

## CRC Council in 2004:

### Trustees and Directors

Mrs Jane Armstrong MBE #  
Mrs Bernadette Askins  
The Ven Stuart Bain  
Major Mervin Baker SA  
Dr Mark Bonnington  
The Revd Graham Carter  
Mrs Margaret Clark #  
The Revd John Claydon  
Mr Brian Coldwell OBE #  
Mr Alan Coultas #  
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The Rt Revd Ambrose Griffiths  
The Rt Revd Robert Ladds  
The Revd Canon Geoff Miller #  
The Revd Lionel Osborn  
The Revd Peter Poulter  
Mr Gerry Rafferty #  
Prof Fred Robinson #  
The Rt Revd Martin Wharton  
The Rt Revd Dr Tom Wright

### Vice Chair of Council

**Chair of Council**  
(Retired: 28.09.04)

### Secretary of Council

(Appointed: 28.09.04)  
**Chair of Board of Management**  
(Retired: 25.05.04)

### Treasurer

## CRC Board of Management in 2004:

All # as above, plus Denise Farrar, Dr David Hall and Michael McCann, also Betty Weallans (Retired 02.11.04)

### CRC Chief Officer:

The Revd Ian Zass-Ogilvie FRICS

### HANE Project Manager For HANE:

The Revd John Rogers MCIM

### Supporting Staff

Stuart Allan IT Manager & Accounts Admin.  
Sue Blackbird Administrator - CRC & HANE  
Deborah Geary, Liam Chadwick Faith Survey Administration

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The Churches' Regional Commission in the North East  
is a Company limited by guarantee incorporated in England  
No. 3062222 and a Registered Charity No. 1047745

# Who We Are and What We Do

## Annual Report for 2004

For the year ending 31<sup>st</sup> December 2004

### Main Objective

Our main objective is the promotion of practical ecumenical work to encourage faith communities in extending their contribution to the social and economic development of the North East Region. In pursuance of this objective we seek to:

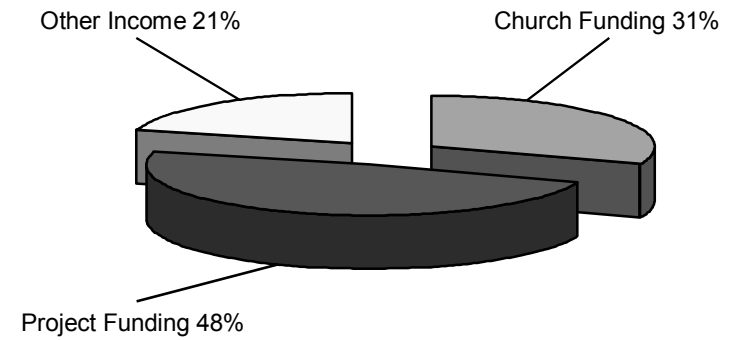
- interpret the social and economic trends and issues from the faith perspective
- access support, advice and training to local churches and their related groups
- identify priorities in the churches' mission and in the disposition of resources

We are increasingly working in partnership with other faiths

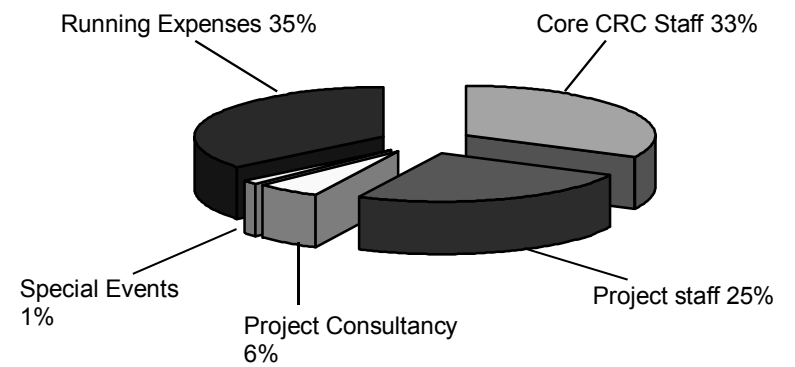
### Our mission statement

*The Churches' Regional Commission in the North East (CRC) working in partnership with North East Christian Churches Together (NECCT) aims to promote social action by churches and faith communities in the North East.*

**Income £165,507**



**Expenditure £159,354**



## ANNUAL REPORT 2004

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### Finance

CRC's total income in the year was	<u>£165,507</u>	
of which the regional Churches gave		£51,000
and grant funding for projects amounted to		£79,889
other income generated raised		£34,618
In the year we spent	<u>£159,354</u>	
cost of core CRC staffing was		£51,924
whilst project staffing cost		£39,152
consultancy on projects cost		£ 9,024
special events cost		£ 2,352
running expenses & asset charges totalled		£56,902

This left a surplus to be carried forward of £6,153

It should be noted that this surplus covers all of CRC's projects. CRC has an unrestricted income reserve of £44,357, which is only about two thirds of the level recommended by the CRC Council (after doing its own risk assessment).

The full Annual Report and Accounts for 2004 with independent examiner's report, is available upon request from the CRC Office at Ushaw College, Durham DH7 9RH

## **Introduction to CRC Annual Report for 2004**

This has been quite a remarkable year, one of our busiest yet, bracketed by the preparations for a referendum on a Directly Elected Regional Assembly and the subsequent spectacular defeat of the proposal, generally attributed to the absence of sufficient significant delegated powers. Such disappointment as may have been felt, appears to be finding a creative outlet in making local representation in governance more effective, through engagement with local strategic partnerships, assisted by community empowerment networks. Faith communities can have an important role in this. It is not yet widely known that in this region alone, faith communities contribute over 4,000,000 hours of volunteering each year – that represents an incredible input in both social and economic terms. We have long been struggling to have this more widely recognised and it seems at last that a more general realisation is dawning.

Mention was made in our report last year of the Home Office's voluntary & community sector infrastructure review. This was followed-up by the Active Communities Unit seeking to support some immediate work in defining specific infrastructure needs. CRC made an early bid into this fund for conducting a regional faiths survey, to discover what social action faith communities were engaged in and what more might be done to expand and support this work. The bid was successful and with top-up funding from the Church Urban Fund we were able to carry out the region-wide survey, *Faith in the North East*, publish a report and launch a database on the joint CRC/NECCT website. So, for the first time, we have data as to what is going on and where and a good idea as to the additional practical support required. We have made a further bid into the infrastructure-funding stream in order to begin to address the infrastructure needs of faith communities in partnership with others.

It is with real sadness that after three years' successful operation we have had to close the Big Lottery funded Housing Action North East project in its present form, due to our inability to find continuation funding and we pay particular tribute to John Rogers for his enterprise and to Sue Blackbird for all her

## **Volunteers:**

We are always on the look out for new volunteers and have been particularly pleased to welcome both Nigel Oakley and Robert Bruce in this capacity and look forward to using them more fully in the year ahead. We continue to benefit, as we have for a number of years now, from Peter Lawson's practical input as a part-time volunteer at the CRC offices. Peter's long civil service experience unfailingly brings order out of chaos.

## **New Chief Officer:**

Ian is to retire at the end of June 2005 and we are delighted to announce that he is to be succeeded by Paul Southgate. Paul was born and trained in the NE and has 25 years experience as a Catholic priest, both in this region and for a while in E. Africa. He resigned in 2002 in order to marry and currently works in the Community Support Division of Durham County Council. His particular skills come at a singularly apposite moment in CRC's development and we look forward to working with him.

## **Our thanks for funding and support from:**

*The Big Lottery Fund*

*Sherburn Hospital Trustees*

*Home Office Active Communities Unit*

*Church Urban Fund*

*Millfield House Foundation*

*Barclays Bank plc*

*Individual churches and congregations*

We also record our most particular gratitude to each of our regional member church denominations that have so generously provided CRC's core funding. We remain deeply grateful to all those who serve CRC and its associated projects in a voluntary capacity on boards and committees, as advisers, or in working as voluntary chaplains with TVM. Finally, we thank those countless people who with immense good-will have helped the work forward through their partnership with us during the last year, amongst them remembering those from other faith communities in the region.

## **Seminars, support and connections contd.**

Brief presentations on CRC's work were made to the Hexham & Newcastle Diocesan Council of Priests and to the Council of Laity. CRC is also represented on the Board of VONNE (Voluntary Organisations Network North East) and on the regional level infrastructure consortium.

## **Areas for future development:**

CRC is still looking for further practical ways of supporting the development of social action by faith communities in rural as well as in urban areas with higher levels of disadvantage. To this end a partnership proposal with the Church Urban Fund is awaiting further consideration. Discussions are also in hand with One NorthEast and Jobcentre Plus, concerning the means of helping faith communities contribute towards the ODPM's recently launched Northern Way, particularly where it aims to tackle (via three or four pilot schemes in this region) the problems of areas heavily dependent upon sickness benefit.

## **Invest 2006:**

Due to the ending of the availability of the Single Regeneration Budget and (post-enlargement) of European Funding, there is no question that the region will suffer. The CRC supports the *Invest 2006* campaign launched on 15<sup>th</sup> November, that draws the imminent crisis to public and political attention. We cannot see the Government's *Futurebuilders* initiative as being an answer to this, or as particularly helpful to more than 10-15% of the Voluntary & Community Sector. If the needs and potential of the VCS and of faith communities within it are to be recognised, then our delivery of PR and general publicity will need a radical overhaul. We are grateful for recent moves to provide additional training in this and for the four initial sessions of '*Getting the Message Across*' provided for the sector at Segedunum with Jane Streater.

support. HANE, in a shell form, will continue promoting the starter packs initiative and running conferences. By contrast, we were pleased to announce that we had been awarded £218k by the Big Lottery Fund Research Grants Programme for running the two-year *Promoting Social Inclusion of Young People* project in partnership with the University of Durham.

Last year I noted that one of the consistent strengths of the Churches' Regional Commission has been its ability to work in partnership with others and lever in additional funding that helps faith communities to contribute to neighbourhood and regional regeneration. Generally speaking, every £1 of core funding contributed by the churches has enabled the CRC to attract an additional £2 from public and charitable sources to further its practical support and project work, much of which is again detailed in this year's report. Most recently with HANE, *Faith in the North East* and *Promoting Social Inclusion of Young People*, CRC has attracted a total of £381k from outside the churches – a not untypical performance and we are most grateful to members of staff and of the Board who have made this possible. Our thanks to those who funded us of course remains undiminished and is recorded at the end of this report.

Finally mention needs to be made of the impending retirement of our Chief Officer who is due to leave us at the end of June 2005. His contribution to the work of CRC has been immense and many of the projects mentioned above would not have started, let alone been successfully completed without Ian's prodigious energy, ingenuity and real flair for social action. The Board and Council have reason to be immensely grateful to him for five years of devoted involvement in the raising of CRC's regional profile that has resulted in recognition on the part of regional public and private sector bodies of the work the faith communities are undertaking and will continue to be involved in. On a personal note, I would like to pay tribute to Ian as a wonderful colleague an inspiring social entrepreneur and an outstanding manager.

***John Eversley: Chairman of CRC Board***

## Faith in the North East

The urgent task in 2004 has been to continue implementing the development strategy that emerged from our consultation in 2003. We wished to conduct further research providing incontrovertible evidence of the added value brought to the region's social and economic life by faith communities and as a consequence, to seek resources for more development work with faith communities, so supporting their partnership and engagement in social action projects etc.

The perfect opportunity emerged with the bid into the voluntary & community sector infrastructure early spend fund for conducting a regional faith survey, the first of its kind in our region, which gave us the opportunity to register the level of faith communities' engagement with their local areas. As the grant was relatively small, it was necessary for CRC to conduct the survey in-house, albeit supervised by Dr Kath Smith and advised by a helpful and supportive reference group. Stuart Allan, Deborah Geary and Liam Chadwick, two of whom were New Deal trainees, carried out the work and all are relatively young. Questionnaires were sent to some 1,500 places of worship and a respectable return of 50.2% was achieved. Data was collated by the CRC team and analysed by Kath Smith who prepared the report. Jonathan Porter was engaged to set up an accessible database for us on the CRC/NECCT website, which Stuart now manages. The considerable information collected is now available to all. Thanks to a residual grant from the Church Urban Fund, 700 copies of the full report were printed and 2000 folded A2 executive summaries and these will be disseminated amongst our 25 local authorities and their local strategic partnerships.

As noted in the Chairman's introduction, we have made a further bid into the infrastructure-funding stream in order to: (a) continue to update and review the database, particularly working with some of the more hard to reach faith communities (b) begin to help directly with some of the problems identified

As in 2005 Sheelah plans to retire from Industrial Mission and Ken to do rather less, it is noted that alternative infrastructure support (either voluntary or paid) for an industrial mission team with such potential needs to be found fairly swiftly.

## Hidden Britain Centres (HBC):

Hidden Britain Centres - an Arthur Rank Centre initiative to increase selective tourism in rural areas of the northwest, where faith communities have been the principal drivers, initially asked CRC in 2003 to support a similar initiative for the North East. ARC have appointed Rosie Radcliffe (working p/t from Cumbria) to take this forward and after an uncertain start here, it seems as if this may now receive some of the support it well deserves from One NorthEast and others.

## Seminars, support and connections:

CRC arranged for seminars on '*An Elected Regional Assembly in the North East - For & Against*' inviting Canon Kenyon Wright (the self-confessed 'grandfather' of the Scottish Parliament) to address the first, following which we published a wee booklet of questions and answers, both for and against. Cautionary literature, encouraging voting for inclusive parties, was also published at the time of the local elections. Last January we welcomed the launch of ippr north (Institute of Public Policy & Research). During the year, working with the voluntary & community and faith sectors, we also have participated fully in the One NorthEast SHINE programme (*Shaping Horizons in the North East*). This is an interesting process, managed by Phil Shakeshaft of ONE, looking at alternative futures facing the region and could therefore be a valuable tool for use by our faith communities - this too is being piloted.

CRC continues in active support of the North East Churches EarthCare Group; Durham Diocesan Board of Social Responsibility; Northumbria Industrial Mission and (to a reduced extent now) the Church & Society Officers' Group.

## Tees Valley Faith Communities Regeneration Group (TVFCRG) contd.

The Community Network has since provided further funding, initially via TVFCRG, to help develop a project to support people in their own homes in Redcar. A further scheme for converting the ground floor of the proposed South Bank Mosque for community use has had to be put on hold temporarily due to area redevelopment plans, but the Mosque has now been assisted to become a registered place of worship and a charity. Work continues in partnership with both One Voice Tees Valley (notably with their Youth Project) and with Middlesbrough Voluntary Development Agency, both of which have picked up the task of further development of local faith networks - MVDA showing particular initiative in this field. An interesting idea surfaced earlier in the year, suggesting a partnership for faith communities with 'Connexions' Kick-start programme, employing home-grown mentors from faith communities to support young people (aged 13-19) at risk of unemployment, together with their families. TVFCRG has had considerable enthusiastic input to this, although regrettably 'Connexions' has experienced difficulties in implementation. This may be due to some recent uncertainties over their own future, but at the time of writing, early in 2005, some progress is at last being made.

## Tees Valley Ministry (TVM):

TVM became an integral part of CRC in Sept 2002, although it runs its own affairs and latterly Dr David Hall, as TVM Chair, has given it both a new focus and a strategy document. During the year two further chaplains were commissioned - Colin Offor at Stockton in April for retail chaplaincy (p/t) and Rachel Harrison at New Marske in September for chaplaincy at the Wilton complex (p/t). The URC-funded Stockton town centre post unfortunately still remains unfilled and further efforts will be made to remedy this. Other volunteer part-time chaplains have been recruited and are in training, supervised by both Sheelah Stevens and (in so-called retirement) by Ken Harris, who still continues with a full programme of industrial visiting.

in the survey (c) work with others in building local faith networks, as a prelude to the eventual formation of a regional faith forum and (d) begin to address the infrastructure needs of faith communities in partnership with local development agencies and others.

## The NECCT relationship



North East Christian Churches Together was constituted in 2001 and, as confirmed by the faiths survey, it has a network of local Churches Together groups in the region. Traditionally their focus has been on ecumenical partnerships rather than social action, but in a number of areas the value of working together on social issues and projects has been discovered to be a truly unifying factor, as our Faith in Community project (1999-2001) proved to good purpose. It was perhaps this apparent difference of agenda that prevented CRC and NECCT from joining together at the outset, however NECCT's local roots and CRC's regional connections are best serving each other and this is essentially what underlies the current proposal for CRC to become an agency of NECCT in April 2005. We already share the [www.northeastchurches.org.uk](http://www.northeastchurches.org.uk) website.

Such a regional partnership and matching of boundaries is unique in the UK and we intend to make the best of it by working together in every way possible. CRC is also part of the Churches Regional Network, which meets in London at CTE (Churches Together in England) to share ways in which faith communities can best relate to national & regional bodies and issues. One of their current concerns is a research project '*Faith in LSPs*' being driven by Dr Pat Logan from the London Churches Group, looking nationally at the role of various faith community representatives in local strategic partnerships and we are participating fully in this.

## Housing Action North East (HANE)



This region-wide project began its third year of operation in Jan 2004 and was subject to a positive evaluation process, which it was hoped might assist in the bid for continuation funding. Sadly, in this we were not successful, despite the project having a year of remarkable achievement. The annual conference in June scored high levels of satisfaction with the 140 delegates.

Working in partnership with Shelter and Centrepont and funded by Northern Rock, a new regional database/website of all housing agencies was successfully launched and demonstrated at the conference, a CD Rom is now available. Faith communities and others have been encouraged to continue with the starter packs initiative – providing some basic needs for those setting-up home after being homeless. Our project leader, through his regional networking with local authorities and agencies at all levels, has been able to make cogent contribution to several policy debates and issues (not least to the gap in service provision in relation to emergency and temporary accommodation) and now has a place on the North East Housing Board. He has also graduated from the Common Purpose programme, one that has usefully extended his width of regional contact. There has been continued development of the mystery customer initiative (to test the level of service delivery from housing agencies to those who are homeless) and an interesting research project into the support needs of refused asylum seekers was commenced.

As the project could not be re-financed, CRC decided to support the project leader in piloting the establishment of his own consultancy so as to complete such work, now funded by a separate charitable trust. The bonus of the creation of a small business was not one of the anticipated outcomes from this project, but then neither was it expected that continuation funding for the project would prove to be quite so elusive.

We are grateful to the Community Fund and the HANE strategic reference group for their advice, understanding and support. It is to be hoped that HANE will continue as a partnership, with some administrative support provided by CRC (funded by Lloyds TSB), undertaking some of its former work, whilst seeking further funding for operating once again more fully.

## Promoting Social Inclusion of Young People

– a new research project with the University of Durham:

Earlier in the year, working with the University of Durham (Dr Sarah Banks) and with the welcome and enabling assistance of Millfield House Foundation, we prepared a research proposal and comprehensive bid to the Big Lottery Fund Research Grants Programme. The proposal was for carrying out (with young people) a participative action research project, looking at the various aspects of youth work currently undertaken by faith communities in the northeast, with a special focus upon those young people on the margins of society. We were notified of the grant award early in December, which is contingent upon proper engagement of young people representing all faith groups. Work is already in hand on this, researchers will shortly be recruited by the University of Durham to be based at Ushaw and supervised by Dr Sarah Banks. CRC will be providing general administration, project management and links with other faith communities. A youth event is planned for the spring, from which a reference group will be drawn. We are hoping that the initial inspiration provided by the Cedarwood Project in North Shields will help fashion the continuing development of this project.

## Tees Valley Faith Communities Regeneration Group (TVFCRG):

This interfaith group originally convened by CRC in 2001, supported by the Redcar & Cleveland Community Network, commissioned a survey of the social action of all faith communities in the area and launched the report in April 2003.