

Dear All,

The latest news from Somerset Market Towns Forum.

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New Features and Content on our website

These include summaries of member towns 'live' projects – click to see [Wiveliscombe Area Partnership's](#), [Ilminster Forum's](#) and [A Better Crewkerne & District's](#); new documents and links in our [Resources Library](#), new [case studies](#) and an explanation of how SMTF fits into the regeneration 'landscape' in Somerset is now on our [About Us](#) page

Guide To Managing ICT

Covering all aspects of managing information and communications technology, this guide from the ICT Hub is aimed to be useful anyone whatever their level of technical knowledge. 'Guide to Managing ICT in the Voluntary and Community Sector' can be downloaded http://www.ictHub.org.uk/publications/managing_ict_guide.pdf. (item from SVSN)

Linking the Food Chain Food Demonstration Programme Events

The next Mini Food Expos and Farm Walks in Somerset, part of the Natural England's farm demonstration programme aimed at linking farms and food with the local community are taking place at:

27 January - Stourhead Farm Shop, Wiltshire

[Press Release-15 Jan 2008 - Stour Head Farm Walk](#)

10 February 2008 - Bramble & Sage, Home Farm, Sutton Montis Somerset

23 February 2008 - Pitney Farm shop, Glebe Farm, Pitney Langport, Somerset

"At the series of events across the South West, people living in market towns are invited to come along to discover more about the farming activities that are happening on their doorstep and find out what local food is available to them. The farm tours will be hosted by the farmer and the public can hear about the role that they play in producing food whilst managing the environment. At these events the public will find out:

Where food comes from

Who produces it

How it's produced

About the farmer's role as wildlife steward

The farm shop will play host to a food expo where patrons can sample the finest of their local suppliers and discover alternative ways to source food from their own locality rather than through the supermarket. The food expos and walks will reinforce the links between the market towns, farms and the food chain. Funded by Natural England, the on farm events will be free for members of the public to attend." [Read more...](#) (News item from SWAN)

Learn more about Local Area Agreements (LAA's)

SWERDA will in future seek to align its own priorities with the local and sub-regional priorities set by the sub-regional Economic Partnerships (SEPs) and upper tier Local Strategic Partnerships (LSPs). It's therefore important that town groups working to improve their communities understand the LAA process, get involved in its development (through consultations) where possible and in future have the LAA objectives in mind when project planning. Somerset Strategic Partnership have information on the [Somerset LAA here](#), and DCLG have produced information and guidance on LAA's and LSP's [Read more...](#)

Training

ViSTA training courses

Apart from the Acquiring & Managing Community Buildings course in Shepton Mallet on March 13th (only 1 or 2 places left – see attached flyer) that we have organised with them, ViSTA have a range of new courses that will be of interest to regeneration & community groups, including; Planning And Running A Community Event, Getting People Involved, Effective Partnership Working, Evaluation Techniques, Making The Most Of ICT In Your Marketing Communications. Most of these are taking place in Taunton. More details and book online at ViSTA's website [click here...](#)

Social enterprise workshops and surgeries

Social Enterprise Link is delivering a series of workshops and surgeries across the south west region – including one in Taunton on March 6th. Many projects working in communities will be considering how to continue their services as current funding comes to an end. Such projects have enormous potential to develop into social enterprise businesses. Developing enterprise with a focus on trade can be a way of sustaining the valuable work already being achieved in local projects. This series of workshops and surgeries are designed to explore how this could happen. See attached flyer and booking form for more details.

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We welcome feedback so that we can develop our services.

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Somerset Market Towns Forum – promoting and supporting community-based action to revitalise Somerset's market towns