

Untapping the Potential of Village Shops

This is a challenging time for many of the district's village shops. With increased competition from supermarkets, particularly home delivery services, internet shopping and the withdrawal of post offices services, some businesses are facing failure and others have already closed. These closures have a big impact on rural communities. Research carried out by Voluntary Action Cumbria (VAC) has found that people value shops and post offices as a meeting place as well as providing goods and services.

Many shops have untapped potential and with a bit of the and encouragement can meet these challenges. A new partnership

set up by VAC has joined with a number of other local organisations including local councils and business support organisations to form the Rural Retail Advisory Partnership for Cumbria.

Specialist support is available to communities looking to own or run their own shop from the Village Retail Services Association (ViRSA). They offer practical advice and guidance from their website www.virsa.org.uk and a team of specialist advisors.

You can get in touch with **Charlotte Foster**, the ViRSA Advisor for Cumbria on **01756 753609**.

Play areas in the Parish? City Council help with safety inspections



Children's play areas are places of fun and enjoyment for youngsters, but with increased safety requirements they need careful management and maintenance. Insurers are now looking for an accredited inspection programme, with a full technical check taking place at least once a year. For a Parish with one or two play areas, a qualified inspector's report can be a significant expense at several hundred pounds. Carlisle City Council may be able to help bring this cost down.

The City Council can offer Parishes a full RoSPA (Royal Society for Prevention of Accidents) inspection and report at a fraction of the cost, by adding your play areas to its own list. The City Council would then invoice the Parish Council at cost for any inspections carried out on its behalf. Typically this may be £40 to £50 per play area.

The next visit by RoSPA inspectors will take place in October/November 2008.

If you wish us to add your Parish to the list, please contact **Lee Lewis** on **01228 618500**, or e-mail LeeL@carlisle.gov.uk

'Owning the Assets' Affordable Housing Conference

This event held recently was aimed at exploring the potential for communities to provide permanently affordable housing through local trusts. It attracted a host of groups from across the county including communities, local authorities, landowners, political representatives and Housing Associations. All interested in how community ownership of some key assets can assist regeneration, in particular setting up Community Land Trusts (CLTs) to provide permanent local affordable housing. Attendees were informed why CLTs were taking off all around Britain, what they are about and how they could be set up.

Key Points about community land trusts:

- CLTs set out to establish permanent affordable and local housing for long-term community benefit
- Scope to manage other assets such as farming, workshops or retail
- Greater freedom to use innovative methods and local procurement such as using local builders and new methods of construction.

To find out more contact: **Andy Lloyd** Community Land Trust Project Officer on **01768 210265** or e-mail andy@crht.org.uk

Allotments

There has been a huge increase in the interest in allotments in recent years. Although allotments are usually thought of as being located in towns and cities, they were rural in origin, initially set up to help farm labourers on low wages provide for their families.

As per the 1908 Allotments Act, plots must be provided if six or more electors petition the relevant allotment authority. Where there are Parish Councils the responsibility for the provision of allotments lies with them. All over the county, Parish Councils are being asked to provide plots for the first time and this includes some in Carlisle and District.

If you:

- Would like to see allotments in your area
- are concerned about how and where they could be provided
- Want to know more about them
- How they might work in the rural areas.

Please contact the City Council's allotments officer. If there is sufficient interest and response it should be possible to take this further with a co-ordinated approach.

Elizabeth Allnutt,
Greenspaces Team, e-mail
ElizabethA@carlisle.gov.uk
or on **01228 618566**

Highway Stewards



Communities across Cumbria are set to feel the benefits of millions of pounds of extra cash being spent on the county's roads. As well as £1million already being used to tackle potholes, an extra £1.135 million is set to be spent on road repairs in 2008/9 and another £1million a year has been agreed to introduce highways stewards to Cumbria.

Twenty-four stewards will soon be on the ground

providing highways services in communities around the county, four will cover Carlisle and District. Each steward will oversee around 124 miles (200 kilometres) of road and will be trained and equipped to tackle small but important repair and maintenance work on roads, gullies, road signs and verges.

They will also be the 'eyes and ears' of the overall highways service, helping to identify larger jobs that need doing and calling on the existing area highways teams to bring in a bit of muscle when required. They will work closely with the County Council's local committee for Carlisle as well as with the parishes and local councillors.

Movies in Brampton

Started in November 2007, Brampton Film Club is now fast approaching the end of its first year. The club was created when the Brampton residents made known that they wanted to see movies locally. The club has attracted more than 140 members, not only locally but also from as far off as Gretna and even Keswick. It also provides a facility in the town, by allowing entry to visitors, who perhaps after a days site seeing, can relax in a friendly atmosphere and watch a good movie.

In June 2008, the club was granted £10,000 from the National Lottery Awards for All fund. Since then, it has been able to purchase its own projection equipment, helping

it to diversify and enhance its future programme.

Brampton Film Club provides refreshments after each film and encourages members to discuss what they have seen. It is providing movies for local people and providing a meeting place, where lovers of film, both local and from further afield, can get together.

To find out more log onto bramptonfilmclub@aol.co.uk



Waste Prevention Fund

Money from Cumbria County Council's Community Waste Prevention Fund is now available to support new and innovative waste prevention initiatives, which work directly with the community to encourage the key practices of reduce, reuse and recycle, and subsequently improving quality of life for the people in Cumbria.

What type of activity will be supported?

The types of activities that will be supported must promote at least two of the following:

- Decrease municipal waste, by introducing community composting schemes
- Increase the amount and range of materials reused and recycled, eg a wood reuse scheme
- Increase the number of households involved in the

three Rs (reduce, reuse and recycle), by establishing a new three Rs scheme

- Link with wider sustainable benefits, by creating volunteer opportunities.

Who can apply to the fund?

Community groups, a charity or social enterprise, with a constitution, a bank account and a great idea, we want to hear from you.

For more information contact **Louise Woods** on **01228 607769** or e-mail **louise.woods@cumbriacc.gov.uk**



Speed Dating with Local Authorities

The outlook has never been better for all those seeking to shape the future of their communities. The Government's 'Communities in Control: Real People, Real Power' White Paper, published on July 9, outlines directions and commitments for local government:

- A new duty for councils and other best value authorities to "inform, consult, involve and devolve"
- More choice for local people in the way local services are designed and delivered
- More opportunities for communities to take on the management and ownership of local facilities and assets, with a new fund to encourage them
- More co-ordinated support for citizens and community groups to help them take advantage of empowerment opportunities

These can only be achieved through partnerships and networks between local authorities and communities. The sort of partnerships which Voluntary Action Cumbria's (VAC) free 'speed dating' style workshop seeks to promote.

They are a fun and informal way for people involved with Community (Parish) Planning to meet and quiz some of the key organisations who can help them bring about change in their communities.

Carlisle's 'Speed Dating' with Local Authorities workshop will be at Downagate Community Centre on Tuesday 16 September from 7pm to 9pm.

Further details and a booking form can be found on the VAC website **www.ruralcumbria.org.uk** or by contacting **Hellen Aitken**, on **01768 869520** or e-mail **hellenaitken@ruralcumbria.org.uk**

Village Hall Workshop

Following on from last year's successful Village Hall workshop, Carlisle City Council, in conjunction with Carlisle Parish Councils Association and Voluntary Action Cumbria, are holding another workshop. It will take place on Saturday 13 September 2008, at the Rockcliffe Centre, Rockcliffe. The workshop will run from 9.30 am to 12.30 pm with a buffet lunch provided afterwards. The workshop will include a mix of presentations, small group discussions and case studies from other village halls in the Carlisle district. Topics will include energy efficiency in halls, licensing, fire safety and food hygiene, legal advice, book keeping, increasing lettings and funding. Places are limited to two representatives from each village hall.

All village halls have been sent booking forms but if you require additional copies, please contact **Claire Rankin**, Rural Support Officer, Carlisle City Council on **01228 817355**.



Carlisle Healthy Networks

Funded through the Carlisle Partnership, Cumbria CVS are developing a Network for Third Sector organisations interested in health and wellbeing.

The Carlisle Healthy Networks project will primarily focus on the reduction of health inequalities by encouraging and supporting the development of health and wellbeing initiatives in the community.

What's Happening

The project team will work with community development workers involved in health and wellbeing (in the broadest sense) to enable us to gather a knowledge base of initiatives and organisations operating in Carlisle and District.

Develop network opportunities to exchange information, highlight health priorities in the area and ensure that smaller, localised health initiatives can keep up to date with regional and national opportunities and information.

Facilitate a series of Health and

Well-being information / training sessions for local community development workers and organisations.

Will be distributing grants, from £500 to £1,500 (total of £16,000) from the Carlisle Partnership. These grants will be available to voluntary and community groups that want to set up, or develop local health projects that fit into the Carlisle Partnerships priorities, over the following year: reducing health inequalities, obesity, smoking and maximising income.

Getting Involved

If you are involved in community development or local health projects, please come along to the launch event

When: Wednesday 17 September, 12.30pm to 3.00pm

Where: The Hub Café, Centre 47, Nelson Street, Carlisle

Contact **Jozi Brown**, Community Involvement & Representation Coordinator at Cumbria CVS, either by e-mail jozib@cumbriaccvs.org.uk or telephone **01228 512513**

Carlisle Healthy Networks

Diary Dates

Carlisle Rural Neighbourhood Forums

Brampton & District
Monday 15 September 2008

Wetheral & Stanwix Rural
Thursday 25 September
and Thursday 27 November
2008

Longtown & Bewcastle
Wednesday 1 October 2008

Dalston & Cummersdale
Monday 20 October 2008

For further information
please contact **Judith
Gardner** on **01228 226474**,
e-mail judith.gardner@cumbriacc.gov.uk

Carlisle Parish Council Association AGM

Monday 6 October at
Dalston Victory Hall at
6.30pm

'Speed Dating' with Local Organisations

Downagate Community
Centre, Warwick Bridge on
Tuesday 16 September 2008

Writing Effective Action Plans

The return of our action
planning workshop!
Downagate Community
Centre, Warwick Bridge on
Tuesday 9 December 2008

Wifi Hotspots for Carlisle

Carlisle City Council is working with Telegeneration to introduce a number of WiFi 'hotspots' around the city. With a WiFi enabled device, such as a laptop, you can now access the Internet at a variety of locations throughout Carlisle.

The service is a low cost, subscription based, service and is based at more than 30 sites around Carlisle including Tullie House Museum & Art Gallery, The Sands Centre, the Civic Centre and Carlisle's

Tourist Information Centre. A full list of these sites can be found at www.carlisle.gov.uk/wifi

To sign up to the service, just visit www.telegeneration.com

