

**Dear All,**

Here is the latest, bumper edition of the Market Towns Forum's news, training & funding bulletin, tailored for the Market Town regeneration sector in Somerset.

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### **Date for your diary – Note!**

We have postponed the SMTF AGM from 8<sup>th</sup> November and will inform you soon of the revised date.

### **News**

#### **Five 'vital amenities' necessary to ensure a thriving countryside**

The Sparsity Partnership for Authorities Delivering Rural Services (SPARSE) which represents the views of over 8.5 million rural people has identified five 'vital amenities' necessary to ensure a thriving countryside. SPARSE has presented the manifesto to Gordon Brown, and the document highlights five essential rural amenities. They are adequate affordable housing, local job opportunities, access to childcare, a viable rural post office network, and faster broadband connectivity. Download the Report (2MB file so let's hope you have that Broadband!) from their [website here...](#) *SPARSE is a Special Interest Group of the Local Government Association*

#### **Community Action for Energy**

Community Action for Energy (CAfE) is a programme from the Energy Saving Trust that is designed to promote and facilitate local community-based energy projects. CAfE is a network of people who share a common interest in community energy projects and ideas. Membership of the network is free and by joining you can keep up to date with news on community-based energy initiatives, as well as hearing about funding opportunities, training sessions and other news from the network.

[Read more...](#)

#### **Carbon Savings in a Somerset Market Town**

As the impacts of climate change on our daily lives become ever more apparent, and oil prices continue to rise, the case for energy descent becomes stronger. While individuals can minimise their carbon footprint, and thus reduce their dependency on fossil fuels, the savings to be made become much more significant when carried out across a town. This interesting article highlights some carbon dioxide savings that the people of Frome could make collectively. [Read more...](#)

#### **Transition Towns meeting in Langport, Oct 9<sup>th</sup>**

Find out about what Transition Towns are and how to get involved. [Read more...](#)

### **'Helping and empowering rural communities to tackle climate change'**

Read the recent speech by Jonathan Shaw MP, Minister for Rural Affairs, DEFRA, to the LGA Rural Conference on Wednesday, 5 September 2007. [Read more....](#) (item from SWAN [www.swan-network.org.uk](http://www.swan-network.org.uk) )

### **Environmental Performance Data**

A new DEFRA survey gives information on the performance of local authorities on the management of litter, fly tipping, and graffiti etc. Download the full survey at <http://www.encams.org/leqreports/>

### **CLG Discussion Forums**

These forums, in the 'have your say' area of the re-launched Communities and Local Government website, allow everyone with an interest in the department's work to contribute their views on current policy and emerging issues. Read more at <http://www.communities.gov.uk/forums/>

### **Rewards scheme for community regeneration projects from Creating Excellence**

'Creating Excellence is aspiring to its name by launching the REWARDS 2007 scheme to celebrate ongoing activity or projects where people have achieved excellent results helping communities in the region. The REWARDS programme will illustrate that people are at the heart of all successful projects and the main reward prize will be a study tour to the value of £3,000 for six members of the winning organisation.'

[Read more...](#)

## **Training**

### **Free ICT training event, November 8<sup>th</sup>, Norton Fitzwarren**

Attached is a flyer for a free ICT training event taking place in November for voluntary and community organisations. For more details, see the flyer or call Rachel Smith, Rural Development Worker (Hidden Somerset & Somerset BroadPlaces Projects) Tel: 01278 699140.

### **Wise! A Project for Women involved in community, charity or voluntary groups in Frome, Shepton Mallet, Taunton or Bridgwater**

'Would you like the chance to develop your skills for a more active community and working life? Would you value the opportunity to gain a qualification in areas like counselling, communication skills or community development work?

If your answer is YES! to the questions above, then the WISE project could be for you!

ViSTA, the voluntary sector training alliance for Somerset, are pleased to be able to support women in four key areas across the county in partnership with local voluntary and community groups. We are working with lots of local groups and have strong working links with the following groups: Mendip Care & Repair, Somerset Black Development Agency, Age Concern Training, Somerset Youth Volunteering Network, Sedgemoor Volunteer Bureau and BIBIC. As part of the project you will get the chance, with a skilled community adviser, to work through your own personal development plan, which will help you to find out more about where your talents lie and give you options to develop your personal and professional skills to gain a nationally recognised qualification.

To get involved call Sara Iles, ViSTA on 0845 358 0372 or read more on the ViSTA website at [www.vistaproject.org.uk](http://www.vistaproject.org.uk)

### **Acquiring & Managing Community Buildings Course**

Participants will learn and understand the options available to them and the legal requirements regarding the acquisition and management of a community building. They will be better informed to

make appropriate and realistic choices regarding acquisition and understand their responsibilities and liabilities. Includes:

The course will outline the Quirk Review and Asset Transfer and will provide information about the initiatives emerging from the Communities and Local Government Pilot Project. Also includes Managing a Community Building - Legal structures, Planning and leases, Sub letting and hiring of rooms, Premises Licence and other licensing requirements, Policies (Health and Safety & Risk).

Training delivered by Stephenie Linham who has over 17 years experience at an executive level in the VCS and is currently involved in the asset transfer project funded by CLG.

13<sup>th</sup> March 2008, 10.30am – 4.30pm Great Bow Yard, Bow Street, Langport TA10 9PN

Free to individuals from rural VCS groups through DEFRA Rural Social Community Programme.

TO BOOK Phone: 0845 358 0372 Terms & Conditions or Book on-line [www.vistaproject.org.uk](http://www.vistaproject.org.uk)

### **Social enterprise workshops and surgeries**

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 have been designed to explore how this could happen. See attached flyer ('Moving from Grants to Trade') for details & booking form.

More details from Marie White, Co-active Ltd. Tel: 01752 - 500888 ext 230 <http://www.co-active.org.uk>

### **Funding**

#### **Local Action – Rural Development Programme for England**

SWERDA have announced the launch of a £28 million initiative to help rural communities in South West England make lasting improvements to the life and economy of their areas.

The funding is offered through Local Action, part of the EU-funded Rural Development Programme for England, which is being managed by the South West RDA. It will build on the success of the previous EU-funded LEADER+ projects which supported a range of successful initiatives in rural areas across the region.

Full information, including details of a series of meetings for groups, individuals and organisations with an interest in forming Local Action Groups to bid for funding to deliver this part of the RDPE, is available at: [www.southwestrda.org.uk/local-action](http://www.southwestrda.org.uk/local-action)

*If you have been forwarded this email, and would like to join our mailing list, email*

[matt@somersettrcc.org.uk](mailto:matt@somersettrcc.org.uk)

*To unsubscribe, please reply with 'unsubscribe' in the subject line.*

Matt Day

Information Officer

Somerset Market Towns Forum

Tel: 01458 252005

[www.somersetmarkettowns.co.uk](http://www.somersetmarkettowns.co.uk)