

## **NCA Annual Report 2014**

Since the last AGM back in October 2013, significant changes have taken place with the departure of Ian Harrison as Chair, the retirement of George Dumble as a long serving committee member and replacement of a number of our Holding Trustees. The constitution has been updated and confirmed by Exeter CVS as 'fit for purpose'. We have altered our pattern of regular meetings, reducing the frequency of open 'forum' meetings to one per quarter and in the intervening months held regular management committee meetings to conduct the regular business of the Association. This pattern seems to have been successful to date and it is proposed to continue this over the next year.

Key items of business have been the programme of monthly events and Cafes run by the NCA. The management of the existing hut including necessary maintenance, modification and communication of hut booking arrangements and taking forward the 'Vision' project. Forum meetings and Café events have included the Cycle Café supported by Devon County Council and our Police Community Support team, the Toy Library event, health and dog walking café, Food Festival, WW1 Commemoration and community bunting. A craft fayre, Halloween event and the Winter Warmer event. All events achieved reasonable attendance and financial gain – the food fayre and WW1 commemoration standing out as particularly successful with attendance of over 100-200 and positive reporting in the Express and Echo. The regular social café and Qigong meetings have grown in attendance during the year and now threaten to exceed the hut space available as does the very successful Newtown Community Choir which meets weekly and has performed at a number of local events and venues.

Regular user groups have come and gone but the calendar remains busy making use of the hut every day of the week and our hut user income has seen a modest uplift on last year. Private bookings have remained steady and continue to provide a steady addition to the association's income. Finally several larger scale events have used the hut as a headquarters building including Respect Festival 2014 which saw an attendance of over 20,000 last year and the Great West Run which used the hut and park for the first time as the event village. Both events return this year. The GWR included NCA as a supported charity and made a generous donation to NCA of over £815 towards the 'Vision' project.

The 'Vision' project received a welcome boost in February last year with the award of £100,000 of 'seed funding' from the NHB scheme. The engagement of a professional fund raising company to help us achieve the full amount required to build the new community building proved less successful than had been hoped and in April it was decided by the management committee to end the contract although bids have been submitted to the Big lottery Fund, Grantscape Fund and more recently the Bernard Sunley Fund. The Big Lottery Fund bid was stalled at the first stage with a demand for more detailed evidence of the likely future impact of the new building in the community. Grantscape rejected the bid as being too far from likely build start date but encouraged a re-submission in due course and the Bernard Sunley fund have expressed interest in the bid and a director of the fund visited at the beginning of this month to hear more about the

project. We are likely to hear in mid-march whether our bid for £127,500 is successful. Independently we submitted a bid to the Exeter Legacy Fund which was unsuccessful this time. Contact with Exeter University has proved encouraging with an agreement to provide us with some professional assistance in submitting further bids and this is work in progress for the coming year.

It remains to thank on your behalf all the volunteers who have initiated and helped to run NCA events throughout the year and in particular our hut bookings secretary Jackie Holdstock and our Secretary Su Aves both of whom play a crucial role in the provision of events and activities that lie at the heart of the NCA 's purpose and without who's efforts the annual report would have much less to celebrate.

Rory McNeile  
NCA Chair

21 February 2015