

# The EXCHANGE

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## US social capital guru at North East

**'IF YOU are involved in regeneration and economic revitalisation, and if you are not focusing on how to build social capital, you're far less likely to be effective.'**

Those are the words of leading US activist Lewis Feldstein (pictured), president of the New Hampshire Charitable Foundation and advisor to presidents Clinton and Bush.

He visited the North East with a presentation to over 100 delegates, at a high profile event looking at the issue of social capital held in July at the Glebe Centre, Murton.

The event, arranged by Regeneration Exchange, regional development agency One North East and the North East Funders Forum, was linked to the launch of a recent ONE commissioned report Social Capital and Economic Development in the North East.

The report calls on ONE and partner agencies to look at how building social capital for disadvantaged and excluded communities can be made a priority, especially in sub-regional investment plans. In addition, funders, activists and policy-makers need to recognise the value of community-based and voluntary sector activities in creating pathways to economic inclusion.

Robin Beveridge, Economic Inclusion Manager at ONE, told The Exchange, 'the challenge is now to increase the focus on social capital throughout public sector agencies and beyond, building these concepts into our core programmes.'

At the event, ONE's director of strategy and development Pat Ritchie highlighted the importance of social capital for partners across the region. She noted how Regeneration Exchange, in partnership with the Community Foundation of Tyne and Wear and Northumberland and ONE, are to establish a region-wide learning forum to take forward the report's recommendations.

The report and its executive summary can be downloaded from [www.onenorth-east.gov.uk/page/reportspublications.cfm](http://www.onenorth-east.gov.uk/page/reportspublications.cfm). For the conference report and presentations and information on the learning forum, go to [www.regenerationexchange.org/feedback-socialcapital05.php](http://www.regenerationexchange.org/feedback-socialcapital05.php).

Contact Karen Gillard at Regeneration Exchange for details on the progress of the forum.