

Communities Making a Difference

Community groups across Rural West have been delivering a number of projects due to a £20,000 Health and Wellbeing Grant that they received in 2011.

Made available through Rural West Area Partnership Board and NHS Western Cheshire Chairman's Discretionary Fund the scheme was aimed at promoting the national 2010 Decade of Health and Wellbeing Campaign. Projects had to involve one or more of the campaign's five themes of Connect, Be Active, Take Notice, Keep Learning, and Give.

Successful bids included a cycling group, ecumenical singers and yoga group from Neston, a village sports and market day in Willaston and sound system upgrades at St Nicholas Church in Burton, a community garden at Mickle Trafford, a summer play scheme and boot camp in Saughall, a Bowling Green shelter in Waverton and recreation ground developments in Tilston and Ashton Hayes.

Over the summer groups used the funding to deliver various activities which all aim to improve the health and wellbeing of local communities.



New Bowling Green at Waverton



Members of British Trust Conservation Volunteers time to grow project



Boot Camp at Saughall



Village sports and market day in Willaston

Planning for the future

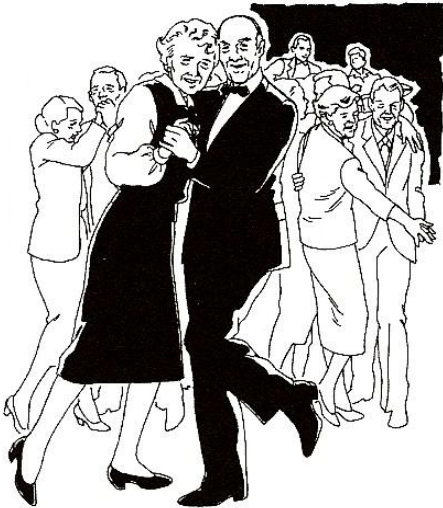
Local councils are increasingly interested in the creating their own neighbourhood plan as introduced in the Localism Act. In Rural West, Tattenhall and District Parish Council has been selected to pilot a Neighbourhood Plan for the parish and this will be an opportunity for sharing their experiences with other local councils.

To assist local councils understand more about the process including the challenges and opportunities a number of workshops have been held in Neston, Waverton and Malpas.

Feedback from those who attended was very positive with participants feeling that the events helped their understanding of the issues associated with neighbourhood planning.



Strictly Tea Dances



Local tea dances held at Tattenhall and Malpas are becoming increasingly popular with many older people living in Rural West.

Western Cheshire PCT and Rural West Area Team are funding the tea dances with participants paying a small charge towards refreshments. The sessions are held alternate Tuesdays at the Barbour Institute in Tattenhall and at the Jubilee Hall in Malpas.

Sessions will run through until 27th March 2012 when the funding will finish. If the Tea Dances are to continue after this date we will need larger numbers of people attending every week - so don't put it off any longer, dust off your dancing shoes and come along! If anyone is interested in knowing more about the dances please contact Sue Bliss on 07917 234635



Local Council Assembly to Meet in March

One of the recommendations arising from the Council's review of its relationship with town and parish councils was the establishment of a "Local Council Assembly" to meet at least once a year.

Cheshire West and Chester Council is inviting up to three representatives from each local council to the first meeting of the Local Council Assembly which will be held on the evening of **Thursday 1st March 2012** at the Forest Hills Hotel, near Frodsham.

It is hoped that this event will provide an opportunity to share knowledge, build on best practice and further explore ways of working more effectively together for the benefit of all our communities.

The event will provide an opportunity for networking between neighbouring local council representatives as well as Cheshire West and Chester Council councillors and senior officers.

Rural Support Funding – deadline for applications

The Council's Rural Fund has awarded 28 applications for funding valued at £513,000, helping to deliver capital-based projects with a total value of just over £5.5m within the borough.

Rural communities now have a limited time to apply for the final Rural Grant funding awards. There are two further deadlines for submissions this financial year: 31 January and 31 March 2012.

Cheshire West and Chester's Rural Support Fund accepts applications from community organisations, charitable groups and other constituted groups who are carrying out work for the benefit of their local community.

To be eligible, projects require match funding of 50% and can apply for between £5,000 and £50,000. Projects should be completed within a year after receiving funding.

Parish Council



The programme will be circulated prior to the event but at this stage the issues for discussion are likely to focus on:

- Localism Act
- Community Budgets
- The borough wide community governance review; and
- An update on the recommendations from the local council scrutiny review

To confirm attendance or for further information please contact: Emma Stevens (Parish Liaison/Support Officer)
Tel: 01244 972671 or Email:

Emma.stevens@cheshirewestandchester.gov.uk



Over the past two years, successful applications have been made for village hall refurbishments, sports facilities, play area schemes and environmental improvements across Cheshire West.

For further information about the Rural Support Funding contact the Rural Agenda Market Towns team on 01244 977475 or email:

ruralsupport@cheshirewestandchester.gov.uk

Country Walking

The Rural West area of Cheshire West and Chester has an abundance of walks, cycle and bridle paths. One of the better known walks is the **Sandstone Trail** which is one of the finest and most popular long distance walks in North West England. It stretches for 34 miles across rural Cheshire and North Shropshire.

Rawhead, near Bickerton in central Cheshire, rises 746 feet above sea level. It's the highest point on the Sandstone Trail and the views from the summit 'trig' point are exceptional.

Another walk that is even longer (200 miles) is the **Marches Way**. This is a long distance walk that starts in Chester and ends in Cardiff! The Rural West section starts in Chester and then follows the River Dee down to Aldford, where it then cuts across country to Farndon, Malpas, and then over the Cheshire / Shropshire border into Whitchurch.

By far the best stretch is the section between Chester and Farndon which is subject to regular maintenance and vegetation clearance.

Other shorter walks in our area include the **Bishop Bennet Way** which at 13 miles and is primarily for horse riding, **Baker way**, **Eddisbury way** and not forgetting the **Wirral Way**.

Other interesting walks, bridle and cycle paths can also be found in detail on the Discover Cheshire web site: www.discovercheshire.co.uk If you know an interesting walk in the Rural West Area please let us know so we can share and promote.



"Citizen's Jury" to consider key questions

We all want public services that respond to what people need and want. Most of us also believe that community members should be involved in deciding what services are provided and how. But what is the best way of involving community members in helping to design and make decisions on such public services in rural areas?

This year Rural West APB aims to consider that question and what better way to do it than to ask community members themselves?

Based on the highly successful model of the Citizens Jury this groundbreaking project will bring together 25 diverse rural citizens for a period of eight evenings to share opinions, hear from outside 'experts' and deliberate on this vital issue.

The project will target those that traditionally don't take part in such activities and don't often have their voices heard.

At the end of the eight week period the group will produce a set of recommendations on how best to ensure that community members are at the heart of public sector decision making in rural areas.



This exciting process will produce a number of important outcomes. Firstly, a set of recommendations which can guide future policy and practice. Secondly it is an opportunity to learn how a different approach to decision making can actually work.

This is a joint project funded by NHS Western Cheshire and Rural West Area Partnership Board. Project preparation has already started, with the actual Inquiry starting in April and finishing in June.

For further information contact either Rob Callow, Rural West Area Manager or Peter Bryant Our Life's Head of Public Engagement peter.bryant@ourlife.org.uk 07818 568549

Otago training

Trips, slips and falls amongst older people are very common and can have a serious impact on not only physical health but also self confidence. Through controlled exercise however, strength and balance can be improved leading to a reduction in falls.

To help address this issue Rural West APB is offering the Otago Exercise Programme Leader training for a number of volunteers including, supported housing staff and community support workers. The evidence based Otago exercise programme has been shown to lower the rate of falls within the older population.

The Otago Exercise Programme Leader course covers the rate of ageing and falls in the older population and the effects of physical activity on health, movement control, confidence and quality of life in old age.

Candidates will learn the key exercise competencies and will practice leading the OTAGO exercises under the guidance of a highly skilled tutor; exercise technique, safety and communication skills are emphasised.



Further information of dates and locations of Otago classes will be provided over the coming months.

For further information contact Julie Rogers on 01244 385044"

Young Peoples Holiday Activities Fund.

Rural West Area Partnership Board is offering up to £800 to help community groups run holiday activity schemes for the benefit of children and young people from isolated rural areas living in the Rural West Area.

Grants can be used to fund school holiday activities for;

- Children and young people aged 5 - 18 years
- Small local schemes lasting for 1 - 6 weeks,
- Schemes with strong volunteer support,
- New activities or extensions to existing schemes to cover school holiday periods.

This fund is available to local councils and community groups within Rural West area.

If you wish to apply but are not part of a formal community group you can still take your idea to your local council or, where no council exists, you can work in conjunction with an established group.

Application forms and further details can be obtained by emailing:

Ruralwest@cheshirewestandchester.gov.uk:

Applications must be submitted by **Wednesday 29th February**



Rural Touring Clinic Hits Malpas



The first of a series of rural touring clinics hosted by Chester and District Housing Trust was held at the Jubilee Hall in Malpas in September. Working in partnership with NHS Western Cheshire and Cheshire West and Chester Council the aim is to offer help and support to tenants and residents across the more isolated rural areas of Cheshire.

A variety of people and information was available including: nursing staff from Laurel Bank Surgery offering health advice, active ageing, health walks, smoking cessation, alcohol advice, dental health advice, pets as therapy, volunteering opportunities for older people and holistic therapies.

Rural West Area Team Contacts

Rob Callow – Area Manager 01244 972858

Robert.callow@cheshirewestandchester.gov.uk

Elaine Grant – Partnership Support Officer – 01244 973334

Elaine.grant@cheshirewestandchester.gov.uk

Emma Stevens – Parish Council Liaison Officer – 01244 972671

Emma.stevens@cheshirewestandchester.gov.uk

Julie Rogers – Public Health Improvement Lead Tobacco - **01244 385044**

julierogers2@nhs.net

Contact: ruralwest@cheshirewestandchester.gov.uk

Web site: www.westcheshiretogether.org.uk

