

Carlisle Renaissance

Carlisle Renaissance is the umbrella under which a number of initiatives are being brought together to direct the restoration of Carlisle post the January flooding.

Carlisle City Council, in partnership with a range of other organisations, continues to work through the welfare, housing and business recovery groups to address the short and medium term needs of flood victims.

But the floods present a real opportunity for Carlisle to think strategically and beyond the floods and the damaged areas. Carlisle Renaissance is a way of taking stock and planning the direction for the district over the next 10 to 15 years.

A Task Group has been established, chaired by the City Council, and comprising the Office of the Deputy Prime Minister, Government Office North West and English Partnerships. Three Task Group workshops are being organised that will identify some high-level objectives and these

will be shared with stakeholders across the district in both the rural and urban areas.

An initial meeting of key stakeholders was held on 17 May and was attended, amongst others, by the Chair of the Carlisle Parish Councils' Association, Jocelyn Holland.

In the meantime, another initiative has been launched. Communities Reunited is a partnership of Carlisle City Council, Cumbria County Council and Carlisle Churches Flood Response.

The main aim of this project is to encourage all flood victims to contact the newly-opened drop-in centre at the Old Town Hall, Carlisle, to make sure all their needs are being met and there are contact details for those affected.

A series of seminars, drop-ins and social events are planned for various venues in both the rural and urban areas. A number of events have already been held in Crosby-on-Eden and Warwick Bridge.

Welcome

This edition of Rural Voice has a variety of information, from grants available to help with flood recovery to help with the new planning process. There are examples of good practice such as Burgh-by-Sands Vital Villages success and Stanwix Rural Parish Council's emergency planning preparations.

If you have comments on the content or format of the newsletter, or wish to submit an article for a future edition, contact Judith Derbyshire, Rural Community Support Officer, on (01228) 817355 or e-mail judithde@carlisle.gov.uk. Deadline for copy is Friday 19 August 2005.

Photographs courtesy of Charlie Hedley and Carlisle City Council.

Rural Footpaths



If you have a problem with public footpaths (also described as Public Rights of Way, Public Bridleways or Public Byways), for example repairing a broken stile or clearing undergrowth, please contact Andrew Nicholson at the East Cumbria Countryside Project on (01228) 564847.

Back to Work Courses



Brampton Business Centre has developed three short courses, following a successful pilot, to help women get back into work.

The Women into Employment Programme will be running in the Autumn to help up to 30 women to brush up on their IT Skills and apply for a job.

Don Taylor, Carlisle City Council's Business Development Officer, said: "The centre recognised that many women returning to the labour market after caring for children find that office technology has moved on and also they may need help preparing applications for jobs and letters. The course uses practical examples to help with the IT training."

For more information, contact Brampton Business Centre on (016977) 45000.

Assistance for Flood Recovery

Funding has been made available from Central Government for Housing Recovery work in the flood-affected areas. Plans are currently being put together to tackle the main issues such as security and flood resistant measures.

There are other ways in which people may qualify for funding – through disability facilities grant and housing grant assistance available from Cumbria County Council and Carlisle City Council.

There are three categories of grant:

- **Mandatory Disabled Facilities Grant** – This is for providing equipment and adaptations, for example stair lifts, ramps and level access to showers, to help a disabled person to stay and be cared for in their own home for as long as possible. This grant is subject to a financial test to see how much or little an applicant would have to contribute. For

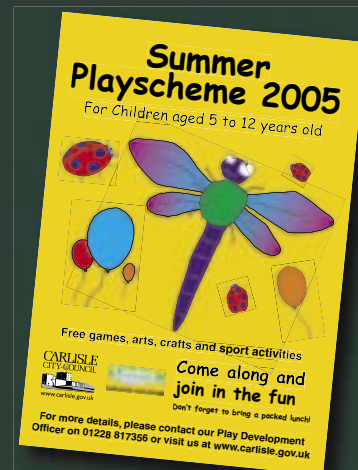
more information, contact Cumbria County Council's Social Services Occupational Therapists on (01228) 606060.

- **Discretionary Renovation Grant** – This is available to bring a property up to a 'Fitness Standard', a minimum standard laid down by housing legislation. It can be used to treat rising damp, for structural repairs and drainage systems. This grant is also subject to a financial test.
- **Minor Works Grant** – People over 60 years old who receive benefits such as Income Support, Housing Benefit, Council Tax Benefit can apply for a grant to help with minor repair work to keep their property in a good state of repair.

For more information on any aspect of housing renovation or grant assistance, call Carlisle City Council's Environmental Protection Services on (01228) 817320.



Summer Playschemes



Summer playschemes will be up and running in Rural Carlisle providing a range of exciting activities for children aged from five to 12-years-old. Fun times are guaranteed so to find out the nearest playscheme to you, contact Carlisle City Council's Play Team on (01228) 817356. You can also log on to www.carlisle.gov.uk to view the whole Summer programme.

Burgh-by-Sands – A Case Study



The Countryside Agency has used Burgh-by-Sands as a case study for its Vital Villages initiative.

The Agency highlights how its £5,000 Vital Villages grant helped the parish council to bring in specialist consultants to help with the research needed to develop its Parish Plan and Village Design Statement.

Villager Susan Hodgson, who co-ordinated the research, said: "We have a practical tool that will be useful for many years as it has become our guiding light. "It has helped to reinvigorate village life by enabling us to progress a number of projects that are already changing people's lives for the better."

The projects include:

- A luncheon club and shopping bus for the elderly
- Fund-raising for the refurbishment of the village playground
- Protecting a green open-space.

To read the case study in full, visit www.countryside.gov.uk

Emergency Planning

Following the storms and flooding in January, parish councils started to think about putting in place their own emergency plans.

Stanwix Rural Parish Council have already started, its Vice Chair, Wendy Aldred, said: "The floods, power failure and severed communications certainly focused our minds on emergency planning, and exploring how the community can help itself in the event of a similar crisis. Arrangements are already in place to house basic community emergency packs in the village halls, and a series of public consultation meetings are being held during June and July. This will involve the parish's local communities in developing and owning our Emergency Plan".

Carlisle City Council welcomes this as very positive step and will be working with parish councils to share best practice and provide support.

Sustainable Community Buildings Project



Village halls, community recreation centres and youth centres, could have access to funding which will help to improve the energy efficiency of their buildings.

The Cumbria Sustainable Community Buildings Project organised by a Penrith based charity, Eden Local Agenda 21, has resources to work with 20 groups across Cumbria to carry out a comprehensive Energy Audit of their community building. They will then provide funding for a minimum of 12 groups to help undertake the

energy improvement measures recommended by the audits.

SCB Project Manager, Phil Davies, said: "A selection of groups will be offered a free energy audit, which will form the basis of future energy efficiency improvements."

For more information, contact Phil Davies, e-mail edenla21@onetel.com or telephone (01768) 210276. The deadline for requests for information is Thursday 30 June 2005.

New Planning Policy System



Each planning authority has to produce Development Plan documents, which set out core strategies and policies to guide future development in their areas.

The new Development Plan system, introduced by the Government in September 2004, will improve processes and make it easier to keep documents up to date.

During the transition period, Carlisle City Council will continue to review its existing local plan.

Parish Design Statements and some elements of Parish Plans can be adopted as Supplementary Planning documents. By doing this, the City Council can take into account guidelines produced by

parish councils when considering an application for planning permission.

There is a detailed guide, PPS12, which sets out the new system. Click on the link www.odpm.gov.uk/stellent/groups/odpm_planning/documents/page/odpm_plan_032593.pdf. The Office of the Deputy Prime Minister will also be preparing a handbook.

For more information, contact the Local Plans team on (01228) 817193 or e-mail lpc@carlisle.gov.uk.

ChangeUp Challenge

The Government is helping the voluntary and community sector (VCS) to become bigger players in providing public services through its 10 year ChangeUp Challenge.

Between 2001 and 2003, the number of people involved in volunteering grew by 1.5 million and the value of volunteer work in the UK is estimated at more than £25 billion a year.

By 2014, the Government aims to increase the capacity, performance and efficiency of this sector in general and, more specifically, those voluntary and community organisations that provide the infrastructure.

The infrastructure describes the physical facilities, structures, systems, relationships, people, knowledge and skills that exist to support and develop, co-ordinate,

represent and promote frontline organisations enabling them to deliver their mission effectively.

Priority areas for development are performance improvement, workforce development and leadership, ICT, volunteer recruitment and management, governance and, in Cumbria, rural isolation.

Development plans will be produced to access funding and events are planned to raise awareness about ChangeUp.

For more information, visit the Cumbria Association of Councils for Voluntary Service website www.cacvs.org.uk or the Home Office website www.homeoffice.gov.uk/comrace or contact Lynne Sneap, Carlisle CSV on (01228) 512513.



Volunteering Roadshow

Carlisle CVS will be holding a Volunteer's Open Day at their Spencer Street offices in Carlisle. On Tuesday 7 June, organisations including Cumbria Scouts, Carlisle Alzheimers and the Samaritans will be there with displays and information. This is the final event of Celebrating Volunteers Week 2005.

They also provide an outreach service at Brampton's Moot Hall on the last Wednesday of the month, between 2pm and 4pm.

Anyone interested in volunteering can come along to the days and find out more. Similarly, any organisations looking for volunteers, particularly in the rural areas such as Brampton, Longtown, Dalston, Burgh-by-Sands are welcome to attend.

For more information, contact Julie Mosley at the Volunteer Centre on (01228) 512513, e-mail juliemo@carlislevb.org.uk or visit www.carlislevb.org.uk.

Securing Services in Rural Communities

Rural communities can apply for 50 per cent funding, to a maximum of £25,000, for projects that safeguard key services.



CRISP, the Cumbria Rural Infrastructure Support Programme will spend £855,000 over the next three years to help groups and organisations to find innovative ways of creating and securing services in rural communities.

Applications are welcome from various types of organisations and for a wide range of activities

such as community shops, pubs and childcare facilities, as well as relocating post offices in existing premises, finding IT solutions to the loss of local services and setting up mobile outreach services.

Kate Willard, Chief Executive of Rural Regeneration Cumbria, said: "This is an excellent scheme designed to support communities who come up with answers to some questions posed by living in really rural areas."

For more information, contact Paul Dodson, Cumbria County Council's Programme Manager (Community Enterprise) on (01228) 606753 or visit www.cumbria.gov.uk/ruralmatters/actions/crisp

Carlisle Parish Councils Association (CPCA) Diary Dates

Joint meeting with Carlisle City Council Executive, Thursday 9 June, at 7.30pm, Orton Village Hall.

CPCA Executive Meeting, Wednesday 7 September, at 7.30pm, Dalston Council Offices.

CPCA Annual General Meeting, Monday 3 October, at 7.30pm, Rockcliffe Community Centre.