

WARR PARTNERSHIP NEWS

Issue No 15

New Year 2011

The **WARR Partnership** is responsible for delivering the Leader programme across rural Rother and Wealden, including the market towns of Hailsham, Heathfield, Battle and Rye.

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WARR
Wealden And Rother Rural

NEW YEAR MESSAGE FROM THE CHAIRMAN

We are reaching the end of the second year of the new Leader programme and can look back at a very successful first year. Very well done to all the team at Red Barn Mews and thank you to the Board and to Robert Fry, the independent appraiser for larger projects.

In these very much straightened times, Leader is a great opportunity for local people and organisations to obtain grant funding; despite all the bureaucratic paperwork that has to be gone through (on which the team will happily advise) it is worth doing.

As yet no-one has applied for a snow plough - but we have had an interesting selection of projects approved. Do not miss this chance to get some of our money back from Europe - especially if you are a farmer who has been 'modulated'!

Happy New Year!

Hamish Monro

RDPE LEADER PROGRAMME

Almost at the end of our second year of delivering the RDPE funding programme, grants committed to date are in excess of £872,682. A wide range of projects is eligible for funding, but projects do need to meet specific criteria and to have the approval of the WARR Partnership and SEEDA.

How can I apply?

To be eligible your business or organisation must be located in rural Rother or Wealden (including the market towns of Hailsham, Heathfield, Battle and Rye). For full details visit our website at www.warrpartnership.org.uk or contact our office in Battle on 01424 787400 or by email at info@warrpartnership.org.uk.

How much funding is available and what types of projects could be eligible?

Grants of up to £50,000 are available. They can cover activities such as farm diversification, adding value to agricultural and forestry products, tourism, renewable energy and community projects. Match funding will be required and the level of grant funding will depend on the type of project that you bring forward.

Who can help me in my application for funding?

Staff at the WARR Partnership Office in Battle will happily advise and assist you at every stage of your application.

**The WARR Partnership team—
Anne (Manager), Melanie (Project Officer), Linda (Finance) and Joanna (Admin) -
wish you a happy and prosperous New Year**

New projects approved since the last Newsletter — *for more details, please see our Website*

Forest Ride Maintenance

This Robertsbridge timber contractor wanted to offer a specialised forest ride clearance and maintenance facility. Regular woodland ride maintenance has many benefits: economic management of forest areas is improved by eliminating the need for expensive, one off operations on a longer term basis; keeping rides and tracks open improves public access and provides a natural leisure space; and ride-side maintenance increases the number of grasses and flowering plants providing crucial nectar sources for butterflies. The facility to offer this new service improved the applicant's income almost immediately.

Poppinghole Farm Holiday Lets

Poppinghole Farm provides the setting, and added attractions, to bring more tourists to East Sussex, but the farmhouse and its outbuildings had fallen into disrepair and become overgrown under previous ownership. The award of grant funding has enabled the redundant barn/stables to be converted into three luxury 5 star holiday cottages. Visitors will be able to experience farming activities such as lambing; bring their own horses and enjoy nearby bridleways and woodland; fish in two well-stocked lakes; enjoy a pamper break; or take part in craft courses. The project will ensure the long term sustainability of the farm and will create a number of new jobs.

Salts Farm Shop



This new shop markets the farm's own Romney Marsh lamb as well as a range of meats, fruit, vegetables, drinks and dairy produce from other local farmers and producers, with the aim of reducing local "food miles". Four new jobs have been created, as well as helping to diversify the farm's activities and improve its long-term sustainability. A community centre has also been created, with a refreshments area and toilets, which is being offered to the Parish Council for community activities since the village of East Guldeford currently has no shop, pub or village hall.

Forest Garden Shovelstrode

Grant funding has helped to create this new, low impact, sustainable forest garden business, using the owners' knowledge and experience of the principles of permaculture to demonstrate how carbon footprints can be reduced. Existing ancient woodland provides the backdrop for teaching and growing facilities, with courses available such as forest garden design, basket weaving, rug making, hedge laying and even coracle boat building. Eco-camping facilities and family-sized yurts will be available. Forest Garden Shovelstrode will become an ecotourism destination as well as enhancing the biodiversity of the local environment.

Rye Wurlitzer



The second oldest Wurlitzer theatre organ in the country was purchased in 1957 by the former Rye Grammar School. As the present owners, Rye College, had no access to funding for its maintenance and restoration, The Friends of Rye Wurlitzer applied for grant funding. This has been used to add a superior relay system to the instrument, simplifying future maintenance work, enhancing its overall playing capabilities and enabling professional recordings to be made, with benefits both to organists and the growing band of students who receive free tuition on it.

Tottingworth Farm Shop

The farm, which rears cattle and sheep and has its own abattoir and butchery facilities, serves the farming community with both wholesale and retail services. The new shop will sell its own beef, pork and lamb, home produced meat pies, sausages, burgers, bacon and hams, together with locally sourced veg, fruit and juices. It will not only help meet the demand for locally-produced food but will also encourage the public to visit a working farm and help to demonstrate the connection between farming and the food chain, better enabling people to make an informed choice from a greater selection of cuts of meat.

Richard Smith Timber Extraction

The purchase of a timber forwarder has enabled Richard to expand his forestry business, resulting in the creation of two jobs. His timber extraction business for woodfuel and woodchip in woodlands throughout East Sussex and Kent was restricted by the cost of hiring equipment and the shortage of equipment to hire, especially at optimum times. He can now also hire out the equipment to other forestry contractors, enabling timber to be extracted from woodlands and transported at times to suit both them and the woodfuel suppliers.



Great Oak Walks

Great Oak Walks is a new business, set up with the help of grant funding, which will offer its UK and international clientele complete self-guided walking holidays in areas of outstanding natural beauty in rural Wealden and Rother. The package will include airport pick-ups, detailed maps and information, and visits to historic sites. Bed & breakfast accommodation is pre-booked along the route, with arrangements in place to transport luggage between overnight halts. A choice of multi-day walks of different lengths is offered, along with tailor-made walks.



Sedlescombe Village Pump

Sedlescombe Village Pumphouse, a Grade II Listed Building situated on the green at the heart of the village, was built by a local benefactor 110 years ago. It provided a public water supply for residents until mains water came to the village in 1958. Both the pump and its shelter were in urgent need of refurbishment to ensure their survival and to retain historical details. Whilst local fundraising continues in order to complete the project, grant funding has enabled local specialists to commence work immediately on the refurbishment of the Pumphouse itself.



Hartfield Pavilion

Hartfield's Sports Pavilion was badly in need of an upgrade. Over £14,000 raised locally had been used to improve changing areas, insulation and energy saving measures, and grant funding has enabled new kitchen facilities, accessible toilets for wheelchair users, and a security system to be added. The Pavilion is also the venue for events such as the Village Fete, Horticultural Show and Annual Fun Run. Catering is an important part of any sporting fixture and the modern kitchen facilities will also widen the Pavilion's appeal to many other groups. The new facilities will enable the Pavilion to provide a focal point for many village activities.

Danehill Memorial Hall

Following the loss of both shops and its post office in recent years, it was more important than ever for this village hall to provide a focal point for residents. Rapid expansion of the youth club had markedly reduced youth vandalism, but the new equipment needed to maintain interest was taking over the hall's small meeting room. Funding has been used to construct new larger storage facilities, put the meeting room back into use for a range of village activities, and to install disabled toilets for the benefit of all user groups. This project has added considerably to amenities and to the long term financial viability of the hall.

Court Lodge Holiday Accommodation

Court Lodge Farm, an organic dairy farm, also produces a drinking yogurt marketed across the region and as far afield as London. A grant funding award has enabled a redundant farm building to be converted to provide the combined benefits of self catering holiday accommodation with much needed storage and office facilities for the yogurt business. As the farm forms part of the Pevensey Levels SSSI and includes an area rented from the Sussex Wildlife Trust and managed as a nature reserve, guests and other visitors will be able to explore with special farm walks, and to experience life on a farm at firsthand.