

## Community Action Northumberland – Information about Warm Hubs

Warm Hubs were started by CAN in 2019, but have extended beyond CAN, especially more recently.

### Warm Hubs

#### ***What is a Warm Hub?***

'Warm Hubs' have been created by CAN as places within the local community where people can be assured of finding a safe, warm and friendly environment in which to enjoy refreshments, social activity, information and advice and the company of other people'.

#### ***Why is this Project needed?***

Northumberland is one of the most sparsely populated counties in England with just 63 people per square kilometre. 40.7% of Northumberland's population – 151,885 people live in rural areas (defined as small towns & fringes, villages, hamlets and isolated dwellings). Of these more than 20% are over the age of 65, 15,075 people report themselves as having a limiting long-term illness and 17,550 people are income deprived.

There is a nationwide agenda to tackle the problems associated with fuel poverty, but rural isolation presents a significant barrier to reaching many of those most in need. This project seeks to overcome this barrier. Community Action Northumberland has a long history of working with rural communities and has a strong network of links with community anchors such as parish councils and village halls.

We believe that village halls and other community buildings provide a natural access point through which to reach local communities.

#### ***Warm Hubs - your questions answered***

CAN's award-winning Warm Hubs project was showcased at a conference held in Newcastle on 17th October 2019. Delegates from as far afield as Surrey came to find out about Warm Hubs and to discuss how other parts of the UK might start to benefit from the Warm Hub approach.

#### ***How can a venue become a Warm Hub?***

Community Action Northumberland works with village halls and other community buildings to ensure that:

- The building is 'fit for purpose'. CAN staff will support the management committee to undertake risk assessments, energy audits and accessibility checks. A small grant can be made available to carry out simple upgrades as well as support to find funding for more extensive work
- Governance and policies are in place
- Appropriate insurances and licences have been acquired
- Suitable volunteer recruitment processes
- Volunteers receive ongoing support and training in Dementia Awareness, Food Safety, Equality and Diversity, First Aid and more.

#### ***How are the Warm Hubs run?***

The scheme is very flexible, and each Warm Hub will be run by local people for local people – ensuring that the scheme best meets the needs of their own community.

CAN staff are available to offer ongoing advice and support on a range of issues, including funding.

[Warm Hubs | Supporting Individuals | Community Action Northumberland \(ca-north.org.uk\)](https://www.ca-north.org.uk)

### Northumberland County Council

NCC's warm spaces and places is separate to the Warm Hub ethos, but those offering a Warm Hub may eventually be listed also. Warm spaces and places are more about signposting and advice, than a place to keep warm.

[Northumberland County Council - Network of warm spaces and places expands in Northumberland](https://www.northumberland.gov.uk/News/2020/09/2020-09-24-Northumberland-County-Council-Network-of-warm-spaces-and-places-expands-in-Northumberland)