

WARR PARTNERSHIP NEWS

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The WARR Partnership is responsible for delivering the EU Leader+ programme across rural Rother and thirteen parishes of Wealden.

WARR Partnership

5 Red Barn Mews

High Street, Battle TN33 0AG

E-mail: info@warrpartnership.org.uk

www.warrpartnership.org.uk

THE WARR PARTNERSHIP WISHES YOU A MERRY CHRISTMAS AND A HAPPY NEW YEAR!

THE WARR PARTNERSHIP HAS GRANT FUNDING AVAILABLE FOR 2005-2008. BELOW ARE SOME OF THE OUTPUTS WE WOULD PARTICULARLY LIKE TO ADDRESS:

Economic Activity

Aim: to increase the number, diversity and sustainability of small businesses and visitor enterprises.

Objective: jobs created or safeguarded in assisted businesses

Economic Activity II

Aim: to increase economic activity based on products derived from local materials with a cultural link to locality

Objectives: new market outlets established and/or jobs created or safeguarded

Tourism

Aim: to increase sustainable tourism based on local distinctiveness

Objectives: sustainable tourism projects supported and/or tourism information facilities provided and/or cultural/heritage events supported

Local Leadership

Aim: an increase in the effectiveness of local leadership and partner organisations in addressing local needs

Objective: local people participating in local consultation events

Environmental and Cultural Resources

Aim: an increase in the sensitive and sustainable use of environmental and cultural resources for economic and recreational purposes

Objectives: businesses receiving environmental advice and/or businesses carrying out environmental audits

Environmental Knowledge and Skills

Aim: an increase in the range and level of environmental knowledge and skills of people living in rural areas and an increase in the knowledge of the countryside among people who visit it

Objectives: businesses/community groups advised/assisted and/or trained local people involved in countryside management activities

THIS IS A ROLLING PROGRAMME AND FUNDING IS NOW BEING ALLOCATED FOR THE REMAINING YEARS. IF YOU HAVE AN INTERESTING AND INNOVATIVE PROJECT IN MIND, PLEASE CONTACT THE WARR PARTNERSHIP TEAM NOW TO SECURE YOUR GRANT.

LEADER+ PROJECTS

This has been a busy year for the WARR Partnership and we are delighted to present below details of all our active projects. All are producing excellent results and we would like to thank all project leaders and project staff for the level of commitment they are putting into the delivery of these projects. For project contact details please see our website www.warrpartnership.org.uk

2003/5—Sustainable Food & Farming Centre

The Centre's aim is to support and co-ordinate the development of sustainable farming and food links. Farmers and growers are receiving support to enable them to increase income through diversification, processing, environmental management and local marketing. Local farmers' networks have been initiated, enabling them to exchange information and experience and discuss opportunities for collaboration.



Sustainable Food & Farming Centre



Observatory Arts Centre—Hedge Planting

2003/4—The Observatory Arts Centre

The Isaac Newton Arts Trust is undertaking the first stage of an exciting plan to transform the redundant telescope housing and surrounding land at Herstmonceux Castle into a landmark of cultural and artistic activity. The initial stage involves the recovery of the landscape around the telescope building, with a view to creating an open air Arena where theatrical, musical and visual events and activities could be programmed.

2004—Agri-Industrial Shed Workbook

This project has produced a planning application for a real commercial building using low-value timber. The processes will be recorded and combined with design information, in the form of a workbook. This will be open to public use as a template guide.



2003/5—Battle Area Volunteer Driver Scheme

This project aims to improve the availability and flexibility of essential transport services to those in greatest need, particularly those living in isolated areas, those on low incomes, the elderly and disabled. A "pilot" scheme has been set up to recruit volunteer drivers, who use their own cars to provide lifts to disadvantaged people, predominantly for medical and clinical appointments.

2004/5—Weald Meadows Initiative

The traditional management of unimproved meadows in the High and Low Weald will be enabled and new species-rich grasslands established. Added value grassland products, in particular Weald native wildflower grassland seed will be proactively developed and marketed.

2003/5—Sacred Sussex

Visits to places of worship are being promoted to develop heritage appreciation, stimulate local economies and rural regeneration. Workshops are being held on the production of guides and interpretative literature and training is provided to encourage local groups to research

2004/6—Community Leadership & Local Initiative Development Programme

This project is providing information, support, knowledge and know-how to individuals and community groups seeking to address identified issues or implement actions that will improve the quality of life locally.

Increase visitor satisfaction. Sites will develop new ways of using their buildings and churchyards for local events.



2003/4—Battle Memorial Hall Improvements

The Memorial Hall in Battle has been extended, upgraded and refurbished to provide a better environment for the existing users, attract new ones and to reinforce its central position as a multi-purpose amenity, supporting social and cultural activity in Battle area and its surrounding villages.

2003/7—Young People Mean Business

This project encourages young people to remain and participate in the local rural economy. Outreach links are developed through local community and statutory organisations, which already have access to disadvantaged young people. By providing soft loans, grants and aftercare support, the programme helps young people who have a good business idea and have been refused all other forms of finance, to move into self-employment.



Young People Mean Business



Rotherfield Community Tourism Initiative - Bridleway: before and after

2004/7—The BUZZ Project

This community development and youth work project will build the capacity of rural communities in Rother and Wealden to better meet the needs of young people in their villages. Local rural communities will be supported and empowered to enable the health, care and social needs of young people to be met.

2004/6—Community Development Finance Initiative

This project will provide loans to micro businesses and small, medium and social enterprises, when conventional bank finance is not available. The project supports new and existing businesses by providing loans towards set up costs, expansion or diversification, together with on-going business advice and mentoring for the life of the loan.



2003/6—Rother Green Gym

This project is promoting health through conservation volunteering. Green Gym community groups, which local people will be enabled to lead and manage, will be established at Rye Bay and Battle. Participants will have the opportunity to

learn both practical environmental skills and social skills, whilst also improving physical and mental health. As a result of their efforts, the environment will be improved at 10 sites.

2004/6—Growing Together

A garden and sustainable energy centre has been created to promote waste minimisation and energy conservation, including composting, water harvesting, rubbish recycling and wind and solar electricity generation. Workshops and open days will increase awareness of local biodiversity and how to enhance it.

2003/5—Rotherfield Community Tourism Initiative

This project is opening up the countryside around Rotherfield village to walkers, cyclists and horse riders, through the development and promotion of a network of bridleways and footpaths in the Parish. Objectives include the creation of new leisure facilities for local people and visitors, an increase in visitor numbers and spend, the retention and creation of local jobs.

2003/4—Wealden & Rother Sustainable Farms

This project will provide a much needed service to rural farm businesses through advisory visits, the production of detailed Whole Farm Conservation Plans and the provision of training for farm workers. Technical Information sheets and website information will provide additional information to those not involved in the programme.



W & R Sustainable Farms - New Farm woodland planting day

2004/6—Growing Skills

A disused barn is being converted to provide a base from which disabled young people can utilise the therapeutic benefits of working outdoors in a horticulture/smallholding environment. Training activities will be implemented that involve harvesting, sorting and preparation of the fruit and vegetable grown. Both vocational and basic skills training will be taught in a realistic working atmosphere.

2004/5—Heathfield Public Information Points (PiPs)

The area suffers from pockets of rural deprivation, poor public transport and lack of access to services, IT and the Internet. The location of a PiP in each village will help to improve computer skills through on-line training, provide access to information and services and improve the skills base of the area as a whole.

LEADER+ TRANS-NATIONAL AND TRANS-REGIONAL PROJECTS

Below are the details of our first trans-regional project developed in co-operation with the East Sussex Rural Transport Partnership and Kent Leader+ group.

2003/7—Marshlink Line

The “Marshlink” Ashford to Hastings line is an under-utilized asset. A partnership between the community, rail industry, development agencies and local government aims to make the most of it for the social, economic and environmental benefit of local communities, residents and visitors. Stations will be enhanced, making them more of a focus for the community and bringing dis-used and often vandalized space back into use for local businesses or community activities.

We are still seeking organizations with links to other parts of the UK or Europe which would like to develop a joint project. Standard Leader+ criteria must be met and the partner organization must also be located in a Leader+ area. The word “co-operation” is key to trans-regional and trans-national working and you will need to demonstrate that working with a partner will provide additional benefits to both organizations.

MEET THE BOARD

A regular feature in which we will be introducing the partners

Jo Blackwell represents Young People



After living in Spain for 10 years, Jo moved to Surrey where she taught countryside estate skills and sheep husbandry at Merrist Wood College. During this time she also looked after their sheep flock and became a qualified chainsaw user!

2 years ago, Jo joined the Prince's Trust, where she has been responsible for getting our 'Young People Mean Business' project off the ground and now manages their in school xl programme throughout Sussex and Surrey.

Jo lives in a small Downs village with her partner, Martin, and their dog, Max, and long walks across the Downs and gardening are her ways of unwinding.

Councillor David Vereker represents Rother District Council



After national service in the Royal Navy, David obtained a Master's degree in Law at Cambridge University, but continued to serve in the Royal Navy Volunteer Reserve until 1962, retiring as a Lieutenant Commander. From 1953 to 1985 he worked at Lloyd's of London, spending the last ten years as Managing Director of a firm of Lloyd's brokers. In 1985 he and his wife Jane took up farming in Burwash, where he became active in the local branch of the NFU and has been serving on the Parish Council for 15 years. Currently Chairman of Rother, David is keen to ensure new initiatives and innovations do actually deliver improved services for the residents.

With two sons and four grandchildren, David's interests include country pursuits, outdoor activities and the preservation of the countryside.

Is this newsletter of interest to you and your organisation? Please let us know what you think and what subjects you would like us to cover in future issues.