



**Press release
For immediate release**

New funding available to residents and businesses in the rural Vale

Creative Rural Communities, the Vale of Glamorgan Council's rural regeneration initiative has announced six new funding programmes totalling more than £3.7 million worth of investment available to residents and businesses in the rural Vale.

Building on the success of previously funded projects, the new programmes aim to increase awareness of what the rural Vale has to offer and help raise pride in the six new programme themes which include farming families, villages, heritage, the Vale, services and food.

Since 2007 Creative Rural Communities, supported by the Rural Partnership, has invested more than £6 million in developing 131 innovative projects and ideas which have improved the long term social and economic wellbeing of the rural Vale.

From setting up a surf school and helping to open a hotel for horses, to regenerating town centres and supporting new innovations, funding from Creative Rural Communities has made a considerable difference to individuals, businesses and communities across the rural Vale.

Norman Jenkins, Chair of the Rural Partnership, said: "The range of projects that have previously received funding from Creative Rural Communities just highlights the wealth and diversity of what the rural Vale has to offer.

"Funding to date has made a considerable difference to both services and amenities for local residents and to the tourism offer, and we look forward to receiving applications for a range of new and exciting projects and ideas under the new funding programmes."

Councillor Rhodri Traherne, Cabinet Member for Economic Development and Regeneration, said: "These new funding programmes give residents and businesses the opportunity to apply for grants that will make a real difference to the quality of life of people living and working in the rural Vale. The range of projects available will also make a significant contribution to our tourism industry, which is so important to the economy of the county."

Vale of Glamorgan residents and businesses are invited to find out more about the new funding programmes at an open day at the Old Hall, Cowbridge High Street on Friday 19th August. In addition to getting advice on grant applications from members of the Creative Rural Communities team, visitors will also be able to take advantage of family-fun activities including free face painting, quizzes and afternoon tea.

Representatives from the Lego store in St. David's Shopping Centre, Cardiff will be also be attending the event and giving children the opportunity to build their own interpretations of key landmarks in the Vale.

For more information on Creative Rural Communities visit:
www.creativeruralcommunities.co.uk.

Projects previously funded by Creative Rural Communities include:

Stable accommodation

You'll have some very interesting *neigh*-bours if you book into an innovative Vale B&B!

Sheepleys in Llandow is a hotel for horses, but luckily their owners are very welcome too.

The equine accommodation was the idea of Sheepleys owners Wendy & Roger Bolter, who expanded their existing business with the help of a £10,000 grant from Creative Rural Communities.

The B&B, which includes two new stables and a refurbishment of the existing block of four stables, is the first of its kind in Wales. It is part of a bid to increase equine tourism to the area and highlight the current and emerging bridal pathways in and around the Vale of Glamorgan.

Wendy said: "With competition for accommodation in the area getting stronger we wanted to develop a project that was a little bit different and we are really pleased with the final outcome.

"I am a keen rider myself and I'm therefore aware of what the Vale has to offer in terms of bridal ways and beautiful scenery. I have also made up maps for around six different riding routes, some starting from the bed and breakfast and others a short drive away.

"It is a fantastic location for a short break and the funding we have received from Creative Rural Communities means that horse lovers can visit the area without leaving their much loved horses at home."

Sheepleys has one twin and two double rooms and accommodates dogs as well as horses. The B&B has a paddock for horses, as well as its own menagerie of horses, donkeys, sheep, chickens, cats and dogs.

For bookings and more information: www.sheepleys.co.uk

Food glorious food

A new partnership with a luxury spa hotel is the icing on the cake for a Wales cookery school.

Vale based Coginio has teamed up with the Vale Resort to give visitors the chance to discover the history of Welsh food and to prepare some renowned Welsh recipes in the hotel restaurant.

The Welsh Cooking Break complements the existing Coginio business, which was launched in 2009. Recently, Coginio, which means 'to cook' in Welsh, launched a series of DVDs giving a step by step guide to making recipes from across Wales with a contemporary twist. The idea for the new cookery school came when Coginio founder Sian Roberts sent one of these DVDs to staff at Brecon Beacons National Park. They loved it so much they suggested she create a cooking course based on it.

Sian said: "I wanted to create a course which was great for visitors but also for local people who want to learn about Welsh food its history and to be able to cook their own fabulous Welsh lunch. We were very fortunate that the Vale Resort agreed to develop the course with us."

The Welsh Cooking Break, which was launched with funding of nearly £10,000 from Creative Rural Communities, is held once a month at the hotel's La Cucina restaurant.

For bookings and more information: www.vale-hotel.com/Activity-Breaks-Wales

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Notes to Editors

The new Creative Rural Communities funding programmes include:

TAKING PRIDE IN OUR FARMING FAMILIES: Grants of up to £40,000 are available to farming families to supplement their income by diversifying into non agricultural activities.

TAKING PRIDE IN OUR HERITAGE: Grants of up to £70,000 are available to support investment in natural, cultural and built heritage.

TAKING PRIDE IN THE VALE: Creative Rural Communities are also developing initiatives under the themes of Community Engagement and Tourism.

TAKING PRIDE IN OUR VILLAGES: Grants of up to £40,000 are available to support physical improvements to your village and projects that help to 'green' community facilities.

TAKING PRIDE IN OUR SERVICES: Grants of up to £40,000 are available to support new footpaths to link villages and the conversion or diversification of existing service facilities to offer new services for the community

GROWING YOUR OWN FOOD: Creative Rural Communities and Bridgend Rural Partnership are able to offer support to communities wishing to grow their own food.

For further information please contact Elinor Evans or Helen Newton at Equinox Communications on 02920764100 or elinor@equinoxcommunications.co.uk / helen@equinoxcommunications.co.uk