



Durham Rural
Community Council

Community News

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promoting voluntary action in rural County Durham

www.durhamrcc.org.uk

Spring / Summer 2010

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Front page picture: Lanchester village by Russell Hayward



Durham Rural
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Community News

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Edited and compiled by Maureen Thomas

For further details of DRCCs printing service e-mail info@durhamrcc.org.uk or telephone 01207 529621.



Jo Laverick: Executive Director



Brave New World or Armageddon?

Although we have hardly started into 2010, there is a lot of speculation from all quarters about what 2011 will bring. This stems from a widespread sense of uncertainty about whether there will be continuing ramifications from the national recession for the North East, and how the inevitable cuts in public sector services will affect us all, not least because the North East has some of the highest levels of employment within the public sector in the country.

This sense of uncertainty extends throughout the voluntary sector, public sector agencies and through communities. The forthcoming election in the Spring is also focusing attention on what the next government's approach to cost cutting measures will be, and where priorities will lie. Whichever way it turns out, we can be sure that we will all have to make less go further.

Challenge or opportunity?

An interesting dialogue is underway within the Voluntary and Community Sector about how we will all be working after 2011. Naturally there is some deep pessimism about whether there will be anything left of the VCS if further cuts have to be made. There is a view that when the bigger cuts come, the VCS will be first in line, and having already been managing on diminishing resources for years, they won't have the resources or strength to sustain the next round of cuts.

There is an alternative view however, which is more optimistic

and turns the challenge into an opportunity for transformation. No change or transformation can happen without discomfort and disruption. Given that discomfort and disruption are inevitable anyway, there is an opportunity to face the challenge full on and ask: what are the best ways we can use *all* of our resources (in both the VCS and the public sector) to meet the needs of our communities? How can we work together and find new ways of working to solve problems and support new solutions? The old order cannot survive in the face of the further and much deeper cuts on the horizon. So it is time to focus on what works best and to pool the best of our creative thinking? The answers lie in the hands of our communities and we have the opportunity to work much more closely and cleverly together to find local solutions to local problems.

Perhaps we should consider throwing away the old blue prints and start with a fresh sheet of paper?

Ironically, it is often during lean times that community-led innovation and enterprise flourish. During the coming year DRCC will be celebrating 75 years as a community support organisation across County Durham. We have worked with communities through recessions and severe hardships, as coal mines, other traditional industries and local links, were systematically closed down and unemployment levels escalated. Over the years we have also seen some wonderful examples of community spirit and leadership.

We have had the privilege of working with community groups who drew on their strong social networks and their cultures to design their own local projects and initiatives and make them work.

If you'd like to read a little more about the history of DRCC and some of the communities we have worked with, you can find a section on our web site by logging on to www.durhamrcc.org.uk/about/history.

We'll be building more information, archive material and case studies into this section over the course of the coming year as part of our 75th anniversary celebrations.

We'll also be celebrating what's working now and looking to the future with the launch of the County Durham Rural Community of the Year Competition 2010. You can read more about the competition in this issue of Community News. It is aimed at celebrating local involvement in keeping communities as strong, vibrant places to live and work.

Also in this edition

You can read about how the Rural Development Programme for England is funding local initiatives in East Durham and the Durham Dales through the LEADER approach to economic development..... and why South Korea is also interested.

Finally, it's been a long hard winter and, with spring on our doorstep, we're looking forward to sharing a busy and productive summer with all of our community partners and colleagues across the county.

Have you
heard the
buzz?



Turn to page 6
and see how your
community could win
in this year's new Rural
Community prize competition

Durham RCC welcomes Jan and Julie as new Trustees and Peter who takes up his post with One Voice Network

Jan Worters

After an early career in housing with Manchester and Leicester City Councils, Jan started work in the voluntary sector with Tyneside Housing Aid Centre in 1979. Later, she worked for 10 years with Durham RCC, initially as a patchworker in both west and east Durham and later promoting the development of affordable and special needs housing in rural West Durham.

Jan moved to VODA in 1996, becoming Chief Officer in 1997. Since then she has been heavily involved in strategic partnership work at local, sub-regional and regional level, promoting the value of the voluntary and community sector and advocating its needs and its involvement in decision making.

When she retired in December 2009 Jan was deputy Chair of the Community Foundation serving Tyne & Wear and Northumberland, Chair of Tyne & Wear Infrastructure Consortium, member of the Regional Strategic Third Sector Forum and Regional Infrastructure Development Group, and member of North Tyneside Strategic Partnership Executive.

With considerable experience in voluntary sector management, Jan is a strong believer in the strengths which can be achieved, at all levels, when people work in partnership.

Julie Form

We are also delighted to welcome another new face to the Durham RCC boardroom. Julie Form, County Durham Director for Groundwork has recently joined our board of Trustees.

Peter Locke

Peter joined One Voice Network in October 2009 as Funding and Sustainability Officer, having previously worked for eVOLUTION in Darlington as a Community Development Worker. Peter's role involves ensuring VCS organisations across County Durham are tender ready, assisting with the development of relevant consortia where appropriate, and ensuring organisations are aware of commissioning opportunities.

Email: peter@onevoice.co.uk
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Read about 75 years of DRCC's history in the anniversary issue of Community News in September.

The Rural Advocate makes his report to government

The Government's Rural Advocate, Dr Stuart Burgess, has launched his Rural Advocate Report 2010.

This year's report focuses on issues affecting children and young people living and working in rural England. Dr Burgess has outlined several issues affecting the sustainability of the countryside, substantiated with robust recommendations. The report also focuses on examples of inspirational individuals who have overcome some of the challenges facing their communities.

He states that the most frequent issue he found was the need for more affordable housing in rural areas. He said that the sustainability and future viability of our rural communities is at risk if young people are unable to live and work there, adding "Not only does this affect farming and traditional rural industries but it reduces the potential of new businesses which should be made possible by modern technology. Ultimately it diminishes the fabric of rural economies and communities."

He also said that there is a lack of high speed broadband and, in many rural areas, lack of mobile phone coverage - a significant factor affecting local economies and services.

He noted that rural deprivation is isolated in small pockets and that the data is often overlooked by policymakers when developing major initiatives such as the Growth Fund, improving access to affordable credit, and the Future Jobs Fund, providing jobs for the unemployed.

Dr. Burgess said that he felt a difference has been made to the local community in rural areas where efforts have been made to introduce high tech industries.

Local projects and initiatives had impressed the Rural Advocate who was overwhelmed by the sheer determination to make a difference.

He concluded "My personal commitment is to seek ways of increasing the engagement of rural young people with these issues which so clearly affect their futures and find ways of harnessing their enthusiasm and creativity to find imaginative new solutions which will benefit us all."

You can read the full report via the Commission for Rural Communities website www.ruralcommunities.gov.uk.

Collaborative Working and Mergers: an Introduction

These guidance notes prepared by the Charity Commission in 2008, are available via VONNE's website (link below) and are applicable to all charities which may be considering working in partnership. For more information, go to this website:

http://www.vonne.org.uk/policy/sectorissues/commissioningandprocurement/resources_for_voluntary_providers.php?flink=602

Congratulations Joy!

DRCC's Staff and Trustees came together recently for a surprise party to celebrate a very special anniversary. Joy Frostwick, DRCC's Finance Manager (below), celebrated 25 years of loyal service to our organisation. Joy joined DRCC in 1985 as the Secretary to the Director when we were based in Hallgarth Street,



Durham. After working through the ranks and in several different office locations, Joy is now based in our Lanchester office.

This very special anniversary was marked by the return, for one performance, of the 'Park House Players', DRCC's very own group of amateur thespians. Together they performed 'The Rime of the Ancient Book Keeper,' carefully adapted from the Samuel Taylor Coleridge classic to fit the occasion, by DRCC's very own playwright, Ken Hazelwood.

The climax of the event was the ceremonial cutting of the cake by Joy, who reminisced fondly about the past 25 years. She's now looking forward to the next 25 years, so the Park House Players had better start rehearsing soon for their next big performance.

Congratulations Joy, we're proud of you!

Castle Eden Community Plan

Durham RCC has been supporting a leading team of local residents and Parish Councillors from Castle Eden, east Durham in the production of the area's first ever community plan. The team of dedicated volunteers has been meeting and working on proposals to gather the views of as many local people and businesses as possible.

The Parish Plan Steering Group helped Castle Eden become one of the first areas in the country to develop an internet based survey tool to produce the plan, allowing and encouraging people to complete the survey online. The group will also distribute questionnaires in paper form to local people who do not have access to the internet. The group feels that by allowing several methods for people to submit their views, a high percentage of local residents will take part.

To communicate the project and to keep local people informed, the group have also set up a website and will be distributing letters and flyers. The group, which has only been established since December, is keen to complete the Parish Plan and to see some of the ideas come to fruition. Tony Rodham, Chair of

the steering group, said "It is very important that local residents take part in the survey. Local people know best what improvements they would like to see made and this is their chance to have their say. We will use the information we gather to formulate the Community Plan which will provide local groups, the Parish Council and the Local Authority with a comprehensive action plan for Castle Eden." The group will continue to work on the plan over the coming months and hope to publish a draft by the Autumn.

Community Planning

From the smaller Parish Councils, such as Castle Eden, to the larger Town Councils like Spennymoor and Shildon the benefits of producing a Community Plan are being recognised.

Durham RCC is working with several communities that have asked us for support as they carry out the community consultation - which is such an important feature of the Community Planning process.

Shildon Town Council is working towards an Action Plan which will give the Town Council and other public sector organisations an indication of how the issues flagged up in the community consultation can be addressed.

Mick Waterson, Town Clerk said 'The process of putting together an Action Plan is time consuming and requires a high level of commitment from residents and elected members for which we are most grateful. The finished Plan will be an important working document which the Council will refer to when planning its activities in the future'.

DRCC has recently signed up to Survey Monkey, an on line survey tool, which will make our community consultation much more streamlined and efficient. This on line facility will be made available to any community wishing to carry out surveys as part of the Community Planning process or for one off consultation exercises. For further details of the Survey Monkey service just call Russell Hayward at our Lanchester office.

Another blow to the rural economy?

New government legislation, due to take effect in the new 2010 tax year, relating to Furnished Holiday Lettings is geared to bring the UK into line with current European tax laws within the business.

Landlords with income from furnished holiday accommodation in the UK are currently treated as if they are 'trading' but after the new legislation comes into force normal tax rules for property income businesses will apply.

This means that those people who are currently supporting their local economy by operating furnished property as holiday lets, will lose (amongst a long and very complicated list of changes) certain tax benefits including - 10% wear and tear allowance, landlords energy savings allowance and some allowances relating to pension relief.

It is being suggested, perhaps as a knee jerk reaction, that some people will be forced to sell property as it is no longer viable to continue with their business - although the new legislation also imposes new tax rules when the property is sold.

If this turns out to be the case as the story pans out, it makes a mockery of the millions government have already pumped in to help farmers diversify with holiday lets and bites hard into the already struggling rural economy. See: www.hmrc.gov.uk/pbr2009/repeal-lettings-rules-3760.pdf



County Durham Rural Community of the Year Competition 2010

supported by  Durham Rural Community Council

A more personal, community competition - with bigger prizes!

Over the past few years Durham RCC has organised the Calor County Durham Village of the Year competition in this area.

This year, Calor have decided to support communities by concentrating their efforts to tackle rural fuel poverty, therefore their competition will not be taking place.

The good news is that Durham RCC has decided to stage its own competition, *with even bigger prizes*, which could improve the lives of everyone in *your* community.

Villagers who have been involved with the competition in the past will know Ken Hazelwood as the man who has co-ordinated the competition in County Durham. Community News talked with Ken to find out what Durham RCC is doing to fill the gap left by the competition. What we found could be even more important and exciting for your village.....

Q Why has Calor decided not to run the competition this year Ken?

A They have decided to

postpone the Calor Village of the Year Competition 2010 to re-channel resources to address their rural fuel poverty agenda.

Q How do they plan to do that?

A Calor will use the national Rural Community Council network to pick up on problems and trends to provide support where they feel it is most needed. Keep watching www.durhamrcc.org.uk for more information.

Q What has been Durham RCCs response to Calor's action?

A We feel that it is a really good competition and in order to keep it going we have decided to stage our own, which we have called 'County Durham Rural Community of the Year 2010'.

Q What made it a good competition?

A It was a great idea which stimulated community action. The groups taking part (usually parish councils or community associations) were required to take a fresh look at *how* they support community facilities and this created better social inclusion and stimulated self-help.

By entering the competition local communities had the opportunity to show-case what they did, received acclaim for their work and if they were lucky – carried off the prize money!

Q Will the new County Durham Rural Community of the Year competition be the same?

A Yes, it is modelled on the original, tried and tested scheme utilising the same objectives. The main difference is that this is a local competition and the winners won't go on to a regional or national final.

Q Is the entry process the same?

A The entry form is the same. It asks questions about activities and initiatives across four areas: community, business, sustainability and communications. The judges will be a panel of experienced, independent and sympathetic individuals, many of whom will have had a great deal of experience in community activity within their own village.

They will be looking for the same things as they did previously when they visit the short-listed communities. They will seek lively, vibrant communities where there is a wide range of support and life enhancing activities for all residents

Q Will there be prizes this year?

A Yes, Durham RCC are providing 2 prizes of £1,000 for the winner and £200 for the runner-up. Which is, in fact, more than in previous years!

Q In the past, did communities feel that they had benefited from taking part Ken?

A In my experience, everyone has responded positively. I found it galvanised communities and brought together groups within villages – some of which hadn't previously worked together. A spokesman for Tanfield Lea, 2008 winners, said that they hadn't been aware of how much they provided for their community until they sat down to prepare their entry for the Calor competition.

Q I understand this is not a competition for individuals, but how can groups submit their entry and find out more about what they need to do?

A Simply Choose from one of the following quick and easy options to request an application pack. You can:

1. Fill in and post back the reply paid card enclosed with this issue
2. Telephone us on 01207 529621 to request an application pack.
3. E-mail ken@durhamrcc.org.uk

Visit www.durhamrcc.org.uk/competition for more information.

Entry Conditions

The judges are looking for:-

“Well balanced, pro-active, caring communities which, irrespective of size, are making the best of local opportunities in order to enhance and sustain a better quality of life for all inhabitants.”

The population of competing communities cannot exceed 5,000

The closing date for entries is 6th July 2010, with judging taking place between 27th - 31st July 2010.

The winners will be announced on 14th October 2010 at Durham RCC's Annual General Meeting

The voice of experience..... LANCHESTER – winners of Calor Village of the Year Competition 2009

Last year Lanchester village was the worthy county winner of the Calor competition when judges found that fantastic work was achieving results within the community.

Clerk to the Parish Council, Sally Laverick pictured right, told Community News that the key to their success lay in the close working relationship between the Parish Council, Lanchester Partnership and village organisations. 'Lanchester is an active, self-supporting, caring community', she said. In fact Lanchester boasts around 70 to 80 community groups all of which thrive because of the staunch public support they receive.

Before they even started to compile the winning entry for the competition the Parish Council made sure they had as many of the organised groups as possible involved in the application. Children and staff from local schools, people from church groups, parish councillors, the partnership, community centre, music organisations and those involved in charitable work all worked together to outline their involvement within the community.

Sally said that the working group, which was involved in the application, felt that it was really important to involve as many people as possible. They found motivation fairly easy as many groups were already working together. The free, monthly newspaper 'Lanchester Village Voice' was also instrumental in drumming up support by publishing promotional articles at the time. Completing the application made everyone realise just how much was going on in the village and that community cohesion was the magic ingredient which made Lanchester a good place to live.

The villagers enjoyed working together to make their entry to the competition. In fact – quite apart from winning they found many benefits came from their experience, including head teachers meeting with local councillors to develop projects in which they have been able to work together.

When they finally lifted the trophy, the working group decided to split the £800 prize money between the Community Centre, the Community Partnership and two local primary schools to benefit as broad a range of people as possible.



The annual Partnership litter pick & the Lanchester Lions Carnival



Your community could be a winner this year!



Update

Celebration for LEADER and local projects

Local people have been given the opportunity to see for themselves how North Pennine Dales LEADER is spending its £1m budget to support rural areas.

An open invitation to a Celebration of Achievement event in February, held at the Morritt Hotel near Barnard Castle, gave everyone the chance to see many of the exciting and successful projects that have already been supported by LEADER.

These include the setting up of a local community radio station, Bishop FM, in South West Durham; the opening of a community shop in the village of Allenheads; MEET hire in Barnard Castle where a pool of equipment is available for clubs and groups in Teesdale to hire, and backing for the Tynedale Cycle Club in Derwentside.

North Pennine Dales LEADER (NPDL) covers Teesdale, Weardale, part of Derwentside and the southern part of Tynedale, and aims to spend £1m to help boost the local economy, create employment, support local businesses, provide training opportunities, improve facilities and the quality of rural life.

NPDL Project Leader Sue Ellwood said: 'We are very proud of the projects LEADER has supported so far and this informal event gave us the chance to showcase their achievements and celebrate their success'.

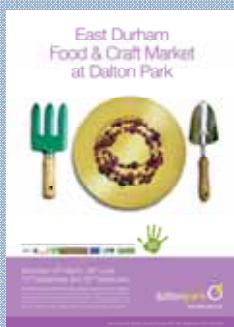
'It was a great opportunity for anyone who had a potential project to come along and discuss it, see whether LEADER could help and chat to project organisers who had already been through the process. It was also an opportunity for anyone interested in becoming a member of our Local Action Group to find out how they might help with LEADER in the future, and talk to existing LAG members about the important role that they play in our work.'

The evening included an especially

written, 10-minute drama about LEADER by young people from Teesdale's Turrets Youth Theatre, based in Barnard Castle - as well as a video about successful projects, and a buffet.

The LEADER funding is made available through the Rural Development Programme for England, which is jointly funded by Defra and the European Union and is managed by One North East in the region. Visit www.northpenninedalesleader.co.uk for details.

Project Organiser Sue Ellwood (centre top) tries her hand at broadcasting at South West Durham's new community radio station Bishop FM, one of the many successful LEADER projects.



More dates planned for East Durham LEADER Food & Craft Markets at Dalton Park

Following last year's successful markets, 4 more dates have been arranged for 2010. The first of this year's sales (aiming to promote small food and craft business in East Durham) took place in March, when stalls strained under the weight of cakes, meat, jewellery, flowers and much more

Come along and support local enterprise by buying local produce:

2010 Markets are on June 26, September 11, & November 20, at Dalton Park, just off the A19, near Murton.



South Koreans seek inspiration to ignite farmers' passion

A South Korean delegation has visited a Durham farm to learn how the region is helping rural businesses diversify and expand to secure a bright future.

Durham RCC, who have management responsibilities for the East Durham LEADER project, played host to the group of 11 South Koreans who were exploring ways of encouraging farms to diversify, addressing the issue of the younger generation not being interested in following in the footsteps of their families when older farmers retire.

As one of four LEADER groups across the region, East Durham share £4.5m of Rural Development Programme for England (RDPE) funding through One NorthEast, aiming to develop more sustainable rural communities.

Under the LEADER scheme, representatives from the public sector, local businesses, land managers, residents and local voluntary groups come together to form the Local Action Group (LAG) who have responsibility for local decision making.

The South Korean's visit came about through Namgeun Song, a Senior Policy Officer for South Korea, who is studying at Newcastle University. Following introductions made at a Northern Rural Network event last year he became interested in the LEADER model.

Namgeun said: 'I noticed a lot of similarities between the region's farms and ours, and the problem of interesting younger farmers to progress farming as a career. The LEADER programme is delivered by people who have a real understanding of rural issues and it struck me as an innovative approach that I wanted to find out more about and possibly implement in South Korea.'

'We have all found the trip and discussions extremely worthwhile



and are very appreciative of the warm reception we have experienced.'

The delegation visited Embleton Hall Dairies and A&E Thompson green waste composting services - an example of a local farm diversifying due to the changes in farming.

Andrew Thompson, owner of A&E Thompson and chairman of East Durham LEADER, said: 'South Korea is going through similar issues that we are familiar with.'

'Namgeun thought that funding provided through LEADER via the RDPE programme, to help farms diversify and build a more successful business, was something that they could take back to their colleagues and possibly implement..'

Jo Laverick, Executive Director of DRCC, found this to be an exciting opportunity, adding: 'we have thoroughly enjoyed playing host to them and hope that they can take inspiration from what we do to benefit their rural community.'

Following the farm visit, the delegation attended an informative presentation by Louise Johnson,

East Durham LEADER Manager, at the Greenhills Centre, Wheatley Hill introducing the LEADER model and how community decision-making can be successfully implemented. This was followed by an informal discussion with LAG members.

The evening ended with a meal at a local pub where traditional farm food was on the menu. The delegates were keen to stay on a working farm and were accommodated at Hamsteels Hall Farm in Quebec, which combines a working farm with bed and breakfast and self-catering accommodation.

Community transport providers were used throughout the visit and handmade gifts were supplied by local business 'Chocs Away'.

For more information please contact Louise Johnson, East Durham LEADER Manager, Greenhills Centre, Wheatley Hill on 01429 824743 or e mail: louise@eastdurhamleader.org.uk

For general information about LEADER in east Durham, visit www.durhamrcc.org.uk/eastdurhamleader



Cycle China – an uphill challenge

In the last edition of Community News we heard how East Durham LEADER Manager, Louise Johnson had signed up to raise funds for groundbreaking medical research into the prevention, diagnosis and treatment of a range of devastating conditions which cause miscarriage, genetic diseases, infertility and cancer. In the UK up to 250 new born babies die each week. In addition to this many families are affected by complications of pregnancy or infertility. Most people and families, if not affected directly, will know someone who has been.

In September 2010, Louise will cycle some 450 kms over 5 days through the countryside of China's Beijing region, along rivers and steep gorges, past tiny villages, ancient tombs and historical landmarks to raise money for the cause.

Louise made good progress with her training initially but the last couple of months have not been easy, the cold weather and a couple of stubborn viral infections have seriously affected her plans.

Louise said: 'I was doing really well until about October, the diet was

going well and I had lost over two stones. I was getting out on my bike regularly, managing to get both feet on the pedals and not falling off, although I did seriously misjudge a gate on one occasion (poor gate – thank goodness for my crash-helmet!).'

'As winter approached and the days were getting shorter and colder it became a struggle to get to the gym, it became a struggle to go out on my bike, and it became a struggle to stick to my diet - it was much too cold! And then the virus struck – coughing and wheezing and sneezing through most of November, December and January really knocked me off my stride and if I'm honest I am struggling to get back into gear.'

'I battled with the diet over Christmas (managing to lose 3 lbs Christmas week) but see-sawing with good week / bad week most of January. I did however, top the three stones mark so I'm still making progress, albeit slow.'

'I have recently invested in an exercise bike which means I can pedal away in the comfort of home watching Emmerdale and Corrie,



Louise checks the map

and I hope I can quickly make progress, although I am missing my proper bike rides.'

'The final part of the challenge is also proving difficult. £3,300 is a lot of money to raise and with everyone affected by the tragic events in Haiti I find I am struggling to ask for sponsorship. I have enlisted the help of friends and family and our next event is a sponsored Ghost Hunt early in April. We did a small scale event at Washington Old Hall and it was very exciting. Our next event is at the Sunderland Air Museum which recently featured on Most Haunted. We will be joined by one or two Mediums helping us to experience paranormal activity. There is a small registration fee and we have asked that anyone wanting to come along raises £50 in sponsor money. It should be a very interesting evening.'

'I have activated a 'Just Giving' web page but at the last check it was still empty – it would be fantastic if you could make a donation to help me on my way. In addition, words of support and encouragement are really important to me.'

Louise's personal page on the 'Just Giving' website is :

www.justgiving.com/lulujo. If you are interested in the ghost hunt or have any fundraising ideas Louise would love to hear from you - her email is katyLou114@yahoo.com.

Ebchester Community Association has recently updated its crockery and now has surplus catering quality crockery, in good condition, for disposal.

The classic design is 'Indies' by Johnson Bros. (still available) and the set consists of: 93 dinner plates, 103 side/tea plates, 94 soup/dessert bowls, 12 large serving bowls, 67 tea cups, 89 saucers, 9 cream jugs and 11 sugar bowls.

A small donation to their funds would be gratefully received.

If anyone is interested, please telephone Geoff Marshall, Secretary of the ECA on:

01207 560555 or e-mail Geoff.marshall@which.net





Summer is just around the corner and a picnic is just the thing for a family day out without spending too much money! Here are some tasty and *healthy* ideas for your picnic basket - send your favourite picnic recipes to charlotte.bates@durhamrcc.org.uk and we will put them onto our website for everyone to enjoy.



Charlotte Bates, Hands on Health Development Officer

Picnic time!

SPICY TOMATO PASTA SALAD

INGREDIENTS

250g dried whole wheat pasta shapes
 1 tin chopped tomatoes
 1 clove of garlic or 1 teaspoon of lazy garlic
 1 carrot - grated
 1 small onion - chopped
 2 tablespoons tomato puree
 1 tablespoon Worcestershire sauce

METHOD

1. Place pasta in a large saucepan of boiling water. Add 1 teaspoon of oil to prevent the pasta from sticking together. Bring the water back to the boil and simmer until pasta is soft. Drain pasta.
2. Wash and grate carrot.
3. Peel and chop onion into small pieces.
4. In a separate pan, mix tinned tomatoes, tomato puree, carrot, onion, Worcestershire sauce and garlic.
5. Bring mixture to the boil and then simmer for 5 minutes, stirring occasionally.
6. Drain pasta. Add to pasta sauce and stir. Make sure all the pasta is

APPLE AND CHEESEBREAD

INGREDIENTS

225g self raising flour
 50g sunflower margarine
 1 grated dessert apple (unpeeled)
 50g low fat cheddar cheese - grated
 Pinch dried sage
 Skimmed milk to mix
 1 tsp. baking powder

METHOD

1. Pre-heat oven to 220°C/gas mark 7
2. Sieve flour, sage and baking powder into a bowl and rub in margarine
3. Mix in apple and cheese, reserving a little cheese. Mix with a little milk to form a dough
4. Roll out into a circle approximately 1 inch thick and score gently into 6 pieces
5. Place on a greased baking sheet and brush top with milk
6. Sprinkle remaining cheddar on top and place in the oven for 10 - 15 minutes.



PCT backing success

The Hands on Health project has been successful in a bid for funding to continue to run our courses throughout County Durham.

In the last year we have delivered 75 Healthy Eating courses and engaged 500 people ranging from children and young people (some with problems relating to substance abuse and exclusion from school), plus young parents and over 60's.

In the coming year, the Primary Care Trust has agreed to finance the project to enable us to extend the work we are currently doing and reach even more people.

The course is fun and we bring experienced tutors (equipment, and sometimes even ovens) to work with groups in their venue. Food is provided free of charge and those on the course get hands on experience in preparing the dishes before everyone sits down and enjoys what they have produced together.

Information about food hygiene, nutrition and how to eat on a budget is also included as part of the 3 - 4 week courses.

For further information please contact Charlotte Bates, on 01207 529621 or e-mail charlotte.bates@durhamrcc.org.uk.

FRESH FRUIT SALAD

INGREDIENTS

110g Black Grapes, 1 Red Apple, 1 Orange, 1 Banana
 1 tin Pineapple pieces in juice, 1 Kiwi Fruit, 1 carton Orange Juice

METHOD

1. Wash all fruit well
2. Cut apple into bite size pieces. Place in a bowl and add a small amount of juice to cover, to prevent them from browning.
3. Peel and chop orange, grapes, kiwi fruit and banana and put into a bowl
4. Open tinned pineapple and pour with juice into a bowl
5. Open fruit juice and pour into a bowl, until fruit is just covered





Community buildings are benefiting across County Durham

Are you ready to take up the challenge?

The Hallmark scheme was launched by ACRE in March 2007 and currently operates in 19 counties via the Rural Community Council network.

It promotes the delivery of effective and well-managed village halls through a quality standards scheme which is backed up by a system of peer 'visitor' assessment.

People who are already involved in community buildings, with experience of the associated problems, carry out the assessments of those halls wishing to achieve Hallmark status. These 'peer visitors' use a system of checklists to identify performance and provide an external validation of achievement across 3 levels – the demands of charitable status, compliance with legal requirements and the role of the facility in the local community and its interaction with the wider community.

The Hallmark scheme has two main benefits:

It provides funders and other organisations interested in village halls with a benchmark for a well-managed hall.

It gives village hall volunteers confidence that they are running the hall in the correct way.

The scheme will provide enhanced benefits for community buildings by providing:

- County-wide scope
- An opportunity for community organisations to co-operate and communicate together and a platform from which formal networks may develop.
- An opportunity for formally networked organisations to share resources and promote themselves more effectively – marketing, publicity, research and joint working.
- 'Visitors' from participating organisations acting as peer assessors.
- Support for trustees to assist community organisations in preparing for assessment either informally or via DRCC's accredited course, 'Introduction to Managing Community Premises'.
- Community building 'tool kit' packs and access to topic-based information.
- DRCC administrative support, provision of materials and resources and scheme coordination.
- Coverage of the expenses incurred by visitors in carrying out assessments.
- 5% Insurance discount for DRCC scheme members achieving Hallmark level 1

The county-based operation of the national scheme ensures that halls are responding to a scheme that is locally relevant, whilst drawing on national standards that are tried and tested.

It encourages management committees to share best practice, access local training opportunities suitable for their needs and build strong networks at local level to create a sustainable support system.

Hallmark's simple indicators can be used to help prioritise issues for attention by trustees, forming part of an annual process of review and forward planning and helping to identify potential problems before they become unmanageable.

In the current climate of restricted funding opportunities, community building trustees need to develop new and efficient ways of operation and ensure that they sit viably at the centre of community life, especially in a rural area – issues explicitly addressed in level 3 of the Hallmark Scheme criteria. And don't forget the 5% Insurance discount for DRCC scheme members achieving Hallmark level 1.

To date, approximately 25 community venues have expressed an interest in entering the scheme, matching their organisations against the Hallmark criteria and providing manpower for the 'visitor', peer assessment process.

Sweet smell of success is in the air

A small hard core group of committed enthusiasts are currently meeting together in south-east county Durham in order to develop the scheme on the ground, prepare their organisations for assessment against the Hallmark criteria, carry out the role of 'visitor' for partner organisations, and provide valuable general feedback on the progress being made.

Some initial success has been achieved at level 1 with at least one venue now progressing to level 2.

Your invitation to join the scheme

DRCC is committed to supporting Hallmark and extends an open invitation to any community venue across County Durham to join in the scheme and/or attend the development meetings.

Please contact Ken Hazelwood for more information at: Durham Rural Community Council, Park House, Station Road, Lanchester, Co. Durham, DH7 0EX. Alternatively, e-mail ken@durhamrcc.org.uk or ring 01207 529621.

So you think you are insured?

It is important that you are aware of the terms and conditions attached to any insurance, and comply with them, to ensure that you are covered in the event of a loss.

A year ago a community centre changed its insurer to save about £700 on the premium. When I went through the policy recently with the treasurer I pointed out that it was subject to numerous conditions (bars or welded mesh on the windows for one) which they had not complied with. In the event of a loss there was little chance that they would have been covered. The cost of installing the protections required would have been more than the £700 saving on the premium.

There was nothing wrong with what the insurer had done, all of the conditions were clearly set out in the documents; it was just that nobody had read them in detail. The management committee obviously thought that any old insurance policy would do, which clearly was not the case.

If you are changing your insurer for whatever reason, read carefully all of the conditions in order to understand and then comply with them, and if there is any doubt seek professional advice.

You can telephone Ian on 01207 529621, or alternatively send him an e-mail to: ian@durhamrcc.org.uk.

Keeping the roof over your head...

By Durham RCCs
Village Halls Adviser: Ian Pillar



Public liability insurance for small groups

All groups, however small, should consider taking out public liability insurance. These days, fuelled by the T.V. adverts for lawyers and claim handling companies, there is an ever increasing prevalence to making claims.

For example, if at a meeting in a hall or community centre, someone spills a cup of tea on the floor and another person slips and injures themselves, either the person who spilt the tea, or the group which organised the meeting, could be sued for compensation. A public liability insurance would cover that risk.

I know of a case a few years ago where an elderly lady tripped and broke her hip. The cost of that claim was £23,000 plus legal and other costs. Fortunately the group concerned had public liability insurance which took care of everything.

In the event of someone making a

claim, a lawyer acting for that person will bring everyone he thinks may possibly be held liable into the action, and every one of those people or organisations, even though they may ultimately be held not to be at fault, will need legal representation to act on their behalf. Public liability insurance would provide that.

It is not enough for a group to assume that it is covered by the insurance of say a village hall or community centre. In the event of a claim, the group concerned would have to be able to demonstrate that it is controlled by the management committee of the hall or centre. If it has its own constitution, or a separate bank account, it is unlikely to be able to do so - in which case it would need to take out public liability insurance in its own name to have protection.

I am talking to an insurer about arranging insurance for small groups that do not own or occupy their own premises. I hope premiums will be £50 - £60 per year.

I need your help!

Before this can be finalised, I need an idea of the number of groups that would be interested. Please let me know if your group, or any group using your hall is interested, so that I can take this further. You can contact me on 01207 529621 or e-mail ian@durhamrcc.org.uk

I look forward to hearing from you!

Running a Village Hall or Community Centre? Looking for quality insurance at reasonable cost?

At Durham Rural Community Council we pride ourselves in providing high quality, cost effective insurance solutions carefully developed to meet the specialised needs of Village Halls and Community Buildings. Our cover is underwritten by Zurich Insurance plc, one of Britain's leading insurance providers. We can also offer a discount of 5% on insurance premiums for any Village Hall or Community Building that achieves Hallmark Accreditation Level 1.

Call Ian Pillar on 01207 529621 or e-mail ian@durhamrcc.org.uk for more information.



Durham Rural
Community Council

has the insurance solution for you!

Lanchester Parish Council - communication is key

The secret of Lanchester's success in the Calor Village of the Year competition 2009 hinged on good communication and the healthy working relationship between the diverse groups which already existed in the village.

Lanchester Parish Council and Lanchester Partnership took the lead in the competition entry and working with village organisations they found it easy to build on the good work which was already going on.

Clerk to the Parish Sally Laverick told Community News that over 90% of those who responded to the Parish Plan questionnaire said that they feel part of the community and more than 70% shop in the village once a week or more.

The community work together to improve the environment and raise funds for good causes. Thousands of visitors are attracted, each year, to the Christmas lights and November bonfire night. The village has already tasted success with its award winning brass band, male voice choir and community centre web-site.

The village design statement, produced by volunteers, has won a Royal Town Planning Institute award and volunteers produce the Village Voice, the monthly community newsletter, which is delivered free to every household.

The Locality Map

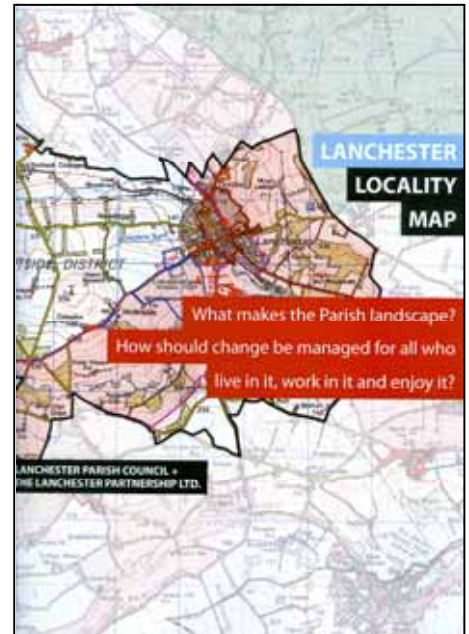
The Lanchester Parish Plan, adopted in 2006, identified the very strong concern of local residents for the enhancement and conservation of the whole environment of the Parish. The questionnaire was distributed to every household and yielded an unusually high response of 42%.

The response to the questionnaire showed a high interest in the local environment and as a result the Parish Council commissioned the 'Locality Map'. The Map sets out that the people of Lanchester Parish

see themselves as custodians of the landscape and wider countryside. They wish to conserve and enhance the area's rich landscape character and diversity.

Their aim is to increase biodiversity and tranquillity, promote enjoyment and understanding of the cultural heritage and plan for future influences on the environment.

Lanchester Parish Councillors, farmers, the Partnership and wildlife



Clerk to Lanchester Parish Council, Sally Laverick makes a presentation at Durham Rural Community Council's Autumn meeting 2009

group worked together to prepare the Locality Map, which was published at the end of 2009.

Lanchester House, West Africa

This pro-active community doesn't confine its caring to home. Since 2003 the village has also found time to support work in West Africa. There have been numerous fund raising events and massive support for an orphanage in post civil war Liberia.

In 2005 the fundraising stepped up when a dormitory roof was urgently needed at the orphanage and

within 3 weeks over £3000 was sent from the people of Lanchester to complete the building, which the Africans named 'Lanchester House' in honour of their benefactors.

Thanks to further generous donations most of the damaged buildings at the Orphanage have now been replaced, including the building of a new school, 'All Saints School, Liberia', funded almost entirely by All Saints School, Lanchester.

Lanchester provides a fine example of community cohesion and a lesson to all.

Funding information

This information is, as far as we can ascertain, accurate at the time of publishing. Durham RCC cannot take any responsibility for subsequent changes or for the quality of information or services provided by other organisations.

The Tesco Charity Trust Community Awards

The Tesco Charity Trust Community Awards Scheme provides one-off donations of between £500 and £4,000. The funding Tesco gives goes towards providing practical benefits, such as equipment and resources for projects that directly benefit children, the elderly and adults and children with disabilities, living in the local communities around their stores in the UK.

Projects previously supported:

- Playground equipment in schools and local communities
- Sensory garden or room projects
- Outdoor classrooms
- Breakfast and after school clubs
- Holiday play-schemes
- Part funding to purchase minibuses
- Befriending schemes
- Luncheon clubs / youth clubs
- Specialist equipment for disabled people
- Day trips / social trips – for elderly / disabled people

Applications should be made via: www.tescocharitytrustcommunityawards-applications.co.uk.

Decisions will not be finalised for approximately 3 months after the closing date of each round.

There are two categories of Community Awards:

Grants to support children's welfare and/or children's education (including special needs schools) which should be made between May 1 and June 30. A decision can be expected by the end of September 2010.

Grants for elderly people and adults, and children with disabilities should be made between August 1 and September 30. A decision can be expected by the end of December 2010

Contact Tesco Charity Trust, PO Box 980, Canterbury, CT1 9DX, or telephone 0845 6123575 for more information.

Do you need a meeting room?



Perhaps you are organising a training session, or need to bring a group of people together for a meeting? Durham Rural Community Council has the solution. Our light, spacious, fully equipped conference room can comfortably seat up to 40 people in theatre style, or approximately 30 in cabaret style. We can also offer smaller meeting spaces capable of accommodating groups of 6 - 8 people. Lanchester is conveniently located on the A691 less than 8 miles north-west of Durham. Ample free parking is available on site, and within the locality.



Room hire is very competitive at only £10 per hour. Tea & coffee costs £1.50 per head, and buffet lunches can be arranged at reasonable cost. Please call Russell Hayward or Charlotte Bates on 01207 529621 to discuss your needs.

Back page Picture Quiz how did you do?

1. Lanchester Church
2. The clock tower at Spennymoor Town Hall
3. Ferryhill War Memorial
4. The entrance of Auckland Castle
5. The entrance stone at Bishop Middleham



1



2



3



Picture Quiz

How well do you know your county?
 Can you recognise these local scenes?
 Answers on page 15

4



5

