

Plunkett Foundation News

3rd February 2012

Community ownership makes the headlines!

This week has seen a frenzy of activity for rural communities, with community ownership making the headlines regionally and nationally.

Last Friday, the focus was on a community in Buckinghamshire considering community ownership as a way of saving their local pub from closure, covered by BBC Oxford News. Wednesday saw BBC Radio Oxford celebrate the 25th anniversary of Hanney Community Shop, the first to open in the county. And Friday's focus was in West Yorkshire, where BBC Radio Leeds covered a community in Hebden Bridge looking to co-operation as a way of saving the much-loved Fox and Goose from closure.

Community ownership also attracted national coverage, with Yorkshire's first ever co-operative pub, the George and Dragon, being featured on ITV's Alan Titchmarsh Show. Landlady Jackie Stubbs and committee member Paul Cullen spoke candidly to Alan about how co-operation saved not only the pub, but also enabled the community to have a shop, library service and allotments in the remote North Yorkshire village. And on Sunday 5th February, Churchinford Community Shop will make an appearance on BBC's Countryfile, talking about their focus on locally produced food.

You can watch the Alan Titchmarsh Show again on ITV player, from 5 minutes in - <http://www.itv.com/itvplayer/video/?Filter=304928>. For more information about how we can help you save an asset or service in your community, visit <http://www.plunkett.co.uk/>.

PLUNKETT ON FACEBOOK AND TWITTER

Plunkett Foundation on Facebook:

<http://www.facebook.com/pages/Plunkett-Foundation/146827248663874?ref=ts>

Plunkett Foundation on Twitter: @PeterCouchman, @Mike_Plunkett, @HarrietPlunkett, @Kat_Plunkett, @MrsM_Plunkett, @James_Plunkett.

Surrey Community Action Grants

If your community enterprise is based in the South East and enables adults to enter, or prepare for employment or education, you could apply for a grant of up to £12,000 through Surrey Community Action. If you would like further information about the grant and eligibility criteria please visit http://www.surreyca.org.uk/grants&funding_esf.htm.

International Social Enterprise Mark

The Social Enterprise Mark has announced it is now internationally registered as a Community Trade Mark in the European Union. Work to register the Mark is ongoing in the USA, Australia, India, Canada and South Africa, with expert services provided by Mat Healey and his team at Bates Wells & Braithwaite.

Lucy Findlay, Managing Director, Social Enterprise Mark Company, said:

“Setting an international standard for a common understanding of social enterprise is crucial to the development of the sector across the world.

“This is an important step in developing a worldwide position where genuine social enterprises are recognized and we are thrilled that the process is now concluded in the European Union. We are continuing to work with key partners around the world to investigate the Mark’s applicability in their local circumstances.” For more information visit <http://www.socialenterprisemark.org.uk/>.

Further support for rural tourism

The government aims to increase the contribution made by rural tourism to the economy, MPs have been told.

Tourism is already a significant contributor to the rural economy and it has the potential for further growth, said Defra minister Richard Benyon.

"The government has therefore announced a £25 million initiative to promote rural tourism and support rural tourism businesses," he said.

The money includes establishing a new £10 million fund for the rural development programme for England, said Mr Benyon. This would provide funding for the development and improvement of tourism destinations, facilities and products. For more information visit <http://www.rsonline.org.uk/business/rural-tourism-has-further-potential>.

Join us in Birmingham for the biggest community enterprise event to date!

Places are going fast for the Village SOS national conference, which will be held in Birmingham on Monday 27th February. The free conference will draw on the widest range of experts from across the rural and social enterprise sectors to give communities the support they need to rejuvenate their villages by setting up community enterprises – from shops and pubs to local food and transport projects.

UK Chair of the Big Lottery Fund, Peter Ainsworth, will be joined on the day by leaders of the sector, including Plunkett Foundation's Chief Executive Peter Couchman, Co-operatives UK's Chair, David Button, Action for Communities in Rural England (ACRE)'s Chief Executive Sylvia Brown and Locality's Chief Executive, Steve Wyler, all of whom are partners on the Big Lottery Fund's Village SOS programme which provides the most comprehensive support ever available to communities setting up community enterprises across the UK.

The UK's community enterprise pioneers will also be present to inspire delegates to start up their own enterprises, like Fordhall Farm, the country's first ever farm to be owned by its community, and Cybermoor, a revolutionary broadband community enterprise that has transformed broadband services for the most remote parish in England. They will be joined by specialists across the spectrum, from business and funding experts to planning and marketing professionals.

Book your free place at <http://www.villagesos.org.uk>

Add your voice to the community food debate

Making Local Food Work, the five year programme funded by the Big Lottery Fund and delivered by a partnership of organizations led by Plunkett Foundation, is celebrating the culmination of five years of success supporting the community food sector by holding its national conference, Making Local Food Our Future, in London on March 20th.

Making Local Food Our Future will not only be a celebration of the 1,300 enterprises we've supported, reaching out to over 2 million consumers across England, but will be an opportunity to debate the development of the sector and what the future might hold. Experts from across the board will join inspirational case studies, from community supported agriculture projects to food co-operatives and local food systems. To book your place on this free event, visit <http://makinglocalfoodourfuture.eventbrite.co.uk>.