



# Annual report

## 2009-10

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## Our aims

Adapt's primary aim is to improve the quality of life of both disabled and disadvantaged people in the North East.

Adapt works closely with partners in both the voluntary and statutory sector and supports working with and through partners to achieve its aims.

Adapt provides services on a needs led basis, and the company's activities are monitored by its voluntary Trustee board.



# Foreword by Pat Maginn

## Chair of Adapt Trustees



**It has been another excellent year for Adapt, with the launch of Northumberland Disability and Deaf Network, new services, more investment in community transport and a national award.**

The development of Northumberland Disability and Deaf Network has provided a vehicle for Northumberland County Council to consult on a range of policies and topics.

The launch of the Green Light to Work scheme at Lynemouth Resource Centre in December saw an excellent turnout by partner organisations and extensive local media coverage. The instant success of the project was rewarded in April with an additional £80,000 European grant, which has funded more vehicles to help unemployed people in Northumberland access work.

We were delighted to be presented with the Community Transport Association's Best Rural Community Transport Award 2010 at the CTA's annual awards ceremony at the Manchester Hilton in February, which recognises exceptional performance.

February also saw the addition of two new, fully accessible low floor minibuses to our fleet, allowing us to expand our vital community transport services including Dial a Ride.

We enjoy lots of positive feedback from users of our services, as well as suggestions for further improvements. A comment from an independent external auditor really stood out this year - it came from the Legal Services Commission's review of our Quality Mark:

*Adapt (North East) Ltd is now a dynamic jewel in the North East crown with real entrepreneurial spirit. Changing its business model, the organisation has been able to survive and thrive in the marketplace despite the turbulent economy. Their accomplishments are most certainly due to inspirational leadership and a great team effort which has quality, spirit and the ability to work together. Well done!*

I hope you enjoy this review of the last year and look forward with me and the Adapt team to more success in 2010-11.



## Review of 2009-10

### By Liz Prudhoe, General Manager

**Successes for the year include the development of Northumberland Disability and Deaf Network and the continuing work of Northumberland LINK, both of which offer an opportunity for people to have a voice in services being provided.**

Alongside the launch of new services such as Green Light to Work, the expansion of existing services including Dial-a-Ride and the delivery of new community transport vehicles, it's been an extremely busy year for Adapt.

### Green Light to Work

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Green Light to Work is a superb scheme, which offers the affordable loan of a car or scooter to people living in Northumberland who have the offer of a job but cannot access it due to the lack of suitable public or private transport. It is funded by the Department of Communities and Local Government via Northumberland County Council's Working Neighbourhoods Fund and was launched in December 2009.

One of the beneficiaries, Rachael Gray, 19, of Amble, said: "Without the loan of the scooter I realistically could have only got to work by relying on lifts from colleagues. I'm also a volunteer crew member with RNLI Amble and, with just a few minutes to get there from my pager going off, every second counts. So the scooter could be a real lifesaver."

For more information on the scheme see [www.greenlighttowork.org](http://www.greenlighttowork.org)



Rachael receives the keys to her scooter from Newcastle United goalkeeper Steve Harper

## Northumberland Disability and Deaf Network (NDDN)

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Working in partnership with Northumberland LINk we launched this new, independent network for disabled and deaf people in January.

### **Its aims include:**

- Supporting the interests of disabled and deaf people, and disability and deaf organisations
- Listening to people's views
- Tackling issues raised by our members
- Being a source of information.

### **It will achieve these aims by:**

- Bringing together disabled and deaf people, and disability organisations in Northumberland
- Providing advice and information on disability and deaf issues
- Signposting people to other organisations that can support them
- Advocating for better services
- Making sure that policy makers listen to the views of disabled and deaf people when planning and delivering services, and take their needs into account
- Providing peer support - members will be able to share information and experience with each other.

The network through Northumberland County Council was commissioned by the North East Empowerment Partnership to carry out some consultation work about how public bodies can better engage with disabled and deaf people.

It produced a report entitled Effective Engagement with Disabled and Deaf People which made a number of recommendations and copies are available from the Adapt office or website.



## New minibuses allowed expansion of community transport services

**In February we took delivery of two new, fully accessible low floor minibuses, taking our capital investment in community transport vehicles to £420,000 in the past three years, part-funded by grants from the LEADER European rural development grant, the former Castle Morpeth Council and Northumberland County Council.**

The vehicles have allowed us to further expand our community transport services, with day trip destinations ranging from Gretna to Morpeth's new Sanderson Arcade.

New Dial-a-Ride routes including Ponteland, Prudhoe and Slaggyford add to existing routes serving Bellingham, Kielder, Blanchland, Allendale, Redesmouth, Horsley, Kingston Park, Dipton Mill, Corbridge, Hexham, Belsay and Morpeth.

## Northumberland LINK

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**Adapt, in partnership with Northumberland Community Development Company, has hosted Northumberland Local Involvement Network (LINK), building on the first year successes.**

Northumberland LINK has an independent Chair and Steering Group setting priorities and overseeing the work.

The LINK has enjoyed a wide and diverse membership participating in activities and task groups throughout the year.

The three most effective methods that Northumberland LINK has used to engage local people in feedback and effecting change have been:

- Building networks and partnerships
- Supporting thematic task and finish groups
- Establishing links into diverse communities.

In recognition of access issues related to the extreme rurality of the county, Northumberland LINK also undertook a range of roadshows in communities throughout Northumberland to publicise and encourage people to have their say in The Big Care Debate.

These events attracted additional people and significantly raised the profile of care issues with a wider public.

## Other services

Adapt offers a number of other services all at nominal rates, subsidised by the Charity. They include:

### Odd jobs service

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Our odd jobs service, which is available to disabled people, older people and women living alone, has been ever popular. Adapt members have been able to arrange assistance with small tasks.

### Creative activities groups

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Adapt provided a series of workshops to determine if there was a need to develop future activity groups, following the implementation of Personal Budgets. Due to the success of the workshops Adapt has taken forward a plan to provide activity groups within Tynedale initially.

### The Individual Support Service

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The Individual Support Service provides ad-hoc support for people to access services in the community which could include visiting the hairdresser, library, leisure centre or for shopping trips. The service has been well used and is appreciated.

### Wheelchair loan scheme

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If someone requires the occasional use of a wheelchair, Adapt can loan one.

### CRB checks

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We completed over 500 CRB checks for volunteers and community groups throughout the year and opened the service up to private sector employers.

## An award winning year...

# Community Transport Association's Best Rural Community Transport Award 2010



**We were delighted to be presented with the Community Transport Association's Best Rural Community Transport Award 2010 at the CTA's annual awards ceremony at the Manchester Hilton in February, which recognises exceptional performance by community, voluntary and local authority fleet operators.**

Further praise came in the review of our Charter Mark by the Legal Services Commission. It said:

*When the organisation first applied for Quality Mark recognition and at the time of their last audit in 2006 they were running an Advocacy and Befriending Service which was funded by the Northern Rock Foundation and the Big Lottery Fund and which fully satisfied the required LSC criteria.*

*This funding came to an end, at which point the organisation recognised the need to become more self reliant and as a result developed a range of products and services to improve income generation.*

*Adapt (North East) Ltd is now a dynamic jewel in the north east crown with real entrepreneurial spirit. Changing its business model the organisation has been able to survive and thrive in the marketplace despite the turbulent economy. Their accomplishments are most certainly due to inspirational leadership and a great team effort which has quality, spirit and the ability to work together. Well done!*

# Future plans: 2010-11 and beyond...

**Adapt has worked for a number of years to achieve sustainability, adopting a social enterprise approach, and is well placed to take advantage of the anticipated opportunities for voluntary organisations.**

We will look to maximise emerging opportunities and offer our expertise in a range of areas through working individually and in partnership.

On a recent board and staff planning away day both the Trustees and Staff considered how to continue the work of Adapt, building partnerships and delivering services.

The Adapt board recognises the importance of reviewing services to ensure we are delivering services that meet the needs of people using them. The board commissioned a report to consider the benefits of the Adapt community transport service, including user reviews and case studies in May 2010, which led to a number of suggestions.

The overall recommendation was:

*'The data that has been collected as part of this review should form the basis of a more detailed study investigating the case for a Community Transport Delivery partnership to roll out the well established model operated by Adapt. Adapt has the expertise and motivation to build a business case using the criteria in a Social Impact Bond. This development would need to be externally funded and managed by a partnership arrangement throughout Northumberland.'*

Projects in the pipeline include:

## **Support Workers' Register**

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We plan to develop a register of support workers covering the whole of Northumberland.

The register will allow disabled people who require support services to maximise the opportunities of personalised budgets whilst enabling development of support workers.

## **Bluebird Training**

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As part of our strategic plan we are to activate our trading arm Bluebird Training in the next fiscal year. Training will be initially focused on driver related training including CPC – Certificate of Professional Competence.

## **Telephone Helpline**

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We intend to provide a telephone helpline also accessible by text and email which will provide information and support.

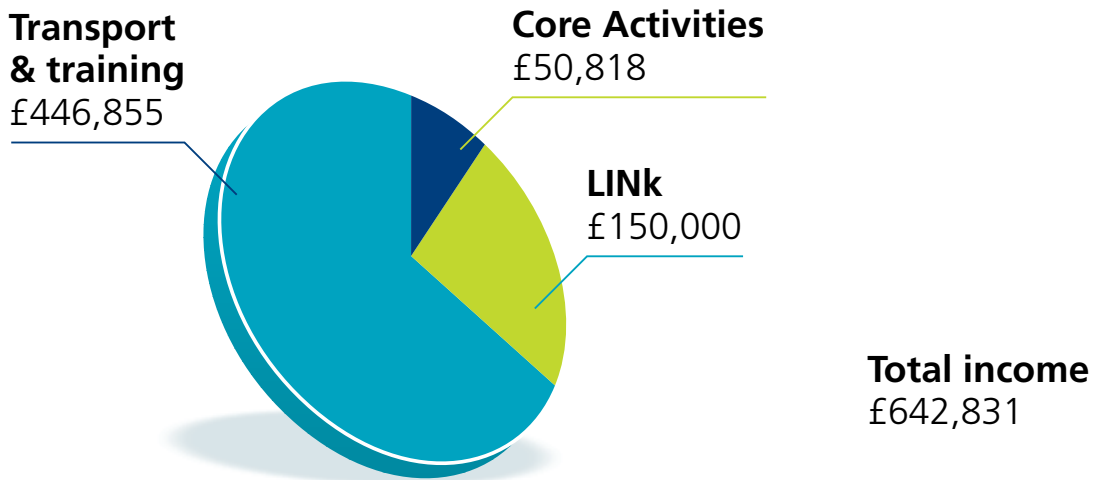
# Accounts

**Adapt is now entering its 20th year and has enjoyed good financial health for a number of years.**

Our reserves policy in former years has ensured we are in a stable financial position allowing us to plan for the future.

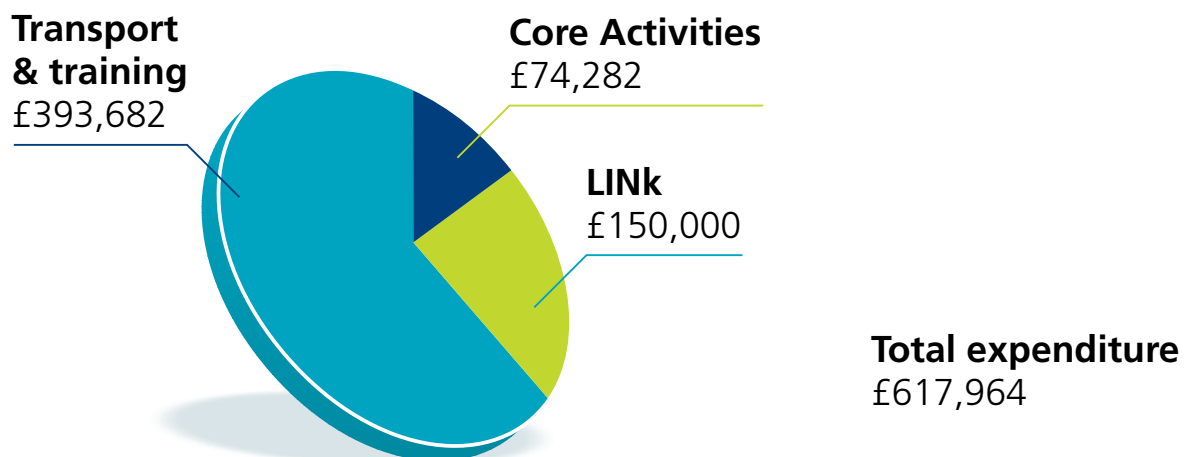
## Income

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## Expenditure

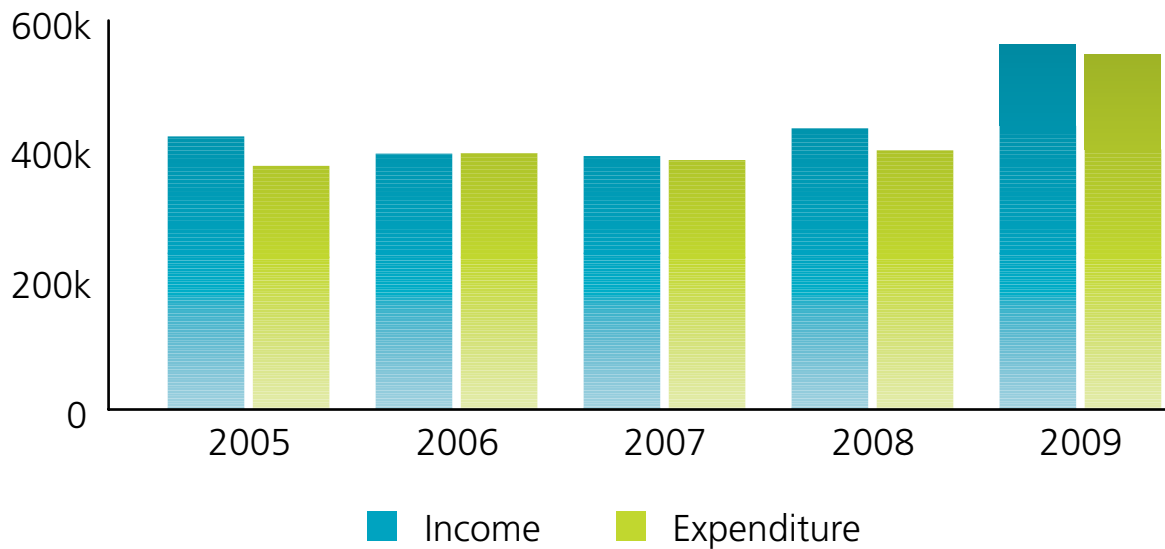
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We are delighted to once again achieve a surplus on core activities in the year, continuing a long term trend. This will enable us to sustain and hopefully invest in developing new services.

A full copy of accounts is available on request.

# Financial history



Financial year end	Income	Expenditure
2009	£563,194	£548,395
2008	£433,721	£399,756
2007	£390,988	£384,811
2006	£394,697	£395,468
2005	£421,271	£375,827

## List of Trustees

Pat Maginn (Chair)  
 Lorraine Hershon  
 George Clarke (Treasurer)  
 Maureen Etton  
 Rosemary Theobalds (Honorary Secretary)  
 Richard Lee  
 Margaret Makin  
 Annie Bishop  
 Anita Stevenson

Liz Prudhoe (Company Secretary)



## Adapt (North East)

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