

August 2015

## Welcome to the RCAN Newsletter.

It contains articles from RCAN and information taken from the press. I do hope you find the content of this newsletter stimulating and useful. Please pass the newsletter onto friends if you feel they would find it useful.

Robert Crowder

Chief Executive of Rural Community Action Nottinghamshire



### Introduction to Rural Community Action Nottinghamshire (RCAN)

We are a highly active and independent voluntary organisation, working Nottinghamshire wide to support the needs of rural communities. We were set up in 1924 and formerly known as Nottinghamshire Rural Community Council.

In the past year Rural Community Action Nottinghamshire (RCAN) and our volunteers have worked hard to help the communities of Nottinghamshire; below is some of the work that we have carried out:

- We gave funding advice, access to professional services support and general running advice to 51 Village Halls.
- RCAN's Supporting Communities Team provided general support to 110 community groups

## Can Nottinghamshire broadband be any more rural than this?

A new broadband partnership between Bassetlaw District Council, and Sharpe Group, is being supported by Rural Community Action Nottinghamshire. The scheme which is targeted at rural areas and has been tested with 80 customers is now up and running in north Nottinghamshire. It provides super-fast broadband to both business and private householders.

N3 delivers internet via wireless line of sight technology and so installation is quick as it does not require the digging of expensive cables, ducting and cabinets etc.



The fixed antennae technology can be attached to high points in a community – such as a church tower, grain silo, or flagpole – and works on a 'line of sight' basis to transmit signals to properties with receiver boxes.



For more information see; <http://www.northnotts.net/>

## **RURAL communities will be allowed to build starter homes for local residents under plans**

set out in the government's first ever Rural Productivity Plan. The plan sets out measures to boost the rural economy by investing in education and skills, increasing wages, improving infrastructure and connectivity, and simplifying planning laws for rural businesses and communities.

Measures include amending planning rules to allow starter homes to be built on Rural Exception Sites for the first time.

The government says this will allow local areas to allocate more sites for starter homes specifically for people who already live in the area, or have an existing local family or employment connection.

Chancellor George Osborne said: "For too long the British economy has been reliant on businesses based in our cities and towns. "We want to create a One Nation economy that taps into the potential of all parts of our country.

"That means setting the right conditions for rural communities and businesses to thrive, investing in education and skills, improving rural infrastructure, and allowing rural villages to thrive and grow."

For more information see:- <http://www.rsnonline.org.uk/business/government-unveils-rural-productivity-plan>

## **Update on the Local Enterprise Partnership D2N2 from your Voluntary Sector representative Robert Crowder [rcrowder@rcan.org.uk](mailto:rcrowder@rcan.org.uk)**

The first call totalling £933k will go out from the end of August 2015 under the European Agricultural fund for Rural Development (EAFRD) . Applications will be from new or existing small or micro businesses looking to develop and grow in rural areas that are seeking grant assistance for investments in capital equipment or premises.

A number of Rural Business Support workshops are being organised for September and October to encourage applications for the bids.

Further delays in the sign off of the LEADER funding mean that there will not be any spend until the next financial year. The First calls for bids will now be at the end of the year after

- across Nottinghamshire.
- RCAN have helped 60 community groups across Nottinghamshire to receive £345,972worth of grant aid.
- Direct support has been provided to 24 Parish Council's across Nottinghamshire.
- We supported the development of 7 Community Led Plans across Nottinghamshire. In Newark and Sherwood 1 CLP is in development. For Bassetlaw 1 CLP is being published and in Rushcliffe, 3 are in Development and for 2 we are supporting the implementation plans.
- We worked in partnership with the planning departments to undertake 7 Neighbourhood Plans across Nottinghamshire. 7 Neighbourhood plans supported 2 in Bassetlaw, 2 in Newark and Sherwood and 3 in Rushcliffe.
- RCAN supported 12 community consultations including work with the Big Lottery in the Langold, Costhorpe and Carlton area.
- 10 Energy Best Deal sessions to over 100 Front Line workers and consumers.
- In partnership with Nottinghamshire Association of Village

the funding calls for the European Agricultural fund for Rural Development (EAFRD) have closed.

The stage one application window, for tranche one bids for the Building Better Opportunities has now closed. They have received over 300 applications across the 25 LEP areas in this tranche. In the D2N2 area we received 13 applications across the three areas of work entitled “Towards Work, Financial Inclusion, Multiple & Complex Needs.” In understand that there are some strong bids which will now be evaluated and reported back to the next board meeting after which successful bidders will be invited to stage two.

## Ever wondered what each Government department does?

Newly published, there are now a series of Short Guides to Departments

The National Audit Office is publishing one for each government department, to assist House of Commons Select Committees. Each guide gives a quick and accessible overview of the department and focuses on what the department does, how much it costs and recent and planned changes.

For more information see:- <http://www.nao.org.uk/search/type/report/>

## From miner to Major: Sherwood Forest’s Landscape Partnership Scheme

A Briefing note has been produced giving the latest information about the current status of the Heritage Lottery Fund (HLF) Landscape Partnership Bid for Sherwood Forest, now titled “From miner to Major”.

The bid is now in the development stage which is expected to last up until November 2016. Upcoming activities include:

- Consultation
- Ecosystems services
- Community archaeology framework
- Match funding and consents

The final project is expected to support projects across three main themes:

1. Natural Heritage. Habitat improvements through large-scale partnership projects and community-led activities. Conserving and re-creating heathland, acid grasslands and wood pasture; providing habitat “stepping stones” in the farmed landscape; increasing numbers and skills of volunteers to improve recording and future management.
2. Built and Cultural Heritage. Community-led investigation

and Community Halls, RCAN designed and distributed to its 51 members, a quarterly newsletter.

- The Grow and Grow project has continued its support of a wide diversity of groups all across the borough of Broxtowe. An application has been made to extend the project across the county of Nottinghamshire.
- 87 people were able to take up new employment or training through our Wheels to Work Nottinghamshire project.
- During the year 14 volunteer befrienders have helped support over 30 lonely people either through offering a 1-2-1 befriending service, helping with shopping, days out or just to be there for a cup of tea and a chat.
- 164 Gypsy and Traveller families or individuals have received accommodation related support for needs associated with homelessness, domestic violence, debt, access to primary mental and physical health issues and support with benefit and statutory entitlements.
- RCAN enabled 96 young people to acquire basic, practical and life

and conservation; inspiring a wide audience and training key people in heritage skills. Addressing needs for Buildings at Risk; archaeological and heritage assets; training of owners, volunteers and contractors.

3. Access. Connecting people with the real Sherwood by increasing physical access, interpretation, and the provision of events. Including circular routes, an accommodation guide, events and improved non-car access.

To find out more, contact the miner to Major Project Development Manager is Beki Howey who will be starting in post from 01 Sept. Until she is in post, you can get further information from:

Malcolm Hackett - 0115 993 2598

Heather Stokes – 0115 993 2592 for more information see:-

<http://www.rcan.org.uk/?q=content/miner-major-real-sherwood-forest>

### RURAL crime cost the UK economy £37.8m last year - despite an overall decline in every region.

Increasingly sophisticated thieves are cybercrime are a growing concern, said rural insurer NFU Mutual. Results of its annual rural crime data based on claims received in 2014 were published by the company on Monday (3 August). They show that rural crime cost the UK economy £37.8 million in 2014, down from £44.5 million in 2013 – representing a 15% fall. But despite the overall decline, several types of crime have continued to rise in parts of the UK, with quad bikes proving particularly attractive to thieves. Meanwhile, the cost of livestock theft nationally has remained stubbornly high with several regions recording increases. The data follows a spate of high-value livestock thefts across the country, and the rollout of a national livestock theft reduction scheme sponsored by NFU Mutual.

For More information see :- <http://www.rsnonline.org.uk/community/rural-crime-falls-by-15-says-insurer>

skills and raised self-esteem on the CAST alternative education angling project. This is made up of 58 young people through schools, 18 through the Children in Need workshops, 13 on the Cotgrave workshops and 7 from the Derby project.

- During the past year, we have seen a significant increase in older IT learners wishing to get to grips with the new tablet computer. To address this change we have purchased a batch of tablets, trained our volunteers and rolled the training out across the county. We have also changed our courses at the University of Nottingham to tablet tuition.
- RCAN also enabled over 100 volunteers to undertake MiDAS training which will enable them to provide safer, more comfortable journeys for a wide range of people with our Extra Mile project.
- RCAN led a group of organisations to successfully bid for nearly £4m of European funding through the next round of LEADER programme.
- Since last year we have changed the process of ordering oil for the Bulk



## Budget brings woe for village halls

VILLAGE halls face higher running costs due to inadvertent consequences from this summer's Budget.

A rise in Insurance Premium Tax (IPT) rise from 6 to 9.5% will mean a typical village hall with a £1,000 premium will pay an extra £35 per year - and bring IPT payments close to £200 per year for a larger hall.

The £500,000 generated for the government will come from hire charges paid by small voluntary groups, say village hall representatives.

The National Village Halls Forum, which represents more than 9,000 village halls in England, is arguing that village halls should either be exempt from the insurance increase or that the revenue raised should be used to help trustees share information.

## RSN Rural Conference 2015:

Aspiration to Action...The Rural Manifesto

We are pleased to announce the launch of the Rural Conference 2015: Aspiration to Action...The Rural Manifesto. It is being held this year at Park Campus, Cheltenham on Tuesday 8th and Wednesday 9th September.

For more information see :- <http://www.rsnonline.org.uk/rsn-rural-conference-2015/rsn-rural-conference-2015>

## How can we combat rural loneliness?

For many people, rural sights, sounds and communities are preferable to an urban lifestyle. But for others - particularly the young and elderly - rural living can be difficult, whether shopping for basic foodstuffs, accessing training or employment or socialising.

While loneliness and social isolation are not the same thing, both are closely related and can have a severe impact on quality of life. How lonely are countryside dwellers and what can be done about it?

Back in October 2013, the Health Secretary Jeremy Hunt described how "it is a source of national shame that as many as 800,000 people in England are chronically lonely... the problem of loneliness is that in our busy lives we have utterly failed to confront it as a society...Some five million people say television is their main form of company". The remarks were made in response to data from the Campaign to End

Oil Scheme. RCAN took over the negotiations and ordered a total of 375,580 litres of oil saving our members an average of 5.94 pence per litre. This gave a total of £22,300 saving for our members over the year and individuals made a saving of nearly £60 on each tank of fuel.

RCAN has continued development of the Newstead and Annesley Country Park. This included the following:

- Good progress on the work on the Visitor Centre. The building work to the Eco Visitor Centre was delayed due to vandalism to key parts of the building. The insurance claim has now been settled and the next phase of the work complete.
- A massive volunteering day saw 120 staff from Eon working on the site painting the building, repairing vandalised barriers, putting up signs and generally improving the site.
- The first fishing lake has now been open to clients and volunteer bailiffs are patrolling the site.
- Volunteer wardens have raised funding to fence off an area of the site for ground nesting birds.

## Loneliness.

This revealed, in the UK, 17% of older people are in contact with family, friends and neighbours less than once a week and 11% are in contact less than once a month; over half of people aged 75 years and over live alone; and 59% of adults aged over 52 years who report poor health say they feel lonely some of the time or often (compared to 21% who say they are in excellent health). With a plethora of reports, campaigns and initiatives, what is 'social isolation' and 'loneliness' and what does it mean for rural.

For more information on the article by Jessica Sellick see:-  
<http://www.rsnonline.org.uk/analysis/how-to-combat-rural-loneliness>

## Business views needed for digital broadband survey

Businesses are being asked for their views to shape the future provision of Nottinghamshire digital broadband services – currently being upgraded by an ongoing £20million programme, backed by D2N2 – by taking part in a short online survey.

Better Broadband for Nottinghamshire (BBfN) is a £20m programme led by D2N2 partner authority Nottinghamshire County Council, which is extending the commercial roll-out of superfast, fibre-based broadband services in Nottinghamshire.

BBfN has received additional funding – including £2.6m from the D2N2 Local Enterprise Partnership (LEP) for its 'Contract Two' stage – with the expectation that 97% of the county's homes and businesses will have the broadband access by completion in 2018.

## Voluntary & Community Sector (VCS) – State of the Sector Research Project

If you recently completed a survey about the State of the Voluntary & Community Sector in Nottinghamshire, you will be interested in the results. The Centre for Regional Economic & Social Research at Sheffield Hallam University are in the process of analysing the survey and will be publishing a report in October.

Two events planned to disseminate the findings and help shape the next steps.

20 October 2015 – 10.00 - 12.30 – Everyday Champions Conference Centre, Newark

23 October 2015 – 10.00 – 12.30 – County Hall, West Bridgford

Hold these dates in your diary.

Work is now complete for the fencing and the site continues to flourish.

- Grant aid has enabled the development of a short term business plan looking at the fishing income, renewable energy and the building.
- A "friends of Newstead Country Park" has now been set up with local people volunteering their time to support the development of the site.
- A number of consultation events about the Wind Turbine have taken place and the application has now been submitted for Planning Approval.
- The reserve area has been recognised with an award at the Greenwood Community Awards.

2014-15 areas of new and continued work included:

- RCAN supported the final delivery of the European funding LEADER stream which has brought an additional £1.5 million to North Nottinghamshire.
- We led the North Nottinghamshire LEADER Local Action Group to a successful follow on programme from LEADER to commence in autumn 2015.
- In addition we helped set up a group for the

## Do the people you support watch Freeview TV (television through an aerial)?

The arrival of Fourth Generation (4G) mobile phone services in the Nottinghamshire area may cause problems with Freeview TV services, leading to a loss of sound, blocky images, or loss of some or all TV channels and the people you support may turn to you for help and guidance

Only people watching Freeview TV will be affected while those who watch TV via cable or satellite are unlikely to experience any problems.

at800 is the organisation that has been set up to help overcome any problems and may have already sent a postcard to those households which may be affected, warning viewers that Freeview TV reception could be disrupted. Some of these households may be entitled to receive an at800 filter - free of charge.

The at800 filters make the TV less sensitive to 4G transmissions and enable viewers to carry on watching Freeview as normal. They are relatively small, need no batteries or external power supply, and will normally plug into the lead between the TV and the aerial. Each type of at800 filter has been tested to ensure it works correctly in the UK and all come with instructions on how to fit them.

To enable viewers to find out what support is available and how to access help, at800 have set up a Contact Centre. To get in touch, viewers should call

0333 31 31 800 (Calls from landlines and mobiles are included in free call packages and inclusive minutes. Outside of call packages, calls from landlines are typically charged between 2p and 10p per minute and calls from mobiles typically cost between 10p and 40p per minute).

Or

0808 13 13 800 (Free from landlines. Calls from mobiles vary in cost - check with your provider).

For more information, please visit [www.at800.tv](http://www.at800.tv)



South of the County who were also successful in accessing funds from LEADER and will again commence in autumn 2015.

- As the Voluntary Sector representative on the Local Enterprise partnership D2N2, RCAN's Chief Executive led on the development of the social inclusion strategy and ensured that the information was used to set the bidding criterion for the TO9 Social Inclusion calls.
- The Chief Executive also chaired the D2N2 Rural Reference Group which recommend to the Board the priority spend for the European Agricultural Fund for Rural Development.
- We have promoted the Rural Community Renewables scheme to parishes and groups across the area.
- We worked with the County Council in developing the Community Empowerment engagement work which so far has resulted in a survey on the State of the Sector.
- We have worked in partnership with Oxfordshire and Gloucestershire RCC's to develop a model of working called the