

# 'Devon Rural Voice'

The Newsletter of the Devon Rural Network

May 2007

## DRN NEWS

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### !!!!Devon Rural Strategy 2007 Launched!!!!

The Devon Rural Strategy 2007—Action Plan for 2007 onwards, was launched at the DRN AGM on Weds 11th April (details of AGM on page 2).

The Strategy leads on from the Rural Devon Profile completed in November 2006 and the SWOT analysis (SWOT consultation event occurred in September 2006)

The strategy includes a summary of the profile of Rural Devon and then concentrates on the 5 issues. The Document is completed by an Action Plan from 2007.

The Strategy highlights the 5 Contemporary Priority Issues identified in the Profile, those being:

1. Accessibility
2. Rural Housing
3. Community Self-Confidence
4. Environment & Climate Change
5. Rural Business & Productivity

DRN members and partners are encouraged to read the strategy in conjunction with the Rural Devon Profile and to consider the action table. Potential deliver bodies have been identified and the next stage of work will be to identify action and intervention leaders to ensure work is being progressed.

Organisations who have renewed their annual membership have received a copy of the strategy along with attendees at the AGM.

The Strategy will be available for download from the website shortly, keep an eye on:

[www.drn.org.uk/about/action.asp](http://www.drn.org.uk/about/action.asp)



For your copy please contact Jen Anderton on 01392 382831 or email [Jennifer.anderton@Devon.gov.uk](mailto:Jennifer.anderton@Devon.gov.uk)



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## DRN AGM Weds 11th April 2007

The DRN AGM was held at Escot House, nr Ottery St Mary. The event was a great success and was attended by 37 people.



*Escot House, Ottery St Mary*

There were lively opening remarks from Professor Michael Winter, President of the Network, who chaired the day. The Devon Rural Strategy 2007 was launched by Professor Ian Mercer, Chairman of the Network. The following changes occurred to the PSG

The following members stood down:

*Martin Weiler—Environment Agency*

*David Whiteley—NW Devon Economic Partnership*

*Peter Walmsley—Private Sector/RBSAG*

*Chris Woodruff—Devon AONB's*

The following representatives were elected:

*Sheena Asthana—Plymouth University*

*Paul Sadler—Environment Agency*

*Alan Robinson—South Hams District Council*

*Chris France—Dartmoor National Park/Protected L'scapes*

The afternoon welcomed speakers on the issue of Sustainable Rural Housing and Climate Change:

Mary Ridgeway—Devon Affordable Rural Housing Co-ord

Gareth Walton—Devon Sustainable Buildings Initiative

Ann Morris—Fuse Architecture

These were followed with 2 workshops both looking at how the new Devon Rural Strategy and actions are addressing this issue and how best to deliver them, amongst other areas of work around this field.

The day received very positive feedback and thanks to all who contributed to the day.

## Note from the DRN Chairman— Prof Ian Mercer

2007-08 is a 'transition year' for the DRN. That is the outcome of the annual bid to the County Council for its continued hosting and part funding of the Network. Created by the Devon Strategic Partnership, itself a creature of all that flowed from the FMD crises of 2001, the Network has always enjoyed the strong support of the County Council. That support is undiminished but like all others the Council has to keep small expenditures under review. So far the RDA has been the other main contributor to the Network's budget, with most of the District Councils excluding Torridge and Mid Devon. Support also comes from Natural England, the National Parks and other member organisations who can afford it.

The outcome of this years negotiation with the County Council is a renewal of funding as last year but with the agreement that we will examine the Network's efficacy and outputs. There is no argument about the maintenance of the rural Devon's needs via the continual review of the Rural Strategy, just refreshed thoroughly after its first four years, we have agreed too to take on the role of Rural Policy advisor to the County Council, and to take a lead in rural Devon's own campaigning when that seems appropriate

Through all this there is no doubt that we should continue to 'proof' all policy proposals, national, regional and local, to ensure as far as possible their fitness for rural purposes. We will still attempt to support groups of members with specific remits like Farming and Food and Communities. This last activity suggests that such groups could well become the champions of the issues that the strategic review has revealed even though there will still be a need for those which cut across more than one issue.

Whatever, the funding of the two staff members we need as a minimum and the activities which keep the network together and fully informed—which is what it is about—will become an annual exercise until we can obtain a commitment from all who see value in such operation beyond the current year

Prof Ian Mercer, May 2007

## Bye Bye to Sarah Streeter!



Since the last newsletter we have said goodbye to Sarah Streeter who started a new job as Sustainable Tourism Officer on 2nd April. This is a brilliant opportunity for Sarah and we are all thrilled for her. She will be sorely missed as Sarah has provided tremendous support and enthusiasm for the next whilst in post. Good Luck to Sarah and thanks for everything!

Check out the next newsletter for news of new recruit Leanne Crawford, due to start on Monday 4th June

## DRN ACTION GROUP NEWS

### CONSULTATION RESPONSE ACTION GROUP

The CRAG are due to meet in June and one of the main topics for discussion will no doubt be the RDPE. There is currently a consultation open on the following:

Views are invited on the draft RDPE 2007-2013 in the context of an Environmental Report on the Programme's likely overall impact.

After the consultation a Strategic Environmental Assessment Statement will be produced summarising views expressed, giving Defra's response, and detailing the way in which the issues raised in the Environmental Report and in consultation have been incorporated into the final version of the Programme.

The deadline for responses is **5 July 2007**. However, it would be helpful to us if there were initial responses to this consultation by **1 May 2007**.

[www.defra.gov.uk/corporate/consult/rural-dev2007-13/index.htm](http://www.defra.gov.uk/corporate/consult/rural-dev2007-13/index.htm)

The DRN and DCC are formulating an initial response to this consultation and will submit a fuller response by July 5th

Comments and questions to Jen (contact details on pg .1.)



### RURAL BUSINESS SUPPORT ACTION GROUP

The RBSAG last met in Oct 2006, this meeting was mainly aimed at finalising the outputs developed for Rural Renaissance. The future of the group is uncertain but there is very likely to be a role for the RBSAG with regards to the Rural Business and Productivity section of the Devon Rural Strategy 2007.

There is a role to help facilitate the actions/interventions in the action plan and possibly to deliver if appropriate.

If you are a member of the RBSAG and would like a conversation around this issue or if you are simply interested and would like to discuss then contact Jen (contact details on pg .1.)

### SUSTAINABLE TOURISM ACTION GROUP

The Sustainable Tourism Action Group is awaiting news about the new emerging Devon Destination Management Organisation (DMO) it is hoped that the STAG will perform the role of the Sustainable Tourism arm of the DMO. Unfortunately the launch of the DMO has been delayed and the start date is not known.

STAG has also got a very important role in supporting the Devon Rural Strategy 2007, there are tourism related actions that can be supported and sometimes delivered by the group.

In the next newsletter it is hoped that there will be much more detailed updates from all the Action groups...

If you are a member of the RBSAG and would like a conversation around this issue or if you are simply interested and would like to discuss then contact Jen (contact details on pg .1.)

*All articles represent the view of the authors and are not necessarily those held by the Devon Rural Network*

## SUSTAINABLE FARMING AND FOOD ACTION GROUP

The Sustainable Farming and Food Action Group met quite a while ago now and the most recent work the group were involved in was developing the outputs for Rural Renaissance (SERC).

Mary Talbot-Rosevear and Jen Anderton are due to meet up in early May to discuss the future of the group and how it can function in the future.

If you have any preliminary thoughts about the group, whether you are an action group member or not please contact Jen

For further information please contact Jen Anderton – [Jennifer.anderton@devon.gov.uk](mailto:Jennifer.anderton@devon.gov.uk) or 01392 382831

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## ENVIRONMENT DEVON

Environment Devon has been inactive for a few months due to pressure on Natural England and the changes that occurred last year. A new office Helen Merchant has now been tasked with looking at ED. Jen and Helen met on Fri 20th April and are now developing the group again.

The main role for ED is yet to be established as how the ED links to the Devon Strategic Partnership is up for discussion. A core group of members are due to meet in May to discuss the group and from there it is likely that there will be a half day event in June/July so watch this space...

For more info on Environment Devon contact Jen on details above.



## RURAL VOLUNTARY AND COMMUNITY SECTOR ACTION GROUP

The RVAG met on 4th April 2007 at the Ockment Centre, Okehampton. The Terms of Reference have been agreed and the group have identified some areas to develop mini working groups around:

- Accessibility
- Rural Funding
- Community (multi use) Buildings
- Transport

Minutes can be found on the RVAG page on the DRN website

For more information please contact Jay Talbot on 01392 383443 or [Jay@devonrcc.org.uk](mailto:Jay@devonrcc.org.uk)

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**Remember that the newsletter is there to advertise and promote members work, so if you have any articles, examples of best practice or upcoming events please email them to**

**[Jennifer.anderton@devon.gov.uk](mailto:Jennifer.anderton@devon.gov.uk)**

**The next newsletter will be due to be released in September!!**

**For all the previous newsletters please go to:**

**[Www.drn.org.uk/news/newsletters.asp](http://www.drn.org.uk/news/newsletters.asp)**

## STRATEGIC NEWS

### Prince demands help for farmers

*Taken from Western Morning News, Monday 23rd April*

Farmers are enduring some of the 'toughest times in living memory' and need more support to survive says the Prince of Wales. Prince Charles, whose comments come at a time when the Government is facing a barrage of criticism over its handling of agricultural policies said the difficulties faced by 'the Guardians of our countryside' were threatening to jeopardise rural life because many farmers could not cope with the 'new and frightening world' and needed help to adapt.

His views add weight to the campaign calling for more help for the rural community in the wake of the Single Farm Payment fiasco which has left many Westcountry farmers facing financial ruin

Prince Charles's comments have been welcomed by campaigners such as Richard Haddock, Chairman of the National Farmers' Union in the South West, who criticised the Labour Government for treating the countryside with "contempt" over the Single Farm Payments.

For full article go to [www.westernmorningnews.co.uk](http://www.westernmorningnews.co.uk) and put Prince Charles in the search engine

### Community Planning Database update

The Community Planning Database steering group met on Monday 19th March at the Ockment Centre. DRN were pleased to be able to confirm funding of £2050 towards the database. This funding has been released from the DEFRA Rural Social & Community Programme. Currently the project is waiting to hear whether or not they have been successful in securing funding from Devon Renaissance.

For more information please contact Matt Bell at DCC [matthew.bell@devon.gov.uk](mailto:matthew.bell@devon.gov.uk)

### Devon Economic Partnership

The DEP last met in April, topics discussed included the development of the Devon Economic Strategy, productive skills in Devon, the DSP and LAA and EU funding in the future. It is hoped that the Devon Economic Strategy will be presented at the next DEP meeting scheduled for May, in draft form.

The DRN sit on the DEP to ensure that linkages are made between the Devon Rural Strategy and emerging Devon Economic Strategy, both are working to deliver outcomes in the LAA

### Rural Development Programme for England 2007-2013

On 29th March, David Miliband gave a written statement announcing the details of the voluntary modulation and co-financing rates that will apply, and the overall budget size for the new Rural Development Programme for England.

#### Rates of voluntary modulation

Miliband said 'The rate of voluntary modulation to apply in England for Single Payment Scheme (SPS) 2006 payments was already established under the old voluntary modulation regulation at 6%.

For the SPS scheme years 2007-2012, I intend to apply the following rates of voluntary modulation, all significantly below the ceiling of 20% established in the new regulation:

2007 – 12%	2008—13%
2011 – 14%	2009—14%
2012 – 14%	2010—14%

Money generated from modulating SPS in any given year is made available for spend in the subsequent year (i.e. modulation of SPS 2007 is available for use in 2008).

#### Co-financing

In England, voluntary modulation is essential to enable us to deliver on the commitments we have made to implement effective agri-environment schemes under Axis 2 of the Rural Development Regulation. I attach very high priority to the environmental outcomes we wish to achieve through the Environmental Stewardship Scheme. I am therefore prepared to add a significant amount of national co-financing to voluntary modulation under Axis 2 in order to deliver on these objectives. I shall therefore provide national co-financing for Axis 2 – which will account for 80% of the voluntary modulation funding – at a rate of 40%. In other words, for every £60 taken from pillar 1 direct payments and transferred to Axis 2, I shall add a further £40 from national funding. I do not intend to provide national co-financing for the 20% of voluntary modulation receipts which will apply to Axes 1 and 3'

[http://www.defra.gov.uk/erdp/rdp07\\_13/index.htm](http://www.defra.gov.uk/erdp/rdp07_13/index.htm)

See Page 3 CRAG for more info and DRN involvement.

## SERC to be launched

The new Sustainable Economies for Rural Communities (SERC) programme will be launched on May 23 at Teignbridge Council offices. It comprises 3 strands, including for the first time Sustainable Tourism, and Sustainable Food and Farming, both of which will cover the whole of rural Devon, and an expansion of its present remit of working to drive up the rural economy by raising business productivity which will now also apply to the non-Objective 2 Local Authority areas (East Devon, Mid Devon and Teignbridge).

Speaking at the launch event will be a number of key speakers, including Colin Molton, the operations director of the South West Regional Development Agency (the principal funder of Devon Renaissance), Malcolm Bell, chief executive of Southwest Tourism, and Melanie Hall, regional director of the National Farmers' Union.

Results of the latest business survey by Devon Renaissance will also be presented at the event. The survey – drawing on the detailed responses from over 1,300 small and medium sized businesses – looked at the pressures on, and the expectations of, businesses across the Non-Objective 2 area. The survey results complement those of an earlier survey of Objective 2 area businesses (over 2,200 businesses from North Devon, Torridge, West Devon and the South Hams), giving the Programme a comprehensive evidence base from which it and partner organisations can target economic regeneration activity.

Robin Makeig-Jones, Devon Renaissance programme manager, says the new programmes will make a real difference to rural Devon

"The Sustainable Food and Farming measures aim to provide a number of opportunities for business to increase skills and develop new activities. These include access to skills development training, increasing links to academic and training institutions to promote professional development and entrepreneurship, supporting businesses to enable them to improve management, financial and marketing skills and supporting initiatives which address key issues for the agricultural sector in Devon, for example market development and improving infrastructure.

"We will also seek to identify gaps and opportunities within the food and drink and farming sectors and support initiatives which address these, and will also utilise and invest in innovation and technology to drive economic development, in particular the use of environmental technologies."

The Sustainable Tourism measures will also focus on raising key skills, the use of innovation, technology and the environment to drive economic development, and in addition will develop networks and communication within the tourism sector to work towards a strategic approach to destination management, and importantly will promote quality – supporting initiatives which promote quality development amongst tourism businesses

.Makeig-Jones added: "The extension of funding to improve business productivity into the Non-Objective 2 areas is recognition of the fact that, whilst in general business performance is better to the south and east of the county in rural areas, there remain very real constraints on growth and productivity and this additional funding will help to address these issues. Part of this funding will be dedicated to an extension of the Redundant Buildings scheme helping to bring redundant buildings back into productive economic use."

The funding for all of this activity will be available until the end of March 2009 and applications for funding are welcomed. For details contact the Devon Renaissance team on 01837 658643 or visit the website [www.ruraldevon.org](http://www.ruraldevon.org)

## The year of Food and Farming begins

The Year of Food and Farming in education is an industry led initiative commencing in line with the academic year from September 2007. The year is being led by Farming and Countryside Education (FACE) with active support from others, including the government department of Department for Education and Skills, Defra and Department of Health. Early work has already started, shaping up to its vision of **'fostering the next generation of children for respect and passion for good healthy food'**

One of the main aims of the year is to give opportunities to the next generation about food origins, the countryside connection and understanding the link between farm and plate. (source Farming and Food Futures spring newsletter)

## South West England Delivery Plan Refresh

The 'Making a Difference' Sustainable Farming and Food Delivery Plan (2004-2007) for the South West of England was produced as a 'living document' to recognise the continuing need for change within the industry. The plan is currently being refreshed to reflect changing priorities and focus on how environmental drivers have changed since 2004.

A noticeable focus in the new Plan will be Climate Change. This is the key factor that will have the most significant effect on the economy and communities over the next 50 years—already a far bigger issue for the industry than it was three years ago. As a result, this issue will receive appropriate attention, including the development of sustainable practices in all areas of activity.

The refresh process is being overseen by a group of representatives of key regional delivery partners. The consultation event on the 14th March was the first significant step in the refresh process and an important opportunity to genuinely influence the overall direction and emphasis of the Delivery Plan (source Farming and Food Futures Spring newsletter)

For more info visit [www.swcore.co.uk](http://www.swcore.co.uk)

phone: 01392 440722

email: [enquiries@swcore.co.uk](mailto:enquiries@swcore.co.uk)



## MEMBERS NEWS

**PLEASE DO NOT FORGET TO SEND IN YOUR MEMBERSHIP RENEWAL FORMS. FOR MORE INFORMATION OR A FORM CONTACT JEN ON 01392 382831**

Membership benefits include:

- Added lobbying power to your organisation – allying your work and interest with other like minded rural bodies to speak with a strong voice for rural Devon.
- Opportunity to meet/network with key rural stakeholders in Devon including regional and statutory bodies.
- Chance to take part in seminars, briefings and consultations to ensure your point of view is heard.
- Membership allows inclusion into the DRN Action Groups if desired and, where applicable, discounted conference and event fees.
- The chance to attend 2 DRN events each year to hear the progress of DRN, its forthcoming work and the chance to learn and input into current priority issues.
- A quarterly newsletter bringing you up to date with DRN, strategic and other membership news.
- The opportunity to share your information, news and events through the DRN newsletter which is distributed to all key authorities and members within Devon.
- The DRN Website is available for all members to post news and events. As a member you can also have a link through to your own website through [www.drn.org.uk](http://www.drn.org.uk)
- Provides a forum to share examples of good practice and learn from others in the network.



**Devon  
Rural  
Network**

### **New team member!!!**

Congratulations to Heather Hillman, former DRN Manager who gave birth to a baby girl Darcie Rose on Saturday 25th March. The family are doing very well.

### **Launch of Rural Business School website 28th March 2007**

The Rural Business School is very pleased to announce that they have officially gone live with the launch of their new and interactive website on **Wednesday 28<sup>th</sup> March 2007**. '*You will never know until you go....visit us at*'

[www.duchy.ac.uk/rbs](http://www.duchy.ac.uk/rbs)

### **Calor Devon Village of the Year 2007 Competition**

By now all Parish Councils in Devon will have received the information they need to enter the Village of the Year competition. This competition is a wonderful way of celebrating and promoting all that is positive about where you live. It's not a competition about perfect villages! – it is about communities working hard to make life for residents as good as it can be

Please note that this year you will be asked to complete a quick tick questionnaire which is in **six clear categories**: Community Life, Business, Young People, Older People, Environment and Information Technology. Even if you don't actually enter the competition reading the questionnaire will give you a wealth of ideas of how you can improve your village's community life. Size is no barrier to entering this competition as Loxhore's success last year showed that even the smallest village with the least resources has a chance of winning this competition.

Applications must be received by CCD by **Friday 1<sup>st</sup> June 2007**. The first round of judging based on the questionnaires will be completed by mid July – a short list will then be drawn up. The Devon finalists will then be contacted and visited by the Devon judges in August. From those finalists a Devon winner will be chosen. The overall Devon Winner will receive a certificate from Calor at a presentation in Autumn 2007 and 'The Jean Allen Memorial Cup' to be held for one year.

Loxhore, last years winners are already preparing for their entry into the National competition where there is the opportunity to win cash prizes and a chance emulate Tedburn St Mary's success.

For further information on the competition please contact CCD on 01392 383443 or email [info@devonrcc.org.uk](mailto:info@devonrcc.org.uk)

## Devon Rural Carers Project Update

The research for the Devon Rural Carers Project has now been completed. Projects have been formulated using the research and are to be taken forward in the next 6-8 months.

The research focused on the needs of rural carers and how we can improve support to carers who live in rural areas of Devon. The research involved nearly 5,000 questionnaires being sent out to carers – 465 of which were returned (a 9.5% return rate). Consultations with carer support organisations provided 102 returned responses and 6 carer focus groups were also held.

Prizes were given to carers who responded: an M & S prize hamper was awarded to Mrs McKay from East Devon and 14 £20 WHSmith gift vouchers were provided to young carers.

The findings of the research are many and varied; highlights of which are shown below:

- Caring responsibilities usually fall on the immediate family and as such the majority of carers live with the cared for.
- Carers are often prepared to travel to their local village or town to access support services. Support services outside of these areas are not so readily accessible for rural carers.
- Lack of time and not wanting to leave the person being cared for are major issues in preventing carers from accessing support services.
- The post office, village shop and local pub are used by many carers. These local services are therefore prime targets for identifying carers. They also provide scope for additional support services in rural communities.
- Demand for online support groups, telephone support groups and more local support groups.
- Over a third of carers gave up work to undertake care. However, only 18% would return to work. Further training and assurance of more flexible working patterns could help carers return to work.

The findings of the research have been used to formulate projects, which have now been agreed by the Steering Group. Projects include marketing and awareness raising of carer support networks, telephone, online and informal support groups, getting carers back into work through training and promotion of rural community transport.

If you would like a copy of the Executive Summary or detailed Papers on the research or a summary of proposed projects then please contact Jo Pickering on 01626 203050

## Carry on South West Forest!

A recent independent evaluation of South West Forest Partnership (SWF) showed an impressive array of outcomes from this rural regeneration initiative that has now run for nearly ten years; ironic then that evidence for the positive impact of this partnership programme comes at a time when it is harder than ever to find funding to support the work of SWF.

As EU funding has dried up and other past funders have been caught in the post-Haskins confusion, the initiative has leaned increasingly on its local authority partners for support. Earlier in the year Devon County Council agreed a generous support package and this has just been followed by confirmation of £45,000 funding from Cornwall County Council for the current financial year. Both authorities are particularly keen to see SWF develop its Carbon Offset and Community Woodland programmes. These are seen as particularly timely with climate change in the headlines as a global issue and concern is also focussed on cohesion of rural communities, particularly in economically lagging areas in northern Devon and Cornwall.

South West Forest is currently embarking on the creation of a new SWF charity and a trading I arm that will enable SWF to receive and distribute funds to support the creation of Carbon Offset woodlands and new Community Woodlands owned and managed by their local communities.

SWF Director Jim Skelton said "By launching our new programmes we can provide environmental services for organisations interested in their social and environmental profiles; their investment will fund the creation of new woodlands and in turn provide continued support for the infrastructure of SWF making us more self sufficient".

The creation of the new charity will enable the initiative to bid to other charities for support for some of SWF's educational and community services. Jim Skelton commented "In making these changes, we are responding to a changing environment and like any organisation or organism we must change or die. We are extremely grateful to the two County Councils and other important funders such as the Forestry Commission who are providing the support that will enable us to make the transition to a more sustainable organisation."

For more information contact Jim Skelton on 01409 221896 or email [jim.skelton@devon.gov.uk](mailto:jim.skelton@devon.gov.uk)



## Local network fund workshop

CALLING ALL COMMUNITY GROUPS

Come and meet the funder's and find out how to get a grant to help Children and Young People in your area.

Get tips on completing the application form and look at some successful and unsuccessful applications.

Hear about successful projects.

We will help you to identify projects & learn how to make a successful application to the Local Network Fund.

### FREE WORKSHOP

Tuesday 22<sup>nd</sup> May, 9.45am to 2.00pm

St Georges Church Extension,

Behind St Georges Church, on the corner of Fore Street  
Tiverton.

Light Lunch included

Individual advice available 2.00pm to 3.00pm

TO BOOK A PLACE please ring Vicky on 01884 235887  
or Email: [Vicky@devoncf.com](mailto:Vicky@devoncf.com)



## World Environment Day with the Environment Agency

05.06.07

ASK YOURSELF .....

*What's the no. 1 thing you're doing to tackle climate change?*

*What one extra thing could you do to tackle climate change?*

*What's stopping you?*

In 1972, the United Nations created World Environment Day. Ever since, on the 5<sup>th</sup> June each year, people all over the world raise awareness about environmental issues and participate in all kinds of activities to celebrate the environment.

We want individuals and businesses to help inspire others to reduce their impact on the environment. World Environment Day can be celebrated in many ways such as green events, tree planting, recycling efforts, clean-up campaigns and much, much more.

For example here at the Environment Agency we have given our staff the opportunity to take an Environmental Day to get involved in activities that benefit our environment and community.

Over the next few months, look out for us at events around Devon and our MUST HAVE Hemingway design goodies.

Pssss....

**The Mend of the World is NOW!**

.....pass it on!!

For further information please contact Heather Holland,  
Tel 01392 316178 or e-mail [heather.holland@environment-agency.gov.uk](mailto:heather.holland@environment-agency.gov.uk)



## GOOD PRACTICE CASE STUDIES

### Business Link supports Women in Rural businesses

With the South West region boasting one of the UK's highest rates of female entrepreneurship, Business Link Devon and Cornwall is launching a series of initiatives aimed at supporting local women to succeed in rural business.

In North and West Devon and the South Hams, women in business are benefiting from free Business Link workshops to help them build success in marketing and public relations and finance, and with their confidence and assertiveness skills.

Because of the excellent response, the series has been extended and new dates are planned to the end of this year, with topics on 'Making the Most of your IT' and 'Developing Your People' also in the pipeline.

For businesses with high-growth potential in eligible rural areas, there is also the chance of funding towards professional advice and guidance including marketing, website design and attending exhibitions. The programme is supported by the European Regional Development Fund and Devon Renaissance.

Advice for anyone in business, or considering starting one, is available from Business Link on 0845 600 9006 or at [www.businesslinksw](http://www.businesslinksw) where the Business Link website provides round-the-clock information, factsheets and guidance, together with practical online tools to review an idea or a business.

Keen to encourage further success in recognition of women's vital contribution to the rural economy, Business Link also offers a free Directory of Services for Women in Business containing details of networks, training opportunities and organisations which provide women-



### Include farming in your village newsletter

Many local newsletter editors have approached local farming families, to ask them if they would be willing to write an article or a column about life on the farm. Although Farm life is a very demanding job, every day of the year, many have welcomed the opportunity to share their unique way of life with the rest of their community.

This can also promote understanding of Agriculture, and why and how different jobs take place on the farm each month or throughout the seasons. One example of a local Farming column, is the very successful and highly entertaining "Mucky Tales" written by a Farming Family from Sandford, and which features every month in their parish magazine "The Crossing".

To help and encourage newsletters to cover farming CCD has produced a toolkit. For a FREE copy of the "Farming Features Toolkit" please contact Annie Petherick at CCD on 01392 383443 or email [annie@devonrcc.org.uk](mailto:annie@devonrcc.org.uk).



## GOOD PRACTICE CASE STUDIES

### Farmers Stewardship survey results released

The East Devon Area of Outstanding Natural Beauty Sustainable Development Fund (SDF) has been used to support Devon Farming and Wildlife Advisory Group (FWAG) to carry out a farmer's survey on the barriers to uptake of the Entry Level Stewardship Scheme in AONB.

The survey showed that uptake of Entry Level Scheme (ELS) and Organic ELS among farmers and landowners in the East Devon AONB lags behind the rest of Devon, the South West and England. The ELS scheme is a vital tool both in the conservation and enhancement of AONB landscape features as well as supporting farmers and landowners in their transition from subsidy based farming. As a precursor to this work, the AONB supported a series of FWAG workshops on the new Environmental Stewardship Scheme across the AONB in 2005-6. However, despite this promotion and further support, uptake of the scheme is still lower than projected.

Chris Woodruff, East Devon AONB Manager, "We are looking to build on these findings with Natural England and to address the low take up of ELS in an integrated way within the AONB". He added "through a related project, also supported by the AONB's Sustainable Development Fund, we have been looking at examining the relationship between bats and how they use the variety of farmed landscapes in the AONB. We wish to combine the two areas of work with a view to providing targeted one to one advice to farmers on ELS in order to improve its take up, as recommended in the survey. This work would also enhance our characteristic landscape features and habitat for bats in this area".

The need for the survey was originally identified in 2006 through close working with Natural England's East Devon and Blackdown Liaison Group on Environmental Stewardship delivery. This highlighted concerns over the take up of the ELS in both Blackdown Hills and East Devon AONB's.

Richard Lambirth, Natural England Project Officer in the Mid and Eastern Devon Team agreed, "the 2006-7 survey in the East Devon AONB will provide valuable information for us. The results may mirror some of the issues faced by farmers and landowners beyond the boundary of the East Devon AONB and help us to enhance our service across Mid and Eastern Devon as a whole".

The East Devon AONB partnership works to conserve and enhance this special area. By working with a wide range of statutory, voluntary and business partners we are able to help foster a living, working landscape. Defra Minister David Milliband recently announced an increase to the national Rural Development Fund budget for 2007 to 2013 to £3.9 billion.



### The Access Project: Broadclyst Really Cares!

200 of the halls (50%) in Devon have attended the DDA access workshop

100 of the halls (25%) in Devon have had an access audit

50 of the halls (12.5%) in Devon are using the Access Doing Pot of £250 to develop their activities and services for older people and disabled people within their community.

Broadclyst Village Hall have used their £250 to kick start a new activity group for the carers of people using the Clyst Cares Day Centre (next door to the hall). We have received the following quote from Mr Pepper (Broadclyst Village Hall management committee):

'I thought you might like to know that we started the first yoga session for the over 55's on Thursday. We had firm indications from at least 12 people and 7 turned up, the others will come but half term etc. caused them some problems looking after grandchildren, holidays etc. The main reason for emailing you however is that 5 people who attended had never met before, even though they lived in Broadclyst! At the end of the session they were chatting away together and promising to bring others along. I cannot describe to you how magic the atmosphere was when these people were chatting together; desperate to make contact with other people and get out of the house. I hope we get more attendees but I was so pleased to see what we hoped to achieve in bringing people together suddenly manifest itself. It was so rewarding and thank you for being the catalyst. Will of course keep you informed later with a more formal report.'

Please don't hesitate to contact Penny Thame, Access Officer if you would like any information about the project. 01392 383681 or penny@devonrcc.org.uk

## EVENTS

Upcoming events: Rural Business School

**.NEW - Wednesday 16<sup>th</sup> May 2007**

**Large Animal Health and Disease – Organic:** A lecture presented by Dr Stephen Roderick from Duchy College. Looking at the symptoms, treatments and preventative measures of common disease conditions that affect farm animals. To be held at Duchy College, Roswarne. From 6.30pm – 8.30pm. £10\* per person. Refreshments provided.

**NEW - Thursday 24<sup>th</sup> May 2007**

**Keeping Poultry for business or pleasure:** With guest speaker Mr. John Moore. To be held at Dupath Well, Callington by kind permission of Mr. Coombe and family. From 1pm – 4.30pm. £10\* per person. Lunch and refreshments provided.

**. Thursday 7<sup>th</sup> June – Saturday 9<sup>th</sup> June 2007**

**The Rural Business School at the Royal Cornwall Show 2007:** The Rural Business School will be on hand to update you with the latest information about our upcoming events and courses programmes. It is a great opportunity to come and meet us in person so that we can offer the very best help, advice and assistance. Further details and our stand number to follow shortly.

**Sunday 4<sup>th</sup> November – Friday 16<sup>th</sup> November 2007**

**The Challenge of Rural Leadership:** To be based at the Passage House Hotel, Kingsteignton, Devon. This is a full two week programme with guest speakers and industry visits all dealing with the current issues facing the rural business environment. Assistance with funding may be available. For more information and to receive an application pack please contact Judith Hegarty (Course Administrator), on 01579 372283 or email: leadership@duchy.ac.uk

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### Community Engagement in Practice Seminar

The Devon Towns Forum invites you to reserve your free places for the **Devon Community Engagement in Practice Seminar** on Thursday **14 JUNE 2007 10.00am to 3.30pm**. Places at this Key Event are limited and attendance is by confirmed invitation only. So please contact the Devon Towns Forum now to reserve you place.

This special one day event facilitated by leading Community Planning consultant Jeff Bishop from BDOR currently working with the Market and Coastal Towns Association, the South West Acre Network, the Commission for Rural Communities and are partners in Action Research for the Carnegie UK Trust in West Devon. The event will seek to capture and reflect current practice and the pressing issues for Devon. Also just what the Local Government White Paper means for everyone with an interest in developing engaged communities. Presentations from the Devon Strategic partnership on the Local Area Agreements Stronger Communities Agenda also introducing the Devon Community Planning Database and its implications for everyone involved in community planning. This event is packed with good practical information and is a must for members and officers of LSP's, County, Town and Parish Councils, Community Organisations and all Community Planning Partnerships. The event plus all refreshments and lunch will provided free to all confirmed bookings. Venue will be confirmed when booking. Please contact Paul Delahoy at the Devon Towns Forum now on 01805 624874 or e-mail [info@devontownsforum.org.uk](mailto:info@devontownsforum.org.uk) to make your reservation now!

### Are you passionate about affordable housing in Devon?

If so please come and join CCD Members Forum on their field visit on Monday July 2<sup>nd</sup>. The programme for the day will be focusing on affordable housing and community regeneration. In the morning we will be visiting the East Devon village of Hawkchurch. A recent housing needs survey has led to the development of five new affordable homes in the community. Present on our visit will be Magna Housing Officers, Rural Housing Enablers and local Parish Councilors who will be able to explain the process as the properties near final completion. In the afternoon we will move onto Hemyock for lunch. After many year of battling and hard work a number of innovative projects are finally coming off in this community. We will be focusing upon the Long Mead Field affordable housing, recreational and leisure development, with the Chief Executive of Falcon Housing and the Mill Hayes hall youth and community project. As ever the day is open to member's partners and any other interested parties who you feel would benefit from the visit Places will be limited so please contact CCD, [www.devonrcc.org.uk](http://www.devonrcc.org.uk), [david@devonrcc.org.uk](mailto:david@devonrcc.org.uk), 01392 383443 by June 22<sup>nd</sup> 2007, or as soon as possible.

## EVENTS

### Productive Skills for Devon Updating & Networking Event

Thursday 14<sup>th</sup> June 5.00 – 8.00 pm

to be held at The Waie Inn, Zeal Monochorum

'Skills' is high on the agenda for many organisations and there are many changes in the content for adult and vocational training. The Productive Skills for Devon Partnership is stimulating a range of initiatives and is encouraging stronger links between employers, training providers and the relevant supporting agencies. This early evening event, at the geographical centre of Devon, provides an opportunity to catch the headlines about the changing context for 'productive skills' and to meet 'fellow travellers' from Devon. As well as the short presentations, there will be good space for informal networking.

Furthermore, the venue would be very attractive to young and old family and friends with both indoor and outdoor children's play facilities, swimming pool, skittle alleys and quintessential Devonshire countryside to explore. And there's camping, caravanning and B+B accommodation if you would really like to make a night of it!

#### Productive Skills for Devon

5.00 pm	Welcome and introduction to the Productive Skills for Devon Partnership	Tim Jones
5.15 pm	Regional Skills Priorities	Jim Neilson
5.30 pm	Skills gaps in Devon	Ben Neild
5.45 pm	European Social Fund Update	Nigel Howells
6.00 pm	Specialised Diplomas	
6.15 pm	Who's Who in the room	
6.30 pm	----- Buffet -----	
7.15 pm	The Sector Skills Approach	Tony Skeel
7.30 pm	Train to Gain	Alison Cox
7.45 pm	Training Provider Network	Craig Marshall
8.00 pm	----- Questions and discussion followed by informal networking -----	

To book a place please contact Lindsey Steele by email: [skills@devon.gov.uk](mailto:skills@devon.gov.uk)  
or 01392 383685