

Essential information on funding, training, events and much more for local councils, community halls and other groups!

Saving the village pub



Our colleagues at Oxfordshire RCC (ORCC) have launched a new guide 'Saving the Village Pub'. The role of the village pub as a vibrant social centre at the heart of the community is as important as ever, but the future of the pub in our rural communities is increasingly coming under threat. Changing economic and social factors are making it more difficult for rural pubs to be maintained as sustainable businesses. The guide gives advice on what to do if the pub is threatened with closure and where to go for information and support.

Further information on [ORCC's website](#)



£250 million to help communities buy local assets

Prime Minister David Cameron has announced £250m to help communities buy local assets such as pubs, shops, community centres, sports facilities and affordable housing. Mr Cameron said Big Society Capital (BSC) and the Big Lottery Fund (BLF) were making a "long-term commitment to provide a quarter of a billion pounds over the rest of this decade to help communities with ambitions to own local assets like pubs, shops, community centres and affordable housing."

Read more on [Action for Market Towns website](#)

Free trees for school, community and youth groups

The Woodland Trust have **4000 free tree packs** to give away to school, community and youth groups this autumn.

Bring your community together to do something good for your neighbourhood by applying* **before 13 September 2013** ** for the chance to receive a free tree pack to plant in November 2013.

Each pack is worth **£30, £105 or £420**. All you need to do is find a suitable site and supply the volunteer planters and tree protection.

Find out more at the [Woodland Trust website](#). First come, first served so apply early!



WOODLAND
TRUST

The Rural Community Energy Fund (RCEF) opens to applications



The RCEF is specifically targeted at helping rural communities access the money needed to carry out feasibility studies into renewable energy projects, and fund the costs associated with applying for planning permission. It is intended that projects will then be able to attract private finance to pay for renewable energy kit and get projects up and running. Funding can be used to support rural projects across the renewable and low carbon energy spectrum including wind, solar, biomass, heat pumps, anaerobic digestion, gas Combined Heat and Power and hydro.

Find out more at the [Inside Government website](#).

FREE

LOFT AND CAVITY WALL INSULATION



Action with Communities in Rural Kent has teamed up with British Gas to offer **free** cavity wall and/or loft insulation to anyone in receipt of eligible benefits, including Child and Working Tax Credits and State Pension Credit.

There is no catch and you don't need to be a British Gas customer.

Insulating your home can save you hundreds of pounds on your energy bills and makes your home warmer; it's good for the environment too by lowering your carbon emissions.

Contact British Gas free on **0800 980 9037** or for more information speak to Tessa O'Sullivan at Action with Communities in Rural Kent on 01303 813790

Research shows people in 30s and 40s leaving rural areas



New figures from the National Housing Federation show that the number of people aged 30-44 has dropped nearly 9% in rural areas over the last decade, despite numbers rising in urban areas. The figures indicate that younger people are being priced out of the housing market. Alongside this demographic shift, rural house prices have nearly doubled in ten years, up 82% from £126,016 to £228,742. However, wages have not kept pace, rising 17% slower in rural areas than in urban areas over the last five years.



The Screwfix Foundation is a new charity set up by Screwfix in 2013. We have a clear purpose of raising funds to support projects that will fix, repair, maintain and improve properties and community facilities specifically for those in need in the UK.

More details from the [Screwfix website](#).

COMMUNITY HALL TRAINING SCHEDULE

Please see below a table of upcoming courses being delivered by Action with Communities in Rural Kent

Training Course	Date	Location	Timings
Trustee Training	4 th September 2013	Lenham	Evening
Trustee Training	4 th November 2013	Rhodes Minnis	Afternoon

(all costs are inclusive of refreshments and VAT)
(price for members and non-members of Action with Communities in Rural Kent on application)

For more information or to make a booking please call 01303 813790
or email info@ruralkent.org.uk

Announcement of allocations to Local Enterprise Partnerships

The Government has announced the European Regional Development Fund, the European Social Fund and part of the European Agricultural Fund for Rural Development (EAFRD) will be allocated to Local Enterprise Partnerships (LEP) areas for a seven year period through a new decentralised EU Growth Programme. Under this new model, decision-making powers will be transferred from Whitehall to local areas. LEPs and local partners will be in charge of European Funds that will provide significant investment in innovation, business, skills and employment in a common agenda for growth and jobs that will integrate effectively with wider LEP Strategic Plans.



The South East LEP that covers Essex, Kent and East Sussex has an allocation of £185.9 million.



Stronger Together!

The Stronger Together Conference was held on 28th June at which there was much discussion about future funds, both from Europe as well as those available across the region to support the Growth Programme. The new programmes round (2014-2020) will bring substantial funding into the south east (see above).

There were speakers from the Department of Business Innovation & Skills, NCVO, Big Lottery and other strategic national and regional agencies as well. To reach the targets set in the Regional Strategy for Growth it is essential that the VCS helps provide the solutions to combatting poverty and exclusion.

Around 120 attended this successful event and the presentations can now be downloaded from the "Events" page of our website at www.ruralkent.org.uk.

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Action with Communities in Rural Kent The Old Granary, Penstock Hall Farm, Brabourne, Kent TN25 5LL Registered Charity No.212796

Tel: 01303 813790

Website: www.ruralkent.org.uk

Email: info@ruralkent.org.uk

