

18 August 2009

Subject: Over £315,000 granted for local projects

Details for press release:

Leader 4 Torrridge and North Devon has so far awarded £315,188 to four wide-ranging local projects.

North Devon+, as applicant for the North Devon Food & Drink Project, has been granted £43,750 over two years. This project will help food and drink producers in North Devon to raise the profile of quality local produce, encourage wider use and promotion through hotels, restaurants, retailers etc, and increase enjoyment through food tourism initiatives.

High Bickington Community Property Trust has been granted £193,000 over two years for the Little Bickington Farm Phase 1 project, which is phase one of a new development for housing, employment and community facilities. This initial phase will involve the construction of two workshop units to rent, plus a new biomass district heating system to generate sufficient heating for the whole development.

The Lynton & Barnstaple Railway Trust has been granted £16,100 to help seek professional fundraising advice and support, to then examine options and possible sources of funding to extend the Lynton & Barnstaple Railway.

The Ilfracombe Healthy Town Initiative has been granted £62,338 for a year-long programme of activities and initiatives. This project will help to raise awareness of health issues, encourage lifestyle improvements and increase access to important health care services.

Chair of the Local Action Group, Sarah Wragge-Morley, has been delighted with the response to the funding so far: "With so few good-news stories out there as far as money is concerned, it is great for our area that we have this funding available. We have been really pleased with the mix of applications coming forward, which shows again what a creative and vibrant place we live in. Whilst in some cases this funding is just the starting point for projects, there is the potential for some major growth and achievement because of it".

Applicant for the North Devon Food and Drink project, Helen Symons, states: "With buying and using local food being an increasing priority for our communities and visitors, it was great that the Local Action Group saw the potential of this project and the need in our area. Without Leader 4, there is currently very little funding that could develop our food businesses and services in the same way".

In total, £3.8million is available for rural projects in North Devon and Torrridge over the next five years. The grant funding comes from the Department for the Environment and Rural Affairs and the European Commission through the Rural Development Programme for England.

The programme is managed by a local partnership made up of community, business and public sector representatives known as the Local Action Group,

with North Devon+ providing legal, administrative and financial management services to administer the funds.

For further information on the programme, please check www.leader4.org