipated service delivery is not to differ to that supplied over the past three years. The most notable change is the number of suppliers, as one of the 10 interviewees felt unable to say what they will be delivering in the future, due to uncertainty over future funding streams. In spite of the gaps in provision highlighted above - particularly ICT, finance, training and mentoring provision for VCO staff and volunteers – the number of organisations providing services in these areas is expected to either fall or remain unchanged over the next three years.



## 1.0 INTRODUCTION

The Voluntary & Community Sector Consortium commissioned the Northumberland Information Network (InfoNet) to undertake a demand and supply assessment of infrastructure support within the voluntary and community sector in Northumberland. The study included a survey of frontline voluntary and community organisations (VCOs) delivering services in Northumberland to measure potential future demand for infrastructure support and to collate information on how and where services should be delivered. From the supply side, the study also included discussions with Infrastructure providers to ensure that potential future demand and supply are aligned.

The findings from the study will:

- Contribute to a VCS Development Strategy for 2006-2014.
- Inform and influence suppliers and funders of infrastructure support about the scale and nature of potential demand.
- Determine the reach, take-up and usefulness of the ChangeUp funded infrastructure projects.
- Enable the sector to contribute to strategic policy development.

This remainder of the report is split into 5 sections:

- Methodology
- Survey Sample
- Demand Assessment
- Supply Assessment
- Summary and Recommendations



## 2.0 METHODOLOGY

### 2.1 Overview

This is essentially a demand and supply study for infrastructure services required to facilitate the activities of frontline VCOs in Northumberland. On the **demand side**, many VCOs require and access a range of support and advice services to ensure sufficient:

- Knowledge and skills in relation to funding, new initiatives, procurement, ICT, finance, performance, people management and marketing.
- Connections with other VCOs and influencing outside organisations.
- Physical structures, such as buildings and equipment.
- Structures and systems relating to organisational form and governance.

On the **supply side**, infrastructure support to VCOs is provided by a number of organisations both within and outside of the county and offering different levels of service. Primary Infrastructure Organisations (PIO) are organisations that are dedicated to providing infrastructure support to VCOs; Secondary Infrastructure Organisations (SIO) are generally other voluntary & community groups whose primary focus is not the delivery of infrastructure support, but that may provide some or all of them to their own branches or members. In addition, organisations from outside of the voluntary and community sector also provide infrastructure services and are termed Tertiary Infrastructure Organisations (TIO).

### 2.2 Demand Study

During 2006, Community Action Northumberland updated and extended the VCO database established by the InfoNet in 2005. The database contains details of almost 1,000 organisations, from which a sample of almost 400 was drawn by the VCO Sector Development Officer. The number of organisations included in the sample from each local authority district is proportional to their share of total population in the County. The sample was selected randomly, although narrow interest groups were generally excluded.

Whilst the previous demand study undertaken by Research Solutions (Sept 2004) was based around 100+ telephone interviews, which are useful in ensuring that the questionnaires are all answered correctly and in collecting other more qualitative information, the available budget and the requirement for a 25%-plus return meant that this was not feasible. Instead, the InfoNet designed a **postal questionnaire** that sought to collect the following data:

- **Overview of the organisation:** number of paid staff & volunteers, turnover/income, Charity Commission Classification for purpose, client group and function, remit area and branch/head office status.
- **Past demand for infrastructure:** historic/recent use of infrastructure support services by type and provider; satisfaction with each type of support received.
- **Barriers to Accessing Support:** have there been any problems in accessing support, due to for example lack of resources, time, expense or locations.
- **Future Demand for Infrastructure Services:** what type of advice will VCOs like to access in the future; do they anticipate any barriers to access; and how would they like to access support.

The demand study also measured awareness and use of infrastructure projects established through the ChangeUp Investment Programme; and how these have impacted on demand for infrastructure and service delivery.

The survey was undertaken during January 2007, followed by intensive chasing-up of non-respondents by Community Action Northumberland staff during the first two weeks of February.

As the postal questionnaire was quantitative by design, the InfoNet undertook follow-up telephone interviews with 10 respondents to collect more qualitative information. Candidates for telephone interview were selected by the InfoNet based on their responses to the postal survey, although efforts were taken to speak to organisations across a range of sizes, functions and locations.

Overall, responses to the postal survey were received from 96 organisations giving a response rate of 25% (which is an exceptional return for surveys of this type) and representing approximately 10% of VCOs on the Northumberland database.

## 2.3 Supply Study

The supply side survey was essentially a brief mapping exercise of the main infrastructure organisations that deliver support to VCOs in Northumberland. Community Action Northumberland provided details of 11 organisations, 10 of which were interviewed by telephone and one face to face. The supply side survey sought to establish:

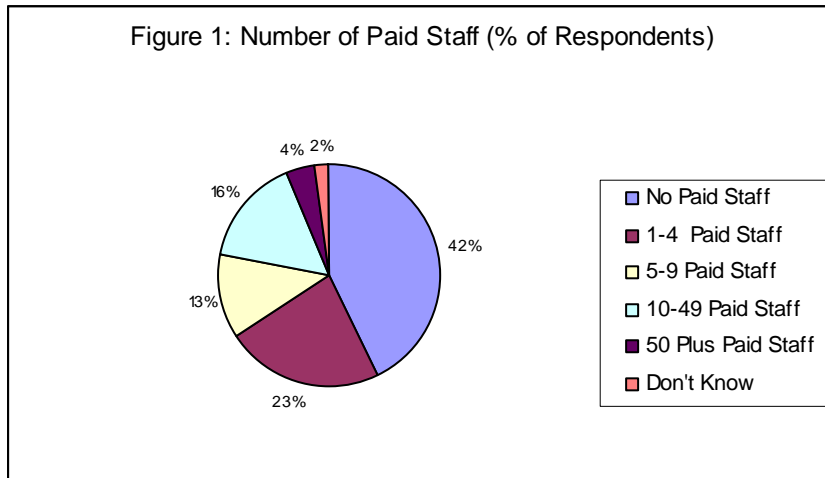
- What services are provided in Northumberland and how this has changed over the past 2 years?
- What changes are anticipated for service delivery over the next 2 years?
- Any other issues that face service delivery, such as funding and staffing resources.

By comparing the results of the demand and supply side surveys, it has been possible to identify potential gaps in provision and mismatches between demand and supply between the VCOs and infrastructure organisations.



### 3.0 SURVEY SAMPLE

Figures 1 to 10 below describe the characteristics of the 96 organisations that responded to the postal survey in terms of size, status and focus.



Referring to Figure 1, just over two-fifths (41 or 43%) of the respondents do not employ any paid staff and amongst those that do, the majority employ between 1 and 4 people (22 or 23%). In contrast, only four organisations (4%) have more than 50 paid employees.

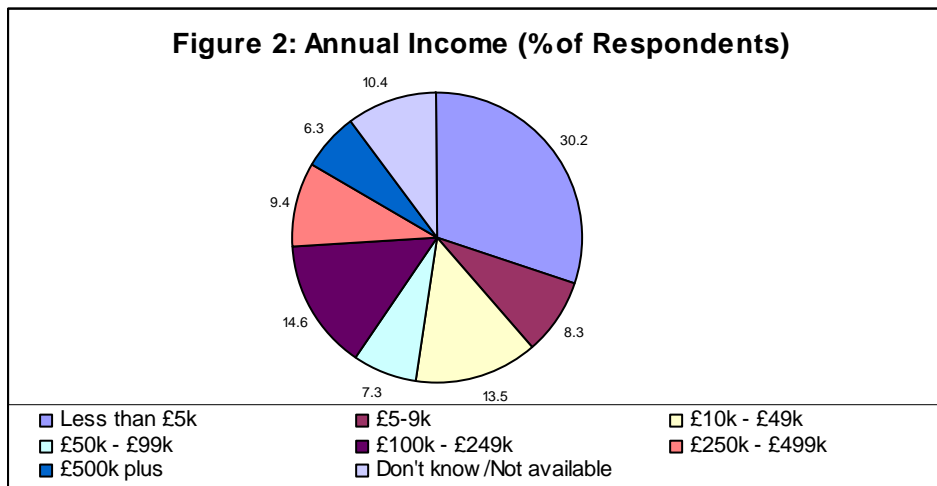
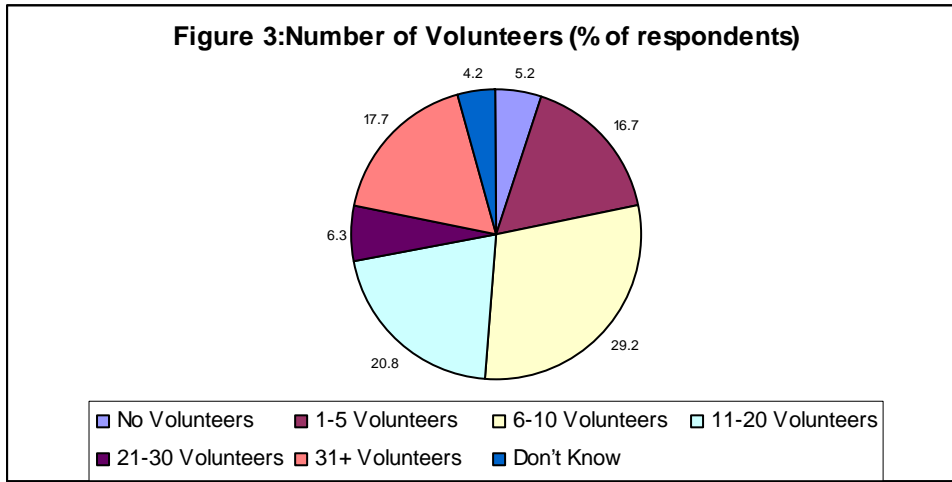


Figure 2 shows that the majority of organisations have a low income base, with almost one third (29 or 30%) reporting an annual income of less than £5,000. In contrast, the same number of respondents reported income in excess of £100,000 pa.



The largest proportion of respondents have between 6 and 10 volunteers (28 or 29%), followed by those with between 11 and 20 (20 or 21%). In contrast, only 5 (5%) respondents said that they have not recruited any volunteer workers.

Respondents were classified using the Charity Commission Classification Scheme, which has three strands:

- Organisation purpose
- Client Group
- Functions

**Figure 4: Client Group**

	Frequency	Percent
General Public	62	64.6
Children / Young People	26	27.1
People with Disabilities/Special Needs	19	19.8
Elderly / Older People	15	15.6
Other Charities/ Voluntary Groups	12	12.5
Other Defined Groups	11	11.5
People Not in Paid Employment	10	10.4
Women Only	6	6.3
Victims of Crime	5	5.2
BME Group	3	3.1
Other	3	3.1
N=	96	

Respondents were asked to provide details of the client groups that they support through their frontline service delivery, the results of which are set out in Figure 4. It should be noted, however, that many organisations have multiple client groups and therefore the figures total more than 100%. Almost two-thirds of organisations

provide services to the general public (62 or 65%), followed by those supporting children & young people (26 or 27%) and people with disabilities or special needs (19 or 20%).

	Frequency	Percent
Provides services (e.g. care/counselling)	29	30.2
Community Development	28	29.2
Provides advocacy/advice/Information	24	25.0
Provides building/facilities/open space	22	22.9
Other	22	22.9
Act as an umbrella or resource body	15	15.6
Sponsors or undertakes research	4	4.2
Provides staff/volunteers to other organ	4	4.2
Provides finance/investment fund	4	4.2
Provides grants to other organisations	4	4.2
Provides grants to individuals	3	3.1
N=	96	100.0

Referring to Figure 5, the majority of respondents provide services to the community, such as care or counselling (29 or 30%), closely followed by Community Development (28 to 29%). Other significant functions include provision of Advocacy, Advice & Information (25%), and Buildings, Facilities and Open Space.

	Frequency	Percent
Education/Training	33	34.4
Economic & community Development	30	31.3
Sports/Recreation	29	30.2
Arts/Culture	23	24.0
Disability	20	20.8
Environment/Conservation/Heritage	19	19.8
Other defined purposes	17	17.7
General charitable purposes	16	16.7
Medical Health/Sickness	14	14.6
Relief of Poverty	13	13.5
Accommodation housing	6	6.3
Religious activities	4	4.2
N=	96	100.0

With regards to main purpose of the organisation, more than one-third of respondents provide Education and Training (33 or 34%), followed by Economic & Community Development (31%) and Sports & Recreation (30%). (Figure 6)

Figure 7: Is your organisation/office independent or a local branch of a larger organisation?		
	Frequency	Percent
Main or only Office	70	73.7
Branch	12	12.6
Private address	13	13.7
Total	95	100.0

Almost three quarters of respondents were the main or only office of the organisations, indicating a high degree of autonomy within the sample. In terms of location, the sample is fairly evenly spread between districts, with the exception of Berwick upon Tweed, which attracted responses from just eight VCOs. (Figure 8)

Figure 8: Location of VCO		
	Frequency	Percent
Alnwick	17	17.7
Berwick upon Tweed	8	8.3
Blyth Valley	14	14.6
Castle Morpeth	22	22.9
Tynedale	17	17.7
Wansbeck	17	17.7
Other	1	1.0
N=	96	100.0

In addition to the location of their office or premises, each respondent was also asked to indicate the geographic extent of their service delivery by district and also be Belonging Community. At a district level, service provision is quite evenly spread across the County, with the exception Berwick upon Tweed which is lagging the other five districts slightly.

Figure 9: Service Delivery: Geographic Coverage by District		
	Frequency	Percent
Alnwick	24	25.26
Berwick-upon-Tweed	17	17.9
Blyth Valley	21	22.1
Castle Morpeth	22	23.2
Tynedale	21	22.1
Wansbeck	22	23.2
Countywide	18	18.9
N=	95	100.0

The question relating to Belonging Communities was less well answered by respondents. Nevertheless, the principal towns in Northumberland (Alnwick,

Ashington, Blyth, Morpeth and Hexham) and clearly better supported by the VCS than some of the more rural or fringe settlements.

Figure 10: Service Delivery: Geographic Coverage by Belonging Community		
	Frequency	Percent
Alnwick	16	24.6
East Ashington	16	24.6
Blyth	15	23.1
Morpeth	14	21.5
West Ashington	14	21.5
Hexham & Hexhamshire	13	20.0
Choppington, Stakeford & Guidepost	12	18.5
Haltwhistle & West Tyne	11	16.9
Prudhoe & East Tynedale	11	16.9
Berwick & Islandshire	10	15.4
Cramlington	10	15.4
Ponteland	10	15.4
East Bedlington	10	15.4
Seahouses & Belford	9	13.8
Seaton Valley	9	13.8
North Tyne & Redesdale	9	13.8
Mid Tyne	8	12.3
Allendale	8	12.3
Newbiggin	8	12.3
West Bedlington	8	12.3
Amble	7	10.8
Glendale	7	10.8
Chevington, Ellington, Lynemouth & Linton	7	10.8
Coquetdale	6	9.2
Widdrington	5	7.7
Rural west	3	4.6
N=	65	



## **4.0 DEMAND FOR INFRASTRUCTURE SERVICES**

The postal survey was designed to elicit information on a number of issues:

- Past use of infrastructure services
- Satisfaction with and impact of services accessed
- Barriers to access
- Potential future demand
- Gaps in provision.

### **4.1 Past Use of Infrastructure Services**

Infrastructure support services were deemed fundamentally important by organisations interviewed as part of the survey, whether it relates to setting up an EBay project or advice on legal protocols.

Business areas covered by infrastructure support include-

- Technological help/support
- Marketing
- Legal protocols
- Strategic planning
- Fundraising
- Staff training
- Advice on contracts of employment
- HR advice
- Health & safety advice
- Developing Terms & Conditions
- General information and guidance
- Management training
- Providing membership to information sources

Referring to Figure 11, all 96 respondents had accessed at least one of the listed services during the previous three years and many had accessed more than type of external support.

Figure 11: Services Accessed Past 3 Years?		
	Frequency	Percent
Funding Information/Advice	59	61.5
Policies & Procedures & regulations	39	40.6
Networking with Others	36	37.5
Business/strategic planning	32	33.3
Attracting New Members/Users	32	33.3
Finding/Keeping Volunteers	30	31.3
Employing Staff	27	28.1
Developing New Projects	26	27.1
Monitoring & Evaluating Projects	21	21.9
ICT	21	21.9
Researching Needs of Users	17	17.7
Marketing	17	17.7
Managing Money	16	16.7
Forming your group	15	15.6
Being open & Accountable	15	15.6
Managing Projects	13	13.5
Office Administration	12	12.5
Selling Services to public bodies	11	11.5
Managing premises/equipment	10	10.4
Having Your Say	10	10.4
Other (Please Specify)	2	2.1
N=	96	

The most common type of support accessed is funding information and advice, received by almost two-thirds of organisations (59 or 62%). Other key areas include Policies, Procedures & Regulations (41%), Networking with Others (38%), Business & Strategic Planning (33%) and Attracting New Members/Users (33%)

At a district level, there are significant differences in the services accessed by respondents over the period. In all cases, Funding Information & Advice was the main service accessed ranging from 82% of respondents in Blyth Valley to 53% of those located in Berwick upon Tweed. However, other services accessed were more variable. In particular, access to business and strategic planning was significant in Wansbeck (47%); Finding & Keeping Volunteers was notable in Castle Morpeth (53%) and Developing New Projects in Berwick upon Tweed (63%). (See Figure 11a, Appendix 1)

Notable differences are also apparent between those organisations that employ paid staff and those that don't. A higher proportion of respondents with paid employees had accessed 20 of the 21 services, with significantly higher proportions reported in

respect of Business & Strategic Planning, Policies & Procedures and (perhaps not surprisingly) Employing Staff! (See Figure 11b, Appendix 1) Research Solutions (2004) attribute this pattern to organisational development, whereby increasing organisation size (as measured by number of paid employees) will at some point trigger demand for infrastructure support. Similarly, as VCOs expand and widen their geographical presence and become more mature, they are less likely to seek advice. Thus, it comes as no surprise that there is a lower propensity for branch organisations to access external support. Funding advice was the main type of help sought by both local (80%) and branch organisations (58%). For local VCOs, funding was followed by Policies, Procedures & Regulations (58%) and Attracting New Members/Users (53%). (See Figure 11c, Appendix 1)

Due to low frequency counts, it was difficult to draw any firm conclusions about propensity to access services by client group, function or purpose of the respondent organisations.

Organisations source infrastructure support from a range of sources. Some have the backing of a national body which is able to provide all the information and services they require, whilst others look to formal public bodies such as Social Enterprise Northumberland and Business Link, and some to private companies to fulfil their needs. Some areas of support are delivered as training using a personal face to face approach. However, more general information is delivered in an electrical format via email or through a website. In addition, a number of organisations also cited local networks and associations as valuable sources of information relating directly to their organisation

Referring to Figure 12, almost three quarters of respondents sourced external support from their local council (69 or 72%), followed by national organisations such as the Charities Commission (59 or 62%). Respondents were asked to score the service that they received from each type of organisation, where a rank of 1 is very useful and 5 is not at all useful. Of particular note is the high level of satisfaction in the support services received from within the recipient organisation: almost three quarters scoring the service received as very useful or useful (rank 1 or 2). In contrast, more than half of organisations (53%) ranked support received through Rural Voices at 4 or 5. Rural Voice is essentially an information portal for organisations, residents and stakeholders located in the four rural districts in

Northumberland. Eliminating scoring of Rural Voice by VCOs located in South East Northumberland reduces the proportion of respondents ranking support received as not useful from 53% to 48%.

At a district level, support received from within the organisation was ranked highest amongst VCO's in Alnwick and Tynedale, with an average score of 1.8 and 1.71 respectively. In contrast, the most highly rated source of support in Blyth Valley and Wansbeck were the local CVS (1.75 and 2.0 respectively); in Castle Morpeth it was National Organisations (1.93) and in Berwick it was general websites. (See Figure 12a, Appendix 1).

Figure 12: Where do you obtain most of your information from?

	Rank					N=	%
	1	2	3	4	5		
Your local district/borough council	29.0	18.8	29.0	15.9	7.2	69	71.9
National organisations (Charity Commission etc)	22.0	28.8	23.7	16.9	8.5	59	61.5
Community Action Northumberland (formerly CCN)	25.0	17.9	25.0	25.0	7.1	56	58.3
General websites	16.3	32.7	30.6	10.2	10.2	49	51.0
Local community/parish newsletters	18.2	25.0	25.0	18.2	13.6	44	45.8
Headquarters of your organisation	46.5	25.6	9.3	2.3	16.3	43	44.8
Friends and family	19.0	23.8	31.0	11.9	14.3	42	43.8
Wansbeck CVS	17.1	24.4	17.1	12.2	29.3	41	42.7
Blyth Valley CVS	17.5	15.0	25.0	2.5	40.0	40	41.7
Development Trusts/Partnerships	20.5	15.4	25.6	25.6	12.8	39	40.6
Private sector (solicitors, accountants etc)	11.8	35.3	14.7	20.6	17.6	34	35.4
Rural Voices	8.8	11.8	26.5	26.5	26.5	34	35.4
Volunteer Centres	0.0	16.7	43.3	23.3	16.7	30	31.3
NALC	17.9	7.1	25.0	7.1	42.9	28	29.2
NCDN	0.0	14.8	40.7	18.5	25.9	27	28.1
Other (Please Specify	47.1	29.4	11.8	0.0	11.8	17	17.7

In addition to ranking the provider organisation, respondents were also asked to rank importance of the services received and the impact they had on organisational performance and service delivery.

The greatest importance was attributed to Office Administration, Researching Needs of Users and Managing Money, with 80 of users ranking the service as being very important or important. In contrast, less importance was attributed to:

- Being Open & Accountable (23%)
- Selling services to public bodies (48%)
- Managing Projects (50%).

Figure 13: How Important Were the Services Received? (Rank where 1 is very important and 5 is not at all important)

	Rank				
	1	2	3	4	5
Forming your group	66.7	6.7	6.7	13.3	6.7
Business/strategic planning	38.7	32.3	12.9	9.7	6.5
Managing Projects	23.1	0.0	61.5	7.7	7.7
Being open & Accountable	66.7	13.3	0.0	13.3	6.7
Finding/Keeping Volunteers	41.4	27.6	17.2	6.9	6.9
Employing Staff	37.0	33.3	18.5	7.4	3.7
Funding Information/Advice	53.6	26.8	12.5	5.4	1.8
Office Administration	45.5	27.3	18.2	0.0	9.1
Managing Money	33.3	33.3	20.0	6.7	6.7
Managing premises/equipment	30.0	30.0	20.0	0.0	20.0
Policies & Procedures & regulations	44.4	30.6	19.4	0.0	5.6
Monitoring & Evaluating Projects	45.0	25.0	15.0	5.0	10.0
Researching Needs of Users	44.4	33.3	22.2	0.0	0.0
Developing New Projects	41.7	25.0	25.0	4.2	4.2
Attracting New Members/Users	43.3	23.3	26.7	0.0	6.7
Having Your Say	60.0	20.0	10.0	0.0	10.0
Networking with Others	40.5	27.0	24.3	8.1	0.0
ICT	14.3	33.3	23.8	19.0	9.5
Selling Services to public bodies	25.0	33.3	25.0	8.3	8.3
Marketing	27.8	38.9	27.8	0.0	5.6
Other (Please Specify)	50.0	0.0	0.0	0.0	50.0

Figure 14 refers to impact on service delivery and achieving organisational goals. In summary:

- 26 of the 33 organisations that accessed external support with Policies, Procedures & Regulations said that it had been useful or very useful in helping to improve service delivery and performance (79%)
- 20 of the 28 organisations that accessed external support with Business and Strategic Planning ranked the service received as useful or very useful (71%).

- In contrast, only five of the 15 VCO's that received external assistance with Researching the Need of Users said that the service had been useful or very useful.

Figure 14: How useful were the services received in helping your organisation to improve service delivery or achieve organisational goals? (1 is very useful and 5 is not all useful)

	Rank					N=
	1	2	3	4	5	
Forming your group	54.5	18.2	9.1	9.1	9.1	11
Business/strategic planning	21.4	50.0	28.6	0.0	0.0	28
Managing Projects	25.0	8.3	50.0	16.7	0.0	12
Being open & Accountable	37.5	25.0	18.8	12.5	6.3	16
Finding/Keeping Volunteers	29.2	25.0	16.7	12.5	16.7	24
Employing Staff	20.0	50.0	25.0	5.0	0.0	20
Funding Information/Advice	44.2	25.0	23.1	5.8	1.9	52
Office Administration	45.5	18.2	27.3	0.0	9.1	11
Managing Money	25.0	33.3	25.0	8.3	8.3	12
Managing premises/equipment	33.3	22.2	11.1	0.0	33.3	9
Policies & Procedures & regulations	39.4	39.4	12.1	6.1	3.0	33
Monitoring & Evaluating Projects	36.8	26.3	26.3	10.5	0.0	19
Researching Needs of Users	6.3	25.0	62.5	0.0	6.3	16
Developing New Projects	10.5	36.8	42.1	5.3	5.3	19
Attracting New Members/Users	17.4	30.4	34.8	8.7	8.7	23
Having Your Say	44.4	22.2	0.0	11.1	22.2	9
Networking with Others	24.2	36.4	18.2	15.2	6.1	33
ICT	16.7	38.9	27.8	11.1	5.6	18
Selling Services to public bodies	11.1	33.3	22.2	0.0	33.3	9
Marketing	0.0	57.1	28.6	14.3	0.0	14
Other (Please Specify)	33.3	33.3	0.0	0.0	33.3	3

Amongst VCOs with no paid staff, the usefulness of Funding Advice and Information was ranked the highest with an average score of 1.65 (based on responses from 17 recipient organisations). This was followed by Forming Your Group (1.8) and Having Your Say (2.0). In contrast, the usefulness of help with Employing Staff was ranked the highest amongst those respondents with paid staff (1.88), followed by Office Administration (1.89) and Policies, Procedures & Regulations (2.0). (See Figure 14b, Appendix 1)

At a district level there were few significant differences to report. Perhaps the only exception being the importance placed on Funding Advice & Information amongst respondents in Blyth Valley (average score 1.75) and Wansbeck (1.64) compared with the other four districts and the usefulness of services relating to Finding & Keeping Volunteers amongst recipients in Berwick upon Tweed and Wansbeck (both 1.5). (Figure 14a, Appendix 1)

Based on telephone interviews with 10 VCO's, comments received on the overall the effects of the infrastructure support on the organisations were generally very positive:

*"The Trust is more entrepreneurial now"*

*"Marvellous, couldn't run without it"*

*"It's given us reassurance"*

*"Now able to help clients more"*

*"It's created a massive shift from where we were"*

*"Invaluable"*

However, one organisation did not feel the infrastructure support they received was very helpful and expressed concerns with the knowledge of the person that came out to visit them.

**Case Study:**

In the early days advice was received on legal protocols. This support moved on to encompass technology and marketing support as well. Someone would come out to the office to provide help. In turn the support received increased the organisations confidence and built a 'can do' attitude. The only negative aspect about the support received was having to *'jump through hoops'* in order to secure funding.

**Case Study:**

Several members of staff went on a management training course, requiring one day per week for 10 weeks out of the office. The course included people from a number of organisations from across the local area. The course had a *'massive impact'* on the organisation, creating a shift from where they were onto a social enterprise arrangement. Through this course the organisation was able to learn how best to deliver their services.

**4.2 Barriers to Access**

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Overall, almost one third of respondents (22 or 32%) said that they had experienced barriers in accessing infrastructure services over the past three years (Figure 15).

Figure 15: Have you experienced any barriers in accessing infrastructure support services over the past three years?		
	Frequency	Percent
Yes	29	32.2
No	61	67.8
N=	90	100.0

At a district level, more than two fifths of respondents in both Berwick upon Tweed (3 or 43%) and Castle Morpeth (9 or 30%) reported barriers, compared with less than one quarter of VCO's located in Blyth Valley (3 or 23%). In addition, a larger proportion of VCOs with paid staff (21 or 41%) experienced barriers, compared with less than one-quarter of those with no paid staff (8 or 22%). Also of note is the low proportion of organisations in the smallest (less than £5,000 pa) income size range that reported barriers (11%) compared with the other income ranges and those in the £50-99k band in particular (71%); and the substantial difference recorded between main office (36%) and branch organisations (9%) (Figures 15a-d, Appendix 1) This is likely to be attributed to the different stages of development of respondent VCOs, with less mature organisations not employing paid staff (and potentially in the smallest income band) less likely to demand services.

Figure 16: What barriers to access did you face?		
	Frequency	Percent
Too Expensive/lack of funding	14	50.0
Don't Meet Eligibility Criteria	10	35.7
Don't Know Where to Access Support	9	32.1
Not aware of Services	8	28.6
Time	8	28.6
Other (Please Specify	6	21.4
No support available locally	5	17.9
N=	28	100.0

The main barrier faced (Figure 16) by respondents was the perceived cost of accessing external support and services, cited by half of the organisations that answered this question. It was suggested by one organisation that where support is not free, it would be useful if the support providers could source details of appropriate funding to apply for.

Cost was followed issues with eligibility criteria (10 or 36%) and a lack of awareness of where to go to access support (9 or 32%).

*“Where/who should I go to for support?”*

*“There is a one size fits all attitude”*

*“People need to have more of a rounded idea of what is going on and what’s out there...we need to have a body that is able to answer all questions”*

*“I don’t know what’s out there”*

One interviewee suggested that a directory of services in Northumberland would be helpful, but also question the difficulties associated with preparing a publication that would cover all of the information and support required by all types of VCO.

Through the telephone interviews, issues relating to the specialist knowledge required to deliver advice and support to the VCS were raised and the extent to which a lack of knowledge impacts on the quality of the service provided and effectively creates a barrier for the future.

*“The consultant needs to be a real person; they need to understand the organisation”*

*“More in-depth knowledge is required from the people who provide the support”*

More generally, a lack of coherence in infrastructure service provision was highlighted through telephone interviews. Indeed, one respondent recalled being *“pushed along a conveyor belt, signposted from one organisation to another, none of which were able provide the help required.”*

At a district level there were significant differences in responses provided:

- Expense was cited by the largest proportion of respondents in four of the six districts (Berwick, Castle Morpeth, Tyne dale and Wansbeck)

- In Blyth Valley the main barriers was ineligibility, whilst in Alnwick and Berwick a large proportion of recipients do not know where to access support services.

In addition, three fifths of respondents with paid staff cited expense as the main barrier, compared with just one quarter of those with no paid staff; whilst cost was referred to by more than half of independent organisations compared with none of the branch office respondents. (Figures 16a-c, Appendix 1)

### 4.3 Impact of the ChangeUp Investment Programme

The demand study also sought to measure awareness and use of infrastructure projects established through the ChangeUp Investment Programme during 2006; and how these may have impacted on demand for infrastructure and service delivery. Referring to Figure 17, 63 of the 96 respondents (66%) were **aware** of at least one of the ChangeUp-funded services and 25 had **accessed** at least one of the services (26%). Of those aware of the services, almost two third were familiar with Volunteering Advice & Support for Organisations/Groups (40 or 64%), followed by Information Computer Technology Support Services (38 or 60%) and Learning (38 or 60%). In terms of access, 10 of the 25 (40%) had used ICT support services; whilst only two of the 25 (8%) had accessed Financial Management Support Services.

Figure 17: Which ChangeUp services have you a) heard of and b) accessed				
	Aware of	%	Accessed/Used	%
Information Computer Technology support services	38	60.3	10	40.0
Learning	38	60.3	5	20.0
Equality & Diversity development	26	41.3	5	20.0
Backfill Project	37	58.7	6	24.0
Financial Management Support Services	25	39.7	2	8.0
Volunteering Advice & Support for organisations/groups	40	63.5	8	32.0
N=	63	100.0	25	100.0

At a district level, awareness was highest in Wansbeck (15 or 88%) and Berwick (6 or 75%) and lowest in Castle Morpeth (11 or 50%). Awareness was also higher amongst VCO's with paid staff than amongst those with no paid staff (71% and 54% respectively); and higher amongst independent VCO's than branch offices (71% and 50%, respectively) (Figures 17a-c, Appendix 1)

With regards to usage, a higher proportion of respondents from Wansbeck (8 or 36%) had accessed ChangeUp-funded services than the other five districts, and contrasts markedly with Blyth Valley (1 or 5%) and Alnwick (2 or 8%) in particular. In four of the six districts (Alnwick, Berwick, Tynedale and Wansbeck) the majority of users had accessed ICT support, whilst in Blyth Valley and Castle Morpeth the majority had accessed Equality & Diversity Development. Two fifths of VCOs with paid staff accessed ChangeUp services, compared with only 7% of those without paid staff. (Figures 17d-f) In the case of the former, 10 of the 22 (46%) users had accessed ICT support; whilst in the latter two of the three users had accessed Volunteering Advice & Support. (Figure 17d-f)

Figure 18: How useful were the services received in helping your organisation improve service delivery or achieve organisational goals?						
	Rank					N=
	1	2	3	4	5	
Information Computer Technology support services	0.0	23.5	29.4	29.4	17.6	17
Learning	22.2	27.8	27.8	5.6	16.7	18
Equality & Diversity development	21.4	14.3	14.3	28.6	21.4	14
Backfill Project	8.3	16.7	33.3	8.3	33.3	12
Financial Management Support Services	22.2	0.0	33.3	11.1	33.3	9
Volunteering Advice & Support for organisations/groups	16.7	8.3	58.3	16.7	0.0	12

Figure 18 refers to impact of ChangeUp-funded support on service delivery and achieving organisational goals. In summary:

- 9 of the 18 organisations that accessed community developed accredited learning said that it had been useful or very useful in helping to improve service delivery and performance (50%)

- 5 of the 14 organisations that accessed external support with Equality & Diversity Development ranked the service received as useful or very useful (36%).

In contrast, only two of the nine VCO's that accessed Financial Management Support Services said that the service had been useful or very useful.

Due to low sample sizes, it is difficult to draw any firm conclusions at a district level, other than to say that there was perhaps a level of dissatisfaction amongst the Tynedale and Alnwick-based recipients in terms of the usefulness of the ChangeUp-funded support programmes; and generally a higher level of satisfaction amongst those located in Berwick upon Tweed and Wansbeck. Similarly, organisations without paid staff generally found the services less useful than organisations with paid staff. (Figures 18a-c, Appendix 1)

Opinions on the services delivered through the ChangeUp programme collected through the telephone interviews were mixed:

Organisations received services from the ChangeUp programme in a number of different formats. For example, informal communication links, attending a talk and receiving technical support at their offices. One attendee felt that talk was *'dreadful, boring and patronising;*' that the content was of little relevance; and felt that the talk should have been led by a more professional organisation.

In contrast, the technical support was better received. The support received by one interviewee, which was provided free of charge, consisted of PC health checks across the organisation, followed by maintenance to eradicate any identified problems. It was commented that:

*"...the service saved us time, whilst making our lives easier."  
"We could not have put a cost on this service"*

However, technical support received by another organisation was not well received, with the complainant referring to a lack of knowledge and understanding about the client and what they specifically required with regards to technological support.

### 4.3 Future demand for Infrastructure Services

Respondents were asked a number of questions relating to potential future demand for infrastructure services, including any perceived barriers to access and gaps in provision. All of the organisations interviewed as part of the telephone survey described their medium to long-term vision around the need for organisational survival, in particular:

*“Continuing to generate earned income”*

*“Staying open”*

*“Keeping going”*

*“Retaining clients”*

*“Expansion”*

*“Continue delivering services”*

*“Expand trading side of the business”*

*“Develop a social enterprise”*

*“Maintain current service level”*

A number of the organisations linked their objectives for the future with the need for continued or additional infrastructure support. Areas of support referred to included funding, accountancy support and practical support to make premises accessible for disabled people. In contrast, one organisation felt that infrastructure support would not be integral to achieving their objectives as it involved too much internal politics, especially with local government and the health care service.

Overall, 86 of the 96 respondents indicated the likelihood of their organisation accessing each of the 20 listed infrastructure services using a scoring system where 1 is very likely and 5 is very unlikely.

Overall, 48 VCO's said that they were likely or very likely to access Funding Information & Advice over the next three years, representing more than three quarters of respondents that had scored the service. Other services expected to attract substantial interest in the future include

- Attracting new members and users (66%)
- Networking with others (66%)
- Policies and Procedures (63%)

- Finding Keeping Volunteers (60%)

In contrast, more than half of respondents that scored each of the services, said that that they were unlikely or very unlikely to access external support on Managing Money, Recruiting & Retaining Staff, Office Administration, Being Open & Accountable and Forming Your Group.

Figure 19: Which forms of infrastructure support are you most likely to require over the next three years?

	Rank					N=
	1	2	3	4	5	
Forming your group	12.5	4.2	4.2	0.0	79.2	24
Business/strategic planning	27.5	25.0	15.0	5.0	27.5	40
Managing Projects	20.5	25.6	12.8	7.7	33.3	39
Being open & Accountable	10.7	10.7	17.9	14.3	46.4	28
Finding/Keeping Volunteers	39.6	20.8	12.5	4.2	22.9	48
Recruiting/Retaining Staff	3.7	18.5	22.2	22.2	33.3	27
Funding Information/Advice	58.7	17.5	9.5	1.6	12.7	63
Office Administration	7.4	14.8	7.4	18.5	51.9	27
Managing Money	10.7	14.3	17.9	17.9	39.3	28
Managing premises/equipment	22.6	12.9	16.1	6.5	41.9	31
Policies & Procedures	28.9	34.2	13.2	5.3	18.4	38
Evaluating Projects	30.8	15.4	20.5	7.7	25.6	39
Researching Needs of Users	30.8	23.1	15.4	10.3	20.5	39
Developing New Projects	29.8	25.5	17.0	10.6	17.0	47
Attracting New Members/Users	37.5	28.6	12.5	1.8	19.6	56
Having Your Say	18.5	18.5	14.8	3.7	44.4	27
Networking with Others	31.7	34.1	7.3	2.4	24.4	41
ICT	12.5	37.5	25.0	6.3	18.8	32
Selling Services to public bodies	40.5	13.5	5.4	8.1	32.4	37
Marketing	29.7	18.9	18.9	16.2	16.2	37
Other (Please Specify)	0.0	0.0	25.0	0.0	75.0	4

At a district level, respondents in four of the six districts (Berwick upon Tweed, castle Morpeth, Tynedale & Wansbeck) indicated that they were most likely to access Funding Information & Advice (based on average scores). In contrast, in Blyth Valley Monitoring & Evaluation and Marketing scored the highest average score (albeit based on a low sample), whilst in Alnwick respondents are most likely to access support on Policies & Procedures. (Figure 19a, Appendix 1)

There are no significant differences to report when comparing VCO's with and without paid staff, nor between main office and branch organisations.

Figure 20: Do you anticipate any barriers in accessing infrastructure support services over the coming three years?		
	Frequency	Percent
Yes	36	37.5
No	26	27.1
Don't Know	33	34.4
N=	95	100.0

Respondents were asked whether they expected to face any barriers in accessing infrastructure services in the future, the results of which are set out in Figure 20. From this it can be seen that the number of VCO's anticipating barriers in the future is higher than the number that faced barriers over the previous three years, rising from 29 to 36 and from 32% of all respondents to 38%. The main barrier continues to be cost, cited by more than two-thirds of respondents, followed by time constraints and lack of awareness of services and where to access them.

At a district level, the proportion of respondents expecting problems in accessing services is highest in Berwick upon Tweed (75%), followed by Castle Morpeth (55%). In contrast, only 13% of respondents from Wansbeck and 14% from Blyth Valley have predicted barriers to access over the same period.

Figure 21: What Barriers to you Anticipate?		
	Frequency	Percent
Don't Meet Eligibility Criteria	8	23.53
Don't Know Where to Access Support	9	26.5
No support available locally	6	17.6
Not aware of Services	10	29.4
Time	13	38.2
Too Expensive/lack of funding	14	41.2
No External Support Needed	2	5.9
Other (Please Specify	2	5.9
N=	34	100.0

Propensity for barriers to access is higher amongst organisations with paid staff (47%) than those without (27%); and higher amongst independent bodies (42%) than those that are branches of larger organisations (33%). Also of note is the high proportion of respondents in the £50-90k (71%) and £500k plus (67%) income bands that have forecast barriers to access.

	Frequency	Percent
Yes	19	20.7
No	13	14.1
Don't Know	60	65.2
N=	92	100.0

Only one fifth of respondents (19 or 21%) felt that there are gaps in infrastructure service provision in Northumberland. The remaining 73 respondents have either indicated that no gaps exist (13 or 14%) or don't really know (60 or 65%).

Perception of gaps is:

- Highest amongst respondents from Berwick (50%) and lowest in Wansbeck (6%);
- Higher amongst organisations with paid staff (29%) than those without paid employees (10%)
- Higher amongst independent organisations (24%) than branches (9%)
- Highest amongst organisations in the £250k-£500k income band (50%) than other income ranges. (Figure 22a-d, Appendix 1)

One of the gaps in infrastructure support is perceived to be a lack of people with specialist knowledge. A number of the organisations that took part in the telephone survey felt that the support network does not include sufficient **people** with the knowledge to understand their business and offer practical advice and support; and that the providers do not have the breadth of knowledge to offer a comprehensive service to all VCO's. A need for more peer support and to learn from others who have done well/achieved similar goals was identified as a possible solution to this problem.

*“We have just had to muddle along...we need help with selling and marketing but there is no one that can help us”*

**Case Study:**

Due to the low numbers of staff at the Infrastructure support provider it has not been possible to progress the Business Plan, having a fundamental impact on the organisation. Dedicated one to one service is required to progress this part of the organisation. Other organisations such as the Social Enterprise fund or the Northern Rock Foundation may be able to help.

Other perceived gaps include project evaluation, research for business planning, marketing and mentoring for volunteers.

Figure 23: How would you like to access infrastructure support services?

	Website/E-mail	Telephone	Regular Mailshots	In Person at Your Premises	In person but off-site	Other (Please specify)	N=
Forming your group	55.6	11.1	22.2	11.1	11.1	0.0	9
Business/strategic planning	25.8	3.2	9.7	58.1	12.9	0.0	31
Managing Projects	35.7	14.3	14.3	32.1	17.9	3.6	28
Being open & Accountable	35.3	5.9	23.5	11.8	23.5	5.9	17
Finding/Keeping Volunteers	51.3	12.8	41.0	28.2	15.4	0.0	39
Recruiting/Retaining Staff	63.2	5.3	36.8	10.5	10.5	5.3	19
Funding Information/Advice	34.5	16.4	32.7	30.9	14.5	1.8	55
Office Administration	42.9	35.7	21.4	14.3	0.0	0.0	14
Managing Money	50.0	16.7	22.2	5.6	5.6	0.0	18
Managing premises/equipment	47.6	0.0	28.6	23.8	14.3	0.0	21
Policies & Procedures	51.6	6.5	22.6	22.6	6.5	0.0	31
Evaluating Projects	34.8	13.0	26.1	30.4	30.4	0.0	23
Researching Needs of Users	41.4	6.9	17.2	37.9	20.7	0.0	29
Developing New Projects	31.0	6.9	20.7	31.0	24.1	0.0	29
Attracting New Members/Users	48.7	12.8	33.3	25.6	12.8	0.0	39
Having Your Say	43.8	12.5	25.0	25.0	25.0	0.0	16
Networking with Others	51.4	11.4	22.9	20.0	28.6	2.9	35
ICT	57.1	0.0	9.5	28.6	14.3	0.0	21
Selling Services to public bodies	31.6	10.5	10.5	42.1	31.6	5.3	19
Marketing	40.9	18.2	13.6	36.4	27.3	0.0	22
Other (Please Specify)	0.0	0.0	0.0	66.7	66.7	33.3	3

Respondents to the survey were also asked to indicate how they would like to be able to access each type of infrastructure support service. The results are set out in Figure 23 below.

Overall, via a website or by email was the preferred method of access for the largest proportion of respondents in respect of the 20 Infrastructure services listed in the Figure. The exceptions to this are Business & Strategic Planning and Selling Services to Public Bodies, for which almost three fifths and two-fifths of respondents, respectively, would like to access services in person on their own premises.

Due to low frequency counts when responses are broken down by type of service and delivery method, it has not been possible to draw any firm conclusions at a district, sizeband and status level.

## 5.0 SUPPLY OF INFRASTRUCTURE SERVICES

The supply side survey has essentially involved a brief mapping exercise of the services provided by the main infrastructure organisations active in Northumberland. Community Action Northumberland provided details of 11 organisations, 10 of which were interviewed by telephone and one face to face. A list of the organisations interviewed is included in Appendix 2. The organisations were selected on the basis that they are the main VCS support providers in the County, some of which are Primary Infrastructure Organisations (PIO) that are dedicated to providing infrastructure support to VCOs; whilst others are voluntary & community groups whose primary focus is not the delivery of infrastructure support, but that provide services to members. The exception to this is FONDT (Federation of Northumberland Development Trusts) which acts as a facilitator for Development Trusts active in regeneration throughout the county.

It should be noted that there are substantial numbers of organisations outside of the voluntary and community sector that also provide infrastructure services (Tertiary Infrastructure Organisations) the contributions of which are outside the scope of this study.

The supply side survey sought to establish:

- What services are provided in Northumberland and how this has changed over the past 2 years?
- What changes are anticipated for service delivery over the next 2 years?
- Any other issues that face service delivery, such as funding and staffing resources.

### 5.1 Overview of the Organisations

The participating organisations jointly provide infrastructure services countywide. Six organisations actually provide a countywide service and the remaining five cover five of the six Northumberland districts between them.

Allowing for crossovers, the eleven participating organisations are providing services to over 1,500 VCS groups. This figure may be increased to well over 4,000 in terms of basic service delivery, i.e. newsletter circulation, etc. Services are currently being delivered to volunteer groups, community organisations, groups that work with and for children and Development Trusts.

## 5.2 Current Service Delivery

Each of the 11 organisations interviewed were asked to provide details of the infrastructure services that they have provided to VCO's in Northumberland over the past 3 years. One of the organisations – FONDT – felt that it did not provide any of the services listed, either to its own members or to the wider community. A further two organisations – Wansbeck CVS and Castle Morpeth & Wansbeck Volunteer Centre – provided a joint response to the consultation.

Overall, 8 of the 9 (89%) Infrastructure Providers had delivered support with Policies and Procedures to Northumberland VCO's. Other notable services include:

- Researching needs of users (7 or 78%)
- Having your say (7 or 78%)
- Training (7 or 78%)

Of particular note, however, is that only four of the 10 organisations have provided services relating to Funding Information and Advice which, based on the results of the demand survey, was the area of support that had been accessed most by VCO's in the County over the past 3 years. It may be worthwhile giving closer consideration to this important area of support, by assessing the deliverable capacity of the 11 organisations interviewed and widening the net to include other smaller and private sector providers to ensure that there is equilibrium between demand and supply.

Figure 24: Supply of Infrastructure Services in Northumberland		
	Number of Organisations Providing Service	%
Policies & Procedures	8	88.9
Researching Needs of Users	7	77.8
Having Your Say	7	77.8
Training	7	77.8
Finding/Keeping Volunteers	6	66.7
Attracting New Members/Users	6	66.7
Networking with Others	6	66.7
Forming your group	5	55.6
Managing Projects	5	55.6
Recruiting/Retaining Staff	5	55.6
Evaluating Projects	5	55.6
Developing New Projects	5	55.6
Marketing	5	55.6
Business/strategic planning	4	44.4
Being open & Accountable	4	44.4
Funding Information/Advice	4	44.4
Office Administration	4	44.4
Managing Money	4	44.4
ICT	4	44.4
Selling Services to public bodies	4	44.4
Managing premises/equipment	3	33.3
Other (Please Specify)	2	22.2
N=	9	100.0

The method in which these services are provided largely depends on the nature and level of demand. Email and internet communication is becoming more prevalent because intensive one-to-one/in-person services are difficult to efficiently resource. In general terms most organisations feel that there have not been any significant changes in the type of service delivery provided in the past three years, however there is some concern that the level of intensity of these services has reduced. All organisations are working to full capacity at the present time and have little room to expand services or work more intensively without the provision of additional resources.

Figure 25: Method of Delivery								
	N=	Website/E-mail	Telephone	Regular Mailshots	Premises the clients In Person at	In person but off-site	In house	Training
Policies & Procedures	8	8	7	7	8	7	2	2
Researching Needs of Users	7	5	5	5	5	5	2	2
Having Your Say	7	6	5	5	5	5	2	2
Training	7	5	5	5	6	6	2	1
Finding/Keeping Volunteers	6	5	5	5	6	5	2	0
Attracting New Members/Users	6	6	6	6	5	5	2	1
Networking with Others	6	6	5	6	5	6	2	1
Forming your group	5	4	5	4	5	4	2	0
Managing Projects	5	5	5	5	5	5	2	1
Recruiting/Retaining Staff	5	3	4	3	5	4	2	1
Evaluating Projects	5	5	5	5	5	5	2	1
Developing New Projects	5	5	5	5	5	5	2	1
Marketing	5	5	4	4	4	4	2	0
Business/strategic planning	4	3	3	3	3	3	2	0
Being open & Accountable	4	4	4	4	5	4	2	1
Funding Information/Advice	4	3	3	4	4	3	2	0
Office Administration	4	3	4	3	4	3	2	0
Managing Money	4	3	3	3	3	4	2	0
ICT	4	4	4	4	4	4	2	1
Selling Services to public bodies	4	4	4	4	4	4	2	1
Managing premises/equipment	3	3	3	3	3	3	2	0

### 5.3 Gaps in Provision

Overall, eight of the 10 organisations that answered this question felt that there are gaps either in their own infrastructure service provision or more generally across the County (or both). Thematic areas referred to include ICT, finance, training and mentoring provision for VCO staff and volunteers. The new infrastructure services funded through the ChangeUp programme appear to have filled gaps in service provision to a certain extent, but there is still a long way to go before the effects can be measured, become embedded in service delivery and cascade.

It has been suggested that gaps exist in service provision because a more cohesive way of working is needed. More opportunities should be made available to work in

partnership with other organisations and a pooling/sharing of resources should take place. There is some confusion as to who is responsible for what in the County; consequently some aspects are rather uncoordinated. A further area of concern is how organisations should manage demands placed upon them by statutory organisations that do not provide funding (e.g. Local Councils).

Specific gaps highlighted within organisations include ICT, personnel issues, training provision, accounts, payroll and financial management issues. These gaps also extend Countywide in addition to perceived gaps concerning black, minority and ethnic issues, equal opportunities, skills for life, health, advice on renewable energy and energy efficiency and expertise in supporting groups working with children, young people and vulnerable adults.

## 5.4 Funding

Funding is the most critical issue for all organisations involved in the study. Planned service delivery beyond March 2008 is largely uncertain due to little or no guaranteed funding beyond this time. At the moment, the Northumberland Strategic Partnership (NSP), which has an uncertain future itself, is providing a proportion of funding for eight of the 11 organisations. Other notable funding organisations include the Northern Rock Foundation, DEFRA and the Big Lottery Fund. (Figure 26)

Funder	No. of orgs receiving funding
NSP	8
DEFRA	3
One NorthEast	1
Northern Rock	4
LSC	1
Capacity Builders	1
Northumberland Youth Service	1
Northumberland Pre-school alliance	1
Tynedale Council	1
Big Lottery Fund	2
Coalfields Regeneration	1
DWP	1

It has been suggested by some infrastructure providers that funding commitments from statutory bodies such as local councils would provide more security, facilitate longer-term planning and result in more intensive service delivery, as opposed to the current short-term, 'quick-fix' situation, which is proving difficult to sustain. This in turn would encourage further funding from other sources.

## **5.5 Marketing**

Word of mouth is one of the most significant marketing tools for most organisations. Increasing reliance is being placed upon website development and email communication, and newsletters are widely distributed. Other marketing methods highlighted include posters, press releases, notice boards, flyers, promotional networking events, local council promotion and promotion through national bodies.

It is generally felt that whilst almost all organisations are successful in reaching their target audience, there are occasionally small groups which may be remote due to location, lack of communication skills or simply not requiring the assistance of an infrastructure service provider, i.e. groups that are not seeking help.

## **5.6 Staff Numbers and Skills**

Figure 27 below shows the staffing numbers of the participating organisations. The size of the organisations varies significantly, with annual incomes ranging from under £50,000 to over £500,000. The number of staff employed by the organisations ranges from one full-time paid employee to 25.5 FTE paid staff. In addition, one of the organisations has approximately 60 volunteers on its books, whilst the Northumberland Community Development Network has 22 staff working part-time on a freelance basis.

In all but three cases, staffing levels were not felt to be adequate to cover the level of services demanded from clients. Indeed it was felt that demand far exceeded supply and that more staff would provide an improved level of service.

Figure 27: Numbers of Staff			
Organisation	Full Time	Part Time	Volunteers
ADAPT	5	12	60
BVCVS	5		
CAN	9	13	
FONDT	1		
NCDN	0	22 (freelance)	
PSLA	0	6	6
NY	1	3	4
VCNN	1	1	7
VT	2	3	
WCVS + CMWVC	22	7	

All organisations feel that they have a portfolio of highly experienced and qualified staff. Staff training and development is valued and supported but can sometimes be cost prohibited due to the level and type of qualification required, the location of the training and limited budgets. If the organisation does not have the resource to deliver training in house, services are bought in.

## 5.7 Barriers to Access Amongst VCOs

There would seem to be some confusion amongst Infrastructure providers regarding who is responsible for what in the County and that this lack of coherence and coordination may in itself provide a barrier to organisations seeking assistance. For example it has been highlighted that the 'blurred boundaries' that exist between the work of Community Action Northumberland, the Northumberland Community Development Network and Castle Morpeth & Wansbeck Volunteer Centre have proven to be a barrier to progression in some instances. Based on discussions with providers, the situation would be alleviated with more cohesive, complementary work programmes, improved partnership working and clearer distinction of roles. Indeed the VCS Consortium has been flagged as an important clearing house for information exchange.

A lack of resources and consequent reliance upon more email and internet communication, as opposed to one-to-one services, may also be an obstacle to those with limited access to computer services. More resources and more 'people on the ground' to intensify services would help address this problem.

## 5.8 The Future

With regards to service provision, Infrastructure providers were asked to provide details of the services that they expect to be delivering over the next 2-3 years. Overall, little change is anticipated, with minor fluctuations in respect of some services. Perhaps the most notable change is the number of service providers. Due to uncertainty over external funding in the future, one provider has been unable to produce any medium to long term strategy and therefore was unable to say what infrastructure services will be provided over the period. In spite of the gaps in provision highlighted earlier in this section - ICT, finance, training and mentoring provision for VCO staff and volunteers – the number of organisations providing services in these areas is expected to either fall or remain unchanged

	Current	Future
Policies & Procedures	8	7
Researching Needs of Users	7	6
Having Your Say	7	6
Training	7	5
Finding/Keeping Volunteers	6	5
Attracting New Members/Users	6	6
Networking with Others	6	6
Forming your group	5	5
Managing Projects	5	5
Recruiting/Retaining Staff	5	4
Evaluating Projects	5	5
Developing New Projects	5	5
Marketing	5	4
Business/strategic planning	4	3
Being open & Accountable	4	5
Funding Information/Advice	4	5
Office Administration	4	4
Managing Money	4	4
ICT	4	4
Selling Services to public bodies	4	4
Managing premises/equipment	3	3
Other (Please Specify)	2	0
N=	9	8

At present there is much uncertainty regarding the future development of all organisations involved in the study due to the lack of long term, sustained funding. Furthermore, local government reorganisation may have an effect on those organisations operating at a more specific geographical district level, thus generating more ambiguity.

More specifically, given sufficient or (preferably) increased funding all organisations would continue to deliver the infrastructure services highlighted previously, and possibly expand those services to address gaps highlighted in provision. For example, further ICT development, training. A boost in financial resources would allow more in depth work and concentration upon capacity building, whereas funding reduction may mean service cuts, staff redundancies, inability to meet demand and in extreme cases, closure of the organisation.



## 6.0 SUMMARY & CONCLUSIONS

Clearly infrastructure support services are an important resource to VCOs in Northumberland. All 96 respondents to the demand survey had used infrastructure support over the previous three years and 86 expect to access them again in the future. In total, 68 of the 96 respondents said that the services they had received had been either important or very important to their organisation; and 62 said that the services had been useful or very useful in helping them improve their own service delivery and to achieve organisational goals.

Nevertheless, there are barriers in the ability of some VCOs to access some infrastructure services; and a number of gaps in provision have also been identified. Over one third of respondents reported difficulties in accessing infrastructure services during the previous three years, with the main obstacles seemingly being perceived cost of services; eligibility criteria; lack of knowledge on where to access services; and in some cases an unawareness that services are available. At a more strategic level, some VCOs have reported a lack of coherence in infrastructure service provision in the County, with unawareness between providers of what other service providers and offer and therefore resulting in an ineffective referrals system.

Less than one fifth of respondent VCOs felt that there are gaps in infrastructure service provision. Whilst some of these were thematic gaps, including project evaluation, research for business planning, marketing and mentoring for volunteers; there were also a number of generic issues highlighted. In particular, a lack of suitably qualified people with the knowledge to understand the needs of client organisation; and the foresight to offer sound practical advice and support.

Barriers in the future are not expected to improve and indeed the number of VCOs **expecting** to face barriers is higher than the number that did face barriers over the previous three years. Cost is expected to be the main barrier to access, followed by time constraints and a lack of awareness of services that exist and where they can be accessed.

Demand for Funding Information and Advice will continue to be the main area of support for VCOs in the County, followed by Attracting New Members & Users, Network with Others and Policies & Procedures. VCOs generally expect to be able to access the majority of services via email or the internet, the main exceptions being

Business & Strategic Planning and Selling Services to Public Bodies, where the preference is for face to face delivery.

Issues with the comprehensiveness of the supply assessment aside, there is some evidence of a mismatch between demand for and supply of infrastructure services. In addition, issues relating to the coherence of service delivery in the County, as highlighted by VCOs that responded to the demand survey have also been recognised by service providers; and some of the same thematic gaps have also been identified. In spite of this, service provision in the future is not expected to change dramatically, a situation that is set to be exacerbated by uncertainty over future incomes and funding streams.


The InfoNet recommends a number of actions be implemented in the near future:

- a) Widen the supply side assessment to include all primary, secondary and tertiary infrastructure providers delivering services in the County; and give greater consideration to deliverable capacity within each organisation.
- b) Using information collected in a) above, prepare a directory of infrastructure service provision for distribution to all VCOs in Northumberland and to all infrastructure providers. Not only will this raise awareness of the services that are available to the organisations that need them, it will also help to improve referrals between service providers in the County. However, the directory needs to be part of a more rigorous marketing campaign that aims to raise awareness of infrastructure amongst VCOs in Northumberland.

## **APPENDIX 1: TABLES & FIGURES**

Figure 11a: Services Accessed in the last three years by Location of VCO (% of respondents)						
	Aln	Ber	BV	CM	Ty	Wa
Forming your group	6.7	12.5	9.1	15.8	35.7	20.0
Business/strategic planning	26.7	37.5	36.4	47.4	28.6	46.7
Managing Projects	20.0	25.0	9.1	10.5	21.4	13.3
Being open & Accountable	6.7	0.0	18.2	31.6	28.6	13.3
Finding/Keeping Volunteers	40.0	37.5	27.3	52.6	21.4	33.3
Employing Staff	26.7	50.0	18.2	47.4	14.3	33.3
Funding Information/Advice	53.3	75.0	81.8	68.4	78.6	73.3
Office Administration	13.3	25.0	9.1	15.8	7.1	20.0
Managing Money	13.3	12.5	18.2	15.8	35.7	20.0
Managing premises/equipment	6.7	0.0	18.2	15.8	14.3	13.3
Policies & Procedures & regulations	53.3	37.5	54.5	52.6	50.0	26.7
Monitoring & Evaluating Projects	13.3	25.0	36.4	36.8	21.4	20.0
Researching Needs of Users	13.3	37.5	9.1	31.6	21.4	13.3
Developing New Projects	26.7	62.5	18.2	42.1	42.9	6.7
Attracting New Members/Users	33.3	12.5	54.5	47.4	35.7	40.0
Having Your Say	0.0	0.0	9.1	15.8	14.3	26.7
Networking with Others	53.3	37.5	45.5	36.8	28.6	60.0
ICT	13.3	12.5	9.1	26.3	42.9	40.0
Selling Services to public bodies	0.0	12.5	18.2	15.8	7.1	26.7
Marketing	0.0	0.0	36.4	31.6	14.3	33.3
Other (Please Specify)	0.0	0.0	0.0	5.3	7.1	0.0
N=	15	8	11	19	14	15

Figure 11b: Services Accessed in the last three years by No. of Paid Employees (% of respondents)		
	No Staff	Paid Staff
Forming your group	18.2	18.4
Business/strategic planning	12.1	55.1
Managing Projects	6.1	20.4
Being open & Accountable	6.1	26.5
Finding/Keeping Volunteers	33.3	38.8
Employing Staff	3.0	51.0
Funding Information/Advice	63.6	77.6
Office Administration	6.1	20.4
Managing Money	9.1	26.5
Managing premises/equipment	9.1	14.3
Policies & Procedures & regulations	27.3	59.2
Monitoring & Evaluating Projects	15.2	32.7
Researching Needs of Users	12.1	26.5
Developing New Projects	24.2	36.7
Attracting New Members/Users	51.5	30.6
Having Your Say	9.1	14.3
Networking with Others	39.4	46.9
ICT	9.1	36.7
Selling Services to public bodies	0.0	22.4
Marketing	12.1	26.5
Other (Please Specify)	0.0	4.1
N=	33	49

 Figure in cell based on response from just one VCO

The figures in the appendix are linked to the headline figures included in the main body of the report. So, figure 11a above provides additional analysis to that in Figure 11 on page 17 of the main report, and so on.

Figure 11c: Services Accessed in the last three years by Organisation Status (% of respondents)

	Main/Only Office	Branch
Forming your group	16.4	33.3
Business/strategic planning	47.5	25.0
Managing Projects	11.5	33.3
Being open & Accountable	14.8	33.3
Finding/Keeping Volunteers	29.5	58.3
Employing Staff	39.3	25.0
Funding Information/Advice	80.3	58.3
Office Administration	14.8	25.0
Managing Money	13.1	33.3
Managing premises/equipment	8.2	33.3
Policies & Procedures & regulations	52.5	33.3
Monitoring & Evaluating Projects	23.0	50.0
Researching Needs of Users	21.3	33.3
Developing New Projects	27.9	50.0
Attracting New Members/Users	31.1	75.0
Having Your Say	8.2	33.3
Networking with Others	47.5	58.3
ICT	29.5	25.0
Selling Services to public bodies	13.1	25.0
Marketing	21.3	33.3
Other (Please Specify)	3.3	0.0
N=	61	12

Figure 12a: Where do you obtain most of your information from: Average Score by Location of VCO

	Aln	Ber	BV	CM	Ty	Wa
Blyth Valley CVS	5.00	5.00	1.75	3.50	5.00	3.38
Community Action Northumberland	2.31	3.57	4.00	2.23	2.62	3.00
NCDN	3.50	3.67	3.50	3.83	3.43	3.40
Development Trusts/Partnerships	3.67	3.71	2.00	2.82	3.29	2.14
Wansbeck CVS	5.00	4.40	3.00	3.20	5.00	2.00
Your local Location of VCO/borough council	2.50	3.71	1.89	2.29	2.46	2.77
NALC	2.17	5.00	4.00	3.50	4.29	2.50
National organisations	2.25	3.13	2.67	1.93	3.07	2.88
Private sector (solicitors, accountants)	2.50	3.20	3.40	3.11	3.00	2.50
Friends and family	2.38	4.25	2.60	3.40	2.50	2.00
Headquarters of your organisation	1.80	2.83	2.00	2.20	1.71	2.38
Volunteer Centres	3.33	3.50	3.33	3.30	4.50	3.00
Rural Voices	2.80	3.60	4.25	3.10	4.20	4.00
Local community/parish newsletters	2.00	3.17	3.67	2.91	3.50	2.43
General websites	2.44	2.00	3.14	2.80	3.00	2.38
Other (Please Specify)	1.00	3.00	2.00	1.80	2.50	2.00
N=	17	8	14	22	17	17

Figure 12b:Where do you obtain most of your information from: Average Score by No. of Paid Employees		
	No Paid Staff	Paid Staff
Blyth Valley CVS	3.53	3.20
Community Action Northumberland	2.87	2.63
NCDN	4.40	3.36
Development Trusts/Partnerships	3.07	2.88
Wansbeck CVS	3.62	2.96
Your local Location of VCO/borough council	2.68	2.48
NALC	3.50	3.63
National organisations (Charity Commission etc)	2.89	2.38
Private sector (solicitors, accountants etc)	3.20	2.88
Friends and family	2.55	3.05
Headquarters of your organisation	2.32	2.00
Volunteer Centres	4.10	3.05
Rural Voices	4.17	3.14
Local community/parish newsletters	2.80	2.88
General websites	2.94	2.48
Other (Please Specify	2.60	1.75

Figure 12c:Where do you obtain most of your information from: Average Score by Office Status		
	Main or Only Office	Branch
Blyth Valley CVS	3.19	3.83
Community Action Northumberland	2.71	3.00
NCDN	3.48	3.60
Development Trusts/Partnerships	2.84	3.50
Wansbeck CVS	2.94	4.00
Your local Location of VCO/borough council	2.54	3.10
NALC	3.40	4.20
National organisations	2.36	3.11
Private sector (solicitors, accountants etc)	2.89	3.20
Friends and family	3.14	2.00
Headquarters of your organisation	2.24	1.67
Volunteer Centres	3.26	3.80
Rural Voices	3.52	3.60
Local community/parish newsletters	2.84	3.71
General websites	2.58	3.00
Other (Please Specify	1.64	3.00

Figure13a: Importance of Services Received: Average Score by Location of VCO						
	Aln	Ber	BV	CM	Ty	Wa
Forming your group	2.5	1	1.33	2.17	1.8	3
Business/strategic planning	4	1	2	1.83	2	2
Managing Projects	1.67	2	2.67	1	3.67	4
Being open & Accountable	1.67	2	1.25	1.83	3	3
Finding/Keeping Volunteers	3	1	1.67	1	4	2
Employing Staff	1		1.25	1.88	2.67	2.11
Funding Information/Advice	2	3.33	1.67	1.9	2	1.89
Office Administration	2.33	2	2	1.25	1.5	1.83
Managing Money	2	2	1.33	2.2	3	2.67
Managing premises/equipment	1.5		1.25	4	2	2.75
Policies & Procedures & regulations	4		2.5	2.78	3	3
Monitoring & Evaluating Projects	1.5	1	2.33	1.6	2.67	2
Researching Needs of Users	1	1.67	3	2	1	2
Developing New Projects	2.25		1.75	1.6	2	3
Attracting New Members/Users	2.5		1.75	1.57	2	2
Having Your Say	3	3	2	2.2	3	2
Networking with Others	2.5	1.5	1.75	1.75	3	2
ICT	2.33	2	2.5	2	3	3.25
Selling Services to public bodies	2.2	3	1.5	2	2.6	2.3
Marketing	1.5	1	1.25	2.33	2	2.4
Other (Please Specify)	2.5		2	1.25	1.67	2.67

Figure13b: Importance of Services Received: Average Score by No. of Paid Staff		
	No PaidStaff	Paid Staff
Forming your group	2.25	2.11
Business/strategic planning	2	2
Managing Projects	2.13	2.75
Being open & Accountable	1.75	2.09
Finding/Keeping Volunteers	2.25	1.82
Employing Staff	2	1.83
Funding Information/Advice	1.75	2.13
Office Administration	1.25	1.93
Managing Money	2.4	2.15
Managing premises/equipment	1.57	2.5
Policies & Procedures & regulations	2	3.21
Monitoring & Evaluating Projects	1.67	1.94
Researching Needs of Users	2.2	1.58
Developing New Projects	2.5	1.93
Attracting New Members/Users	2.3	1.78
Having Your Say	2.57	2.1
Networking with Others	2.83	1.73
ICT	2.83	2.35
Selling Services to public bodies	2.14	2.32
Marketing	1.86	2.05
Other (Please Specify)	2.43	1.33

Figure 14a Importance of Services in improving service delivery: Average Score by Location of VCO						
	Aln	Ber	BV	CM	Ty	Wa
Forming your group	3	3	3.5	1	1.75	1
Business/strategic planning	2.25	2.33	1.75	2.5	1.75	1.83
Managing Projects	3	3	3.5	1	2.67	2
Being open & Accountable	3	4	2.67	2.2	1.67	1
Finding/Keeping Volunteers	3.4	1.5	3.25	2.67	2.5	1.5
Employing Staff	2.67	2	2.67	2.17	1.5	1.67
Funding Information/Advice	2	2.67	1.75	2.36	1.89	1.64
Office Administration	2	3	3.5	1	1	1.5
Managing Money	3		3	1	2.67	1.5
Managing premises/equipment			3.33	1	5	1
Policies & Procedures & regulations	1.71	2.67	1.8	2.2	1.6	2
Monitoring & Evaluating Projects	3	2.5	1.6	2.4	2.5	1.33
Researching Needs of Users	2.67	3	4	2.25	2.5	
Developing New Projects	2.5	2.5	3.33	2	3	2
Attracting New Members/Users	3		2.5	2.25	3.5	2
Having Your Say		2	3.5	1	4.5	1
Networking with Others	2.67	2.5	2.29	2	3.17	2
ICT	3		2.5	2	2.67	2.6
Selling Services to public bodies		3	3.33	1	5	2
Marketing			2	3	3.33	2
Other (Please Specify)				2	3	

Figure 14b Importance of Services in improving service delivery: Average Score by No. of Paid Staff		
	No Staff	Paid Staff
Forming your group	1.8	2.29
Business/strategic planning	2.5	2.04
Managing Projects	3.5	2.33
Being open & Accountable	2.67	2.15
Finding/Keeping Volunteers	3.5	2.19
Employing Staff	3.33	1.88
Funding Information/Advice	1.65	2.11
Office Administration	3	1.89
Managing Money	4.5	2
Managing premises/equipment	5	2.14
Policies & Procedures & regulations	1.89	2
Monitoring & Evaluating Projects	1.25	2.33
Researching Needs of Users	3.25	2.58
Developing New Projects	3.25	2.4
Attracting New Members/Users	2.69	2.5
Having Your Say	2	2.8
Networking with Others	2.08	2.62
ICT	3.25	2.29
Selling Services to public bodies	5	2.88
Marketing	2.33	2.64
Other (Please Specify)		2.67

	Main/Only Office	Branch
Forming your group	2.18	1
Business/strategic planning	2.11	1
Managing Projects	2.56	2.5
Being open & Accountable	2.38	1
Finding/Keeping Volunteers	2.17	3.5
Employing Staff	2.17	2
Funding Information/Advice	1.98	1.67
Office Administration	2.2	1
Managing Money	2.33	1
Managing premises/equipment	2.14	5
Policies & Procedures & regulations	1.83	2
Monitoring & Evaluating Projects	2.06	2.5
Researching Needs of Users	2.75	2.67
Developing New Projects	2.44	3.33
Attracting New Members/Users	2.19	3.2
Having Your Say	2	4.5
Networking with Others	2.32	3
ICT	2.59	1
Selling Services to public bodies	2.57	5
Marketing	2.45	3
Other (Please Specify)	1.5	5

	Yes	No	N=
Alnwick	29.4	70.6	17
Berwick upon Tweed	42.9	57.1	7
Blyth Valley	23.1	76.9	13
Castle Morpeth	40.9	59.1	22
Tynedale	30.8	69.2	13
Wansbeck	29.4	70.6	17
Other	0	100	1

	Yes	No	N=
No Paid Staff	21.6	78.4	37
Paid Staff	41.2	58.8	51

	Yes	No	N=
Less Than £5k	11.1	88.9	27
£5-9K	25	75	8
£10-49K	33.3	66.7	12
£50-99K	71.4	28.6	7
£100-249K	46.2	53.8	13
£250-499K	33.3	66.7	9
£500k plus	50	50	6
Don't Know	37.5	62.5	8

	Yes	No	N=
Main or Only Office	36.4	63.6	66
Branch	9.1	90.9	11
Private Address	33.3	66.7	12

Figure 16a: What barriers to access did you face? By Location of VCO						
	Aln	Ber	BV	CM	Ty	Wa
Don't Meet Eligibility Criteria	50.0	0.0	66.7	40.0	33.3	20.0
Don't Know Where to Access Support	50.0	66.7	33.3	20.0	33.3	20.0
No support available locally	0.0	33.3	0.0	0.0	66.7	40.0
Not aware of Services	25.0	33.3	0.0	30.0	66.7	20.0
Time	0.0	33.3	0.0	30.0	66.7	40.0
Too Expensive/lack of funding	25.0	66.7	0.0	60.0	66.7	60.0
Other	0.0	33.3	0.0	30.0	33.3	20.0
N=	4	3	3	10	3	5

Figure 16b: What barriers to access did you face? By Number of Paid Staff		
	No Paid Staff	Paid Staff
Don't Meet Eligibility Criteria	25.0	40.0
Don't Know Where to Access Support	25.0	35.0
No support available locally	12.5	20.0
Not aware of Services	25.0	30.0
Time	25.0	30.0
Too Expensive/lack of funding	25.0	60.0
Other	25.0	20.0
N=	12	20

Figure 16c: What barriers to access did you face? By Office Status		
	Main or Only Office	Branch
Don't Meet Eligibility Criteria	23.1	25.0
Don't Know Where to Access Support	26.9	25.0
Lack of Resources	50.0	75.0
No support available locally	23.1	0.0
Not aware of Services	34.6	25.0
Time	38.5	50.0
Too Expensive/lack of funding	53.8	0.0
N=	26	4

Figure 16d: What barriers to access did you face? By Income Band							
	<5k	5-9k	10-49k	50-99k	100-249k	250-499k	500k plus
Don't Meet Eligibility Criteria	100.0	50.0	25.0	40.0	16.7	33.3	66.7
Don't Know Where to Access Support	0.0	50.0	0.0	60.0	50.0	33.3	33.3
No support available locally	0.0	0.0	0.0	20.0	0.0	66.7	33.3
Not aware of Services	0.0	0.0	25.0	40.0	33.3	66.7	33.3
Time	0.0	0.0	50.0	20.0	33.3	33.3	33.3
Too Expensive/lack of funding	100.0	0.0	50.0	20.0	83.3	33.3	66.7
Other	0.0	0.0	50.0	0.0	33.3	33.3	0.0
N=	2	2	4	5	6	3	3

	Al	Ber	BV	CM	Ty	Wa
Information Computer Technology support services	54.5	50.0	50.0	72.7	60.0	66.7
Learning	63.6	83.3	70.0	63.6	40.0	53.3
Equality & Diversity development	45.5	33.3	40.0	63.6	20.0	40.0
Backfill Project	45.5	66.7	20.0	90.9	50.0	73.3
Financial Management Support Services	36.4	66.7	50.0	27.3	0.0	60.0
Volunteering Advice & Support for organisations/groups	63.6	66.7	100.0	63.6	10.0	73.3
N=	11	6	10	11	10	15

	No Paid Staff	Paid Staff
Information Computer Technology support services	54.5	61.5
Learning	50.0	64.1
Equality & Diversity development	27.3	46.2
Backfill Project	36.4	71.8
Financial Management Support Services	36.4	38.5
Volunteering Advice & Support for organisations/groups	63.6	61.5
N=	22	39

	Main or Only Office	Branch
Information Computer Technology support services	64.0	33.3
Learning	62.0	66.7
Equality & Diversity development	38.0	66.7
Backfill Project	64.0	50.0
Financial Management Support Services	42.0	33.3
Volunteering Advice & Support for organisations/groups	64.0	66.7
N=	50	6

	Al	Ber	BV	CM	Ty	Wa
Information Computer Technology support services	50.0	75.0	0.0	16.7	50.0	37.5
Learning	0.0	0.0	100.0	33.3	25.0	12.5
Equality & Diversity development	0.0	0.0	100.0	50.0	0.0	12.5
Backfill Project	50.0	25.0	0.0	16.7	25.0	25.0
Financial Management Support Services	0.0	25.0	0.0	0.0	0.0	12.5
Volunteering Advice & Support for organisations/groups	0.0	50.0	100.0	33.3	25.0	25.0
N=	2	4	1	6	4	8

	No Paid Staff	Paid Staff
Information Computer Technology support services	0.0	45.5
Learning	0.0	22.7
Equality & Diversity development	33.3	18.2
Backfill Project	0.0	27.3
Financial Management Support Services	0.0	9.1
Volunteering Advice & Support for organisations/groups	66.7	27.3
N=	3	22

	Main or Only Office	Branch
Information Computer Technology support services	47.6	0.0
Learning	19.0	50.0
Equality & Diversity development	19.0	50.0
Backfill Project	19.0	50.0
Financial Management Support Services	9.5	0.0
Volunteering Advice & Support for organisations/groups	33.3	0.0
N=	21	2

Figure 18a: Usefulness of ChangeUp services in helping improve service delivery (Average Score by Location of VCO)

	Aln	Ber	BV	CM	Ty	Wa
Information Computer Technology support services	4.33	3		2.5	4	3
Learning	2.8	2	3	2.25	4	2
Backfill Project	3.5	2.5		3	5	2.25
Equality & Diversity development	4	5	3	3	4	2
Financial Management Support Services	4	3	3		5	2
Volunteering Advice & Support for organisations/groups	3.33	2		3	3.5	2

Figure 18b: Usefulness of ChangeUp services in helping improve service delivery (Average Score by No. of Paid Staff)

	No Paid Staff	Paid Staff
Information Computer Technology support services	4.67	3.14
Learning	4.67	2.27
Backfill Project	4.67	2.73
Equality & Diversity development	3.75	3.25
Financial Management Support Services	4.67	2.67
Volunteering Advice & Support for organisations/groups	3	2.63

Figure 18c: Usefulness of ChangeUp services in helping improve service delivery (Average Score by Office Status)

	No Paid Staff	Paid Staff
Information Computer Technology support services	4.67	3.14
Learning	4.67	2.27
Backfill Project	4.67	2.73
Equality & Diversity development	3.75	3.25
Financial Management Support Services	4.67	2.67
Volunteering Advice & Support for organisations/groups	3	2.63

Figure 19a: Demand for Services Over the Next three Years (average score by Location of VCO)

	Aln	Ber	BV	CM	Ty	Wa
Forming your group	3.67	5	1	4	5	5
Business/strategic planning	3.14	1.4	2	2.9	3.25	3.14
Managing Projects	3.2	2.8	1	3.17	3	3.57
Being open & Accountable	3	5	1	4.13	4.5	3.17
Finding/Keeping Volunteers	2.6	1.6	2	2.54	2.6	3.67
Employing Staff	3.5	3	1	3.88	3.83	4.2
Funding Information/Advice	2.5	1.2	2	2	1.77	1.67
Office Administration	5	2.5		4.14	4.33	4
Managing Money	3.75	3.67	1	3.86	4.2	3.29
Managing premises/equipment	5	2.2		3.5	3.5	3.29
Policies & Procedures & regulations	2.14	2.2	1.25	2.44	3.14	3.4
Monitoring & Evaluating Projects	3.67	2	1	3.33	2.9	3.13
Researching Needs of Users	3.4	2.25	1.67	2.8	2.56	2.86
Developing New Projects	3.29	2	2	2.57	2.2	3.29
Attracting New Members/Users	3	2.5	1.25	2.2	2.7	2.7
Having Your Say	4	3		3.25	3.33	3.43
Networking with Others	3	3	1.83	2.2	2.44	3.33
ICT	3.14	4		2.44	2.43	3.17
Selling Services to public bodies	4	1.8	1	3.18	2.88	2.75
Marketing	2.86	1.67	1	3	2.8	3.33
Other (Please Specify)	5			5	4	

Figure 19b: Demand for Services Over the Next three Years (average score by No. of Paid Employees)

	No Paid Staff	With Paid Staff
Forming your group	3.83	4.65
Business/strategic planning	2.89	2.83
Managing Projects	3.18	3.07
Being open & Accountable	4.17	3.71
Finding/Keeping Volunteers	1.91	3
Employing Staff	4	3.6
Funding Information/Advice	1.64	2.1
Office Administration	4.14	3.85
Managing Money	4	3.48
Managing premises/equipment	3.1	3.43
Policies & Procedures & regulations	2.5	2.5
Monitoring & Evaluating Projects	2.58	2.93
Researching Needs of Users	2.78	2.63
Developing New Projects	2.6	2.59
Attracting New Members/Users	1.88	2.75
Having Your Say	3	3.5
Networking with Others	2.14	2.74
ICT	2.75	2.91
Selling Services to public bodies	3	2.71
Marketing	3	2.59
Other (Please Specify)	5	4.33

Figure 19c: Demand for Services Over the Next three Years (average score by Office Status)

	Main or Only Office	Branch
Forming your group	4.38	4.4
Business/strategic planning	2.42	4.8
Managing Projects	2.9	4.2
Being open & Accountable	3.52	4.6
Finding/Keeping Volunteers	2.66	2.14
Employing Staff	3.35	4.2
Funding Information/Advice	1.84	2
Office Administration	3.65	4.6
Managing Money	3.36	4.75
Managing premises/equipment	3.13	4
Policies & Procedures & regulations	2.23	4.25
Monitoring & Evaluating Projects	2.63	3.29
Researching Needs of Users	2.63	2.43
Developing New Projects	2.56	2.63
Attracting New Members/Users	2.38	2.5
Having Your Say	3.37	3.2
Networking with Others	2.26	3
ICT	2.48	3.6
Selling Services to public bodies	2.46	3.83
Marketing	2.48	2.88
Other (Please Specify)	4	5

Figure 20a: Anticipated barriers to accessing infrastructure support services over the coming three years? By Location of VCO

	Yes	No	Don't know	N=
Alnwick	35.3	23.5	41.2	17
Berwick upon Tweed	75.0	12.5	12.5	8
Blyth Valley	14.3	57.1	28.6	14
Castle Morpeth	54.5	18.2	27.3	22
Tynedale	41.2	17.6	41.2	17
Wansbeck	12.5	37.5	50.0	16
Other	100.0	0.0	0.0	1

Figure 20b: Anticipated barriers to accessing infrastructure support services over the coming three years? By Paid Staff

	Yes	No	Don't know	N=
No Paid Staff	26.8	31.7	41.5	41
Paid Staff	47.2	22.6	30.2	53

Figure 20c: Anticipated barriers to accessing infrastructure support services over the coming three years? By Office Status

	Yes	No	Don't know	N=
Main or Only Office	42.0	27.5	30.4	69
Branch	33.3	33.3	33.3	12

Figure 20d: Anticipated barriers to accessing infrastructure support services over the coming three years? By Income Band

	Yes	No	Don't know	N=
Less than £5k	28.6	35.7	35.7	28
£5-9k	25.0	25.0	50.0	8
£10k - £49k	53.8	7.7	38.5	13
£50k - £99k	71.4	14.3	14.3	7
£100k - £249k	42.9	14.3	42.9	14
£250k - £499k	33.3	44.4	22.2	9
£500k plus	66.7	33.3	0.0	6
Don't know/Not available	10.0	40.0	50.0	10

Figure 21a: What barriers do you anticipate? By Location of VCO

	Aln	Ber	BV	CM	Ty	Wa
Don't Meet Eligibility Criteria	50.0	0.0	0.0	30.8	16.7	33.3
Don't Know Where to Access Support	25.0	0.0	100.0	38.5	33.3	0.0
Lack of Resources	50.0	50.0	0.0	53.8	66.7	0.0
No support available locally	25.0	50.0	0.0	7.7	16.7	0.0
Not aware of Services	50.0	33.3	0.0	30.8	33.3	0.0
Time	0.0	66.7	0.0	38.5	50.0	0.0
Too Expensive/lack of funding	0.0	66.7	0.0	46.2	16.7	66.7
No External Support Needed	0.0	16.7	0.0	0.0	16.7	0.0
Other	0.0	0.0	0.0	0.0	33.3	0.0
N=	4	6	1	13	6	3

Figure 21b: What barriers to access did you face? By Number of Paid Staff

	No Paid Staff	Paid Staff
Don't Meet Eligibility Criteria	16.7	27.3
Don't Know Where to Access Support	33.3	22.7
Lack of Resources	50.0	45.5
No support available locally	8.3	22.7
Not aware of Services	33.3	27.3
Time	41.7	36.4
Too Expensive/lack of funding	16.7	54.5
No External Support Needed	8.3	4.5
Other	8.3	4.5
N=	12	22

Figure 21c: What barriers to access did you face? By Office Status		
	Main/Only Office	Branch
Don't Meet Eligibility Criteria	22.2	25.0
Don't Know Where to Access Support	25.9	25.0
Lack of Resources	48.1	75.0
No support available locally	22.2	0.0
Not aware of Services	33.3	25.0
Time	37	50.0
Too Expensive/lack of funding	51.9	0.0
No External Support Needed	3.7	0.0
Other	7.4	0.0
N=	27	4

Figure 22a: Gaps in Infrastructure Service Provision: By Location of VCO				
	Yes	No	Don't Know	N=
Alnwick	17.6	11.8	70.6	17
Berwick upon Tweed	50	25	25	8
Blyth Valley	8.3	8.3	83.3	12
Castle Morpeth	22.7	9.1	68.2	22
Tynedale	31.3	12.5	56.3	16
Wansbeck	6.3	25	68.8	16
Other	0	0	100	1

Figure 22b: Gaps in Infrastructure Service Provision: By Paid Employees				
	Yes	No	Don't Know	N=
No Paid Staff	10.3	12.8	76.9	39
Paid Staff	29.4	13.7	56.9	51

Figure 22c: Gaps in Infrastructure Service Provision: By Office Status				
	Yes	No	Don't Know	N=
Main or Only Office	23.5	16.2	60.3	68
Branch	9.1	0	90.9	12

Figure 22d: Gaps in Infrastructure Service Provision: By Income Band				
	Yes	No	Don't Know	N=
Less than £5k	18.5	14.8	66.7	27
£5-9k	12.5	12.5	75.0	8
£10k - £49k	15.4	7.7	76.9	13
£50k - £99k	33.3	33.3	33.3	6
£100k - £249k	21.4	7.1	71.4	14
£250k - £499k	50.0	0.0	50.0	8
£500k plus	16.7	50.0	33.3	6
Don't know/Not available	10.0	10.0	80.0	10



## **APPENDIX 2: INFRASTRUCTURE ORGANISATIONS INTERVIEWED**

ADAPT

Blyth Valley CVS

Community Action Northumberland

Federation of Northumberland Development Trusts

Northumberland Community Development Network

Northumbria Youth

Pre-School Learning Alliance

Volunteer Centre North Northumberland

Volunteering Tynedale

Wansbeck CVS

Wansbeck & Castle Morpeth Volunteer Centre

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