

MARKETPLACE

The annual review of the Gloucestershire Market Towns Forum **2009**



Board champions best practice



by **Peter Godfrey**
Chairman, Gloucestershire Market Towns Forum

The Gloucestershire Market Towns Forum Board, supported by a team from Gloucestershire County

Council and Gloucestershire First (mainly on a strategic level), continues to champion best practice in the South West Region. It has been strengthened by the appointment of two more members, Jenny Hincks from Cirencester and Mattie Ross from Stonehouse.

The three-year agreements which we have with Gloucestershire County Council and South West Regional Development Agency (SWRDA) ensure that we are financially viable for the next two years and we are working hard to secure future funding. The funding enabled us to contract out the work previously designated as the duties of a Development Officer to Hannah Reynolds Associates. This work has achieved a full performance review of our member communities and, as a result, we are able to offer them technical support on their envisioned needs – for details, see page 3. We are soon to undertake a training needs survey which will enable us to co-operate with Action for Market Towns (AMT), the national body, and possibly the South West Market and Coastal Towns Network (SWMCTN) to provide any such training.

The Board is continuing to support our member communities through our Development Fund (see pages 9, 10 and 11), and existing Board members are also going to be shadowing and offering support to member communities which do not have a Board member.

The Forum's Regional Role

Vice Chairman Bob Watters and I continue to attend and support the South West Market and Coastal Towns



Strengthening the board are new members Jenny Hincks from Cirencester (above) and Mattie Ross from Stonehouse (below)



Network (SWMCTN). This is an informal meeting of market towns from within the region who, funded by the SWRDA, disseminate good practice and help to market towns throughout Cornwall, Devon, Somerset, Wiltshire and Gloucestershire. Through our combined efforts we will shortly add Dorset County Forum.

As the longest-standing and most experienced Market Towns Forum in the region, and as a Company Limited by Guarantee, we were asked by SWRDA to be the Accountable Body for the network. Although this has involved more work than at first anticipated, it is settling down and we feel helps us to contribute significantly towards the goals of SWMCTN.

The Forum also has two members on the Board of Action for Market Towns – myself and Dan Judges.

Reserves policy

The Board always aims to have at least three months' running costs in reserves. This is presently in the order of £15,000 to £25,000. Current reserves at the balance sheet date are in excess of this figure. However the Board is mindful that the budgets for 2009/10 show a significant deficit which will need circa £35,000 of reserves in order for the Forum to continue for the next year ahead. For more details of the Forum's finances, please see the back page.

Thank you

The Board again thanks all the team at Gloucestershire First: John McLaughlin, Claire Edwards, Dan Judges, Lina Jones, Crystal Johnson and Eva Harvie, for their invaluable help and advice.

A pivotal role for Gloucestershire

Gloucestershire plays a pivotal role in the work of South West Market and Coastal Towns Network (SWMCTN) which links Market Towns Forums from five counties across the region. The Network evolved after the closure of the Market & Coastal Towns Association and aims to continue to disseminate good practice among regional market towns. As the accountable body for SWMCTN, GMTF co-ordinates claims and payments to and from network members – Devon, Dorset, Cornwall, Somerset and Wiltshire – and the South West Regional Development Agency. The Network has raised capacity within the forums through the introduction of robust monitoring and finance arrangements and continues to lead the way in co-ordinating the annual delivery plan for the network.

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A little more Action...

Thirteen of the Forum's member towns and five of the county's area partnerships are members of Action for Market Towns. GMTF's chairman Peter Godfrey and Dan Judges from Gloucestershire First are on AMT's Board. So what is Action for Market Towns and how does it benefit rural communities? We asked AMT's Communications Manager John Pole to explain more.

"It can be lonely trying to plan and deliver future improvements in your town, but as an Action for Market Towns member you are part of a family of people who, like you, are trying to put something back to help their towns," said John Pole, AMT's Communications Manager.

"AMT offers training, consultancy, a range of member services and national advocacy for the policies needed to help market towns which can save you both time and money. In different ways, our services help to meet the needs and aspirations of community partnerships, town councils and local authorities."

The organisation helps bring people from market towns all over the country together through its annual National Convention, described as the market towns event of the year, as well as through regional and county events to share information and experience. AMT members enjoy free or discounted access to services.

"AMT is in the forefront of using new technology to link people with an interest in market town issues – through our monthly e-newsletter Insight, by a continually-updated website with special features for members and through electronic forums and community networking," said John.

Linking all AMT activity is the Towns Alive programme – a five year Big Lottery-funded scheme to raise the game of market towns in four ways:

- 1 sharing experience and best practice through the Towns-4-Towns programme
- 2 providing vital training through the Market Towns Academy
- 3 analysing and developing policy through the Knowledge Hub and
- 4 providing a National Voice for market towns

Action for Market Towns has also established a research and consultancy arm – amt-i, which can provide towns with a range of services from loyalty cards to car parking surveys. "amt-i also has the expertise to design and run community consultation events and surveys. Nationally, amt-i has undertaken a variety of research, from the health of local markets to how towns have coped with the recession," said John.

amt-i also manages the award-winning town benchmarking programme which enables towns to track

the progress of their economy from year-to-year and compare it with others.

The following GMTF Forum member communities are already members of Action for Market Towns:

1. Chipping Campden
2. Churchdown
3. Cinderford
4. Cirencester
5. Fairford
6. Lechlade
7. Nailsworth
8. Stonehouse
9. Stow
10. Tetbury
11. Tewkesbury
12. Winchcombe
13. Wotton under Edge

In addition, the following town partnerships are also AMT members:

1. Coleford Area Partnership
2. Lydney Area in Partnership
3. Newent Initiative Trust
4. Project Stroud
5. Tewkesbury Area Partnership

● Action for Market Towns membership starts from just £97 + VAT per annum. To discuss membership, contact the AMT Membership Co-ordinator Anna McGowan on tel: 01284 756567 or e-mail : info@towns.org.uk . For more information about Action for Market Towns, visit the website at: www.towns.org.uk



The organisation helps bring people from market towns all over the country together through its annual National Convention

A pivotal role for Gloucestershire

Continued from page 1

Its first conference was held in February this year in Devon, attracting 80 people from across the region. They discussed a variety of issues ranging from the re-organisation of local government in Devon and how market town partnerships are superbly placed to lead community-led planning there, to how policy for community-led planning works and what it means.

GMTF's Chair, Peter Godfrey said: "It is interesting how the various Market Towns forums, all of them slightly different, work and have different funding situations. As any group decision has to be a consensus this does require people



with silver tongues! The Network, in co-operation with Action for Market Towns, is looking towards offering regional training to benefit all Market Towns."

2010's conference will also be hosted at Tiverton. The Network is developing the programme and hopes it will be an even greater success.

● For more information on SWMCTN visit: www.swmctn.com

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Member towns get free expert help

Hannah Reynolds Associates consultancy has been commissioned by GMTF to help provide technical assistance and expert help to its member communities.

Whether considering projects such as developing a town plan, what to do with a redundant community building, re-vamping a council website or how best to refurbish an under-used space in the town, members were invited to identify a project which they felt could benefit from 15 hours of expertise.

The take-up of this offer of free help during the pilot phase has been excellent. So far, 10 of the 16 GMTF member communities have applied for assistance on projects ranging from technical/feasibility help, to help with Healthcheck or fundraising advice – and towns have clearly been delighted with the results:

“The Council was delighted with the work done by HRA on developing a prospectus for what to do with Churchdown Pond. It has enabled us to progress from an ‘idea’ to a workable plan. This expertise came at exactly the time it was needed in order to move the project further.”

**Churchdown Town Council
(Churchdown Pond Prospectus)**

“Thank you so very much indeed for your help – you were wonderful!!! I think that quite a few of the councillors were sceptical about the whole thing but everyone has been so complimentary and very pleased with the outcome of the meeting. From our point of view that was what it was all about – everyone coming to some conclusion and being happy about the process.”

**Northleach Town Council
(Independent facilitation of meeting)**

“Thank you for this God-send of a report. We would have had to pay dearly elsewhere for a report of this quality.”

**Tewkesbury Town Council
(Moorings Feasibility Study)**

“Our members have clearly found this type of help to be very useful,” said Peter Godfrey, chair of GMTF. “Hopefully we will be able to extend GMTF’s offer of free expert help beyond September ’09, but we urge all our member communities to contact HRA to discuss how they would like to use this free consultancy help.”

● Contact HRA direct on **01392 421869** or via the GMTF website **www.town2town.org.uk**.

Community	Technical Assistance	Status
1 Churchdown	Community Pond area – Prospectus for environmental enhancements	Complete
2 Newent	Feasibility Study on chapel building conversion for use as Council Offices	Complete
3 Northleach with Eastington	Future of Sports Pavilion – meeting facilitation	Complete
4 Tewkesbury	Moorings Feasibility Study	Complete
5 Coleford Town Council	Re-design of web site	Complete
6 Fairford	Healthcheck Action Planning	In progress
7 Stow-on-the-Wold	Action Plan to develop Town Plan	In progress
8 Cirencester	Project fundraising advice	In progress
9 Tetbury	Contact made – deciding on project for Tech Assist.	In progress
10 Chipping Campden	Contact made – deciding on project	In progress
11 Lechlade on Thames	Review of IT	In progress
12 Cinderford	Projects under development	
13 Nailsworth		
14 Stonehouse		
15 Winchcombe		
16 Wotton under Edge		

Market towns **pivotal** in supporting economy

David Owen, Chief Executive of the county's economic partnership, Gloucestershire First, has been on a steep learning curve after being in post for just seven months. However, he took a brief break in his busy schedule to reflect on the role of our market towns and the work of the Forum in an exclusive interview for Marketplace:



“Given the current economic climate, Gloucestershire's Market Towns are facing tough times – but they aren't dealing with it on their own. The County as a whole is suffering under the current recession with unemployment at around 3.5%.

“Significant steps are being made through the Economic Taskforce to tackle the multitude of problems facing the County at present. Some will have an impact on the County's Market Towns and will hopefully breathe confidence back into our rural centres.

“Market Towns play a pivotal role in supporting the economy as centres of economic activity

that support the surrounding rural parishes, while providing valuable services for those working and living in the towns themselves.

“As a frequent user of my local Market Town, I place a huge value in the services they offer and believe they are crucial in acting as hub of economic activity – but I'm also acutely aware of the challenges and issues affecting them.

“I firmly believe the way in which GMTF works and pulls together key individuals from

the County's Market Towns to share best practice and knowledge of potential solutions is extremely innovative and shows why the Forum is still an exemplar of best practice across the Country. This is endorsed by the way in which the Regional Development Agency has welcomed GMTF as the accountable body for the South West Market and Coastal Towns Network and why one of the Forum's Directors and one of its Support Officers are Directors of Action for Market Towns – the national voice for Market Towns.

“This highlights the importance of GMTF and how its work is highly valued not just locally but at a regional and a national level.

“GMTF is a leader in its field and has achieved amazing results on very little resource. It works tirelessly and its volunteer Directors should be congratulated on the achievements to date. Greater challenges lie ahead and I'm sure GMTF is superbly placed to manage and deal with these.”

Government interest in GMTF recession reports

Research commissioned by GMTF into the recession's impact on the high streets of our member towns was used to brief a senior Government minister.

Results from the research showed that at least 70 town centre shops or businesses had closed between July 2008 and May 2009 across the Forum's 16 member communities.

Peter Godfrey, Forum Chair said: “The survey provided quantifiable evidence of the impact the recession is having in market towns across the county and provides a base upon which to support recovery for businesses locally and to influence national policy decisions.”

The Government's Commission for Rural Communities asked for a copy of the research to brief Hilary Benn, Secretary of State for Environment, Food and Rural Affairs.

Juliet Johnson, from the CRC's Rural Economies Team said: “The way in which market towns have been impacted by the recession is an issue we are keen to

understand. We are therefore very interested in the Gloucestershire Market Towns Forum survey. The results will be particularly helpful in informing our regular recession reports which go to Hilary Benn and form part of his briefing for attendance at the National Economic Council.”

The research revealed that, of the 70 shops and businesses which had closed, 54 (77%) were identified as independents and 16 (23%) were part of a national chain.

Of the 70 shops and businesses which had closed, 50 gave a reason for closure – and of those, 39 (78%) were attributed to the economic downturn/lack of business.

But it is not all doom and gloom – during the research period at least 49 new shops opened, and several member communities are taking active steps to encourage more people to support their towns' traders.

The full recession report – along with the results a separate survey of rural tourism related to member towns – is available on the GMTF website at www.town2town.org.uk. It includes a town-by-town breakdown as well as positive examples of how towns are fighting back, including 'shop local' initiatives and celebration day events to attract visitors. A follow-up survey is due this Autumn.



ACROSS THE COUNTY

News from our member communities

Towns in partnership

The importance of adjoining communities working together to achieve shared aims has been embraced by **Fairford** and **Lechlade** in recent years and the resulting institution is developing strongly. Along with Quenington parish, they have formed the East Cotswold Strategic Partnership, whose administration is supported by a small GMTF grant.

With the accelerating development of the eastern section of the Cotswold Water Park, there is much meat for the organisation to get its teeth into. The first step has been to give local input into the proposed Thornhill public park. This arose from a Section 106 agreement linked to the lakes by Yoo commercial leisure development midway between the towns. There are also issues over provision of footpaths.

There is also a proposal to re-open the former railway line between Fairford and Lechlade as a cycle path, providing a safer alternative for cyclists than the dangerous A417 road. With the support of the two councils, Lechlade Footpaths Committee is heading the effort and hopes to commission a feasibility study soon. The Partnership has also discussed public transport provision locally.

We love our town!

Following an enjoyable 'We love Wotton' day in April, townspeople in **Wotton under Edge** will be able to look back on the day at

an exhibition organised by Under the Edge Arts. On the weekend of October 3 & 4, there will be a chance to see photos, film and sound recordings from the 'We love Wotton' day at Under The Edge Arts, Chipping Hall. The show runs from 10am- 2pm on Saturday (finishing early for a Memorial Service for U A Fanthorpe) but open 10am-4pm on Sunday. Admission is free.

There are hundreds of photographs, and hopefully local people will add their own pictures in the meantime. The Wotton-under-Edge Calendar for 2010 is also to be based on photographs from the day and should be available by October.

More play

Lechlade Town Council and members of the public have worked hard to design and arrange funding for a new play area within the MUGA (multi-use games area) site. This will replace facilities that had to be demolished at the far end of the recreation field owing to repeated vandalism. The Council is also looking at having a Farmers' Market in the Town. If this happens it would revise the Market Charter granted by King John 1 in 1210.



Planning for the future

The George V Playing Field Trust in **Northleach** has regained vacant possession of the pavilion bar and is deciding whether to re-assign the lease. Other suggestions were to demolish the building and replace it. Meanwhile facilities for sports in the area would be maintained. Better use of the site is being investigated and might include the MUGA (multi-use games area) and other Council proposals.

The Northleach Town Plan Steering Group Action Plan is reaching fruition and is due to be discussed. Projects include improved parking in the Marketplace and extra parking elsewhere, speed control signs, a pedestrian crossing and improvements to bus stops with improved access for coaches to the Square.

Controversy courts town

Controversy has courted **Cinderford** for the past year. Firstly, will Tesco come to town or not? This has been the subject of many letters and debates. Secondly, should the Miners' Welfare Hall be demolished in favour of a new building?

The neighbourhood project, GL14, has had funding problems, as has the Young People's Candi project; sustainability is a problem shared by many organisations all over the country. However, all is not gloom and doom. £14.75m

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Town plan on move despite setbacks

In the past year or so, **Stow-on-the-Wold** has suffered more setbacks than successes. For example, the Cotswold District Council decided it could no longer support Stow Visitors Information Centre, despite tourism being the district's biggest business sector and that visitors to other parts of the district also used it. Discussions led nowhere and alternative premises were unsuitable. Efforts to fund a much-reduced service with the help of a small grant are progressing slowly. Taken with the refurbishment of the public toilets which has reduced these facilities to one-third of those previously available, tourism in the area is expected to fall significantly.

Similarly, planning applications are often passed seemingly without regard to local needs. A recent development that replaced a two-storey house near the centre with eight three-storey dwellings was built with a stepped roof-line. One end was over a metre above the other, although the plans showed it level. District Council officers then passed



A small, enthusiastic group has been set up

the retrospective amendment as not being significant, despite a resident complaining that the extra height meant his solar panel no longer caught direct sunlight.

On the plus side, a small, enthusiastic group has been set up by the Council to work on the Town Plan, replacing the Stow 2020 group which had switched its efforts to the Health Check but lost momentum as its numbers fell and, despite advertising, could not attract new members. The new group has already won a grant from the GMTF.

Reports submitted by member towns do not necessarily reflect the views of the GMTF Board.

Volunteers' £34,000-worth of help

Between September 2008 and March 2009, the volunteer hours devoted to the development of **Cirencester's** Community Plan was estimated to have a value of £34,150. The Council really appreciates the support that has and continues to be provided.

'Our Future Cirencester' contains 16 community projects on themes relating to economic development, heritage and culture, young people and sustainability. Four working groups examined how to take the community plan forward, looked at specific topics and made recommendations to the Steering Group. The working groups prepared individual reports on a range of projects which were then prioritised.



In July 2009, the Council approved funding for the six-month employment of a student intern. The student will, under the supervision of the Cirencester Chamber of Commerce as part of the 'Cirencester Local Business' project, help to promote future 'I Love Cirencester' events, which were such a success when the inaugural weekend was held in June. The Council also agreed to buy in the services of a Youth Information Officer to co-ordinate the Youth Town Council and to lead on establishing a 'Chill-Out Zone' project at the New Brewery Arts.

The Community Plan can be viewed on the Council's website

www.cirencester.gov.uk/ofc.php

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Coalfields funding has been agreed for the Northern Quarter and, following consultation, work is currently underway on the master plan. The Town Centre Enhancement work is also to become a reality, irrespective of the outcome of the Tesco Planning application.

New life for former museum

In the past year **Newent** lost a central attraction when The Shambles Victorian Street Museum closed after years of attracting around 20,000 visitors annually. However, all is not lost as the small shop units are being refurbished and new business opportunities are being created around an enclosed courtyard. This will make a pleasant oasis behind the main street frontage.

The Town Council has been looking at options within the old Cemetery buildings, perhaps creating a freestanding office space within the present Victorian construction. The Council will then be able to dispose of the cemetery lodge office which is not DDA compliant. Technical assistance has been provided through the Forum.

Community hall renovation

After years of neglect, **Tewkesbury's** historic Watson Hall is undergoing extensive renovation. Funded by the Town Council through the precept, the work is being carried out by professional workmen supported by a team of enthusiastic local volunteers led by Cllr Chuck Pavey.

Once the work is completed, the town will have a community hall to be proud of. It will also be able to help fund itself through increased

hiring income. The Town Council was grateful for the help of a specialist interior designer who offered her services free through Dulux Paints and has developed a scheme to make the most of the hall's dramatic architecture.

The withdrawal of Borough Council funding for the award-winning Bishop's Walk public loos has led to their closure, so the Town Council is now looking at ways to re-open them. The Borough Council estimated they cost £40k a year to run.



The devastating floods of 2007 destroyed many moorings along the river in Tewkesbury. With the support of GMTF's consultant Martin Davidson, the Town Council has investigated the best way to replace them and is working on new finger moorings which rise and fall with the tide.

Two local gardening clubs have taken on the tasks of keeping the town's public gardens attractive while the Tewkesbury in Bloom group looks after the hanging baskets. Tewkesbury Town Council has also just been recognised as a Quality Parish Council.

More to do for young folk

The number of young people in **Churchdown** Parish and surrounding area is on the increase, and the Parish Plan identified the need for more activities to engage with them. The Parish Council has used its 15

hours of GMTF Technical Assistance to develop a plan for a Multi-purpose Games Area, helping to promote healthy lifestyles. This plan will enable the Parish Council to apply for funding to make this into a reality.

Memorial facelift

The War Memorial in **Stonehouse** has undergone a facelift thanks to a huge community effort and fundraising from the Mayor's Charity. The town has a very active RBL and generates a large Remembrance Sunday parade each year.

For the first time this year, Stonehouse Live! ran two days of fun-packed activities for young people in August. Run and supported by the Churches Together in Stonehouse and a grant from the Town Council's youth budget, these were popular free events. To find out more, visit www.stonehouselive.org.uk.

The Stonehouse Chamber of Trade has reformed and held well attended open and



Loads of fun at Stonehouse Live!

Reports submitted by member towns do not necessarily reflect the views of the GMTF Board.



A vision for the future of Stonehouse High Street committee meetings – good news for the High Street and town. A business group recently met for the first time and has already produced a town business directory.

Although some projects in Stonehouse Partnership's Community Plan will take years to complete – for example, the 'shared-space' project which aims to make the High Street area safer and more attractive – others are having more immediate results. The town newsletter, *Stonehouse News*, produced jointly by the Town Council and the Partnership and delivered to every town household and all town centre businesses, is now mid-way through its second year.

The work of the Partnership is carried out by groups covering:

- Events – including a Christmas Goodwill Evening and Horticultural Show
- The High Street – looking at ways to make it more pleasant
- History – to learn more about the town
- Sustainable Stonehouse – has published a Green Guide and organised a successful Clothes Swapping event

The Partnership had its own website provided free by the Market & Coastal Towns Initiative and is working to create a combined Town Council and Partnership website.

Like many communities, Stonehouse is concerned that footfall on High Street has been falling for some time. The Partnership envisages its High Street project as a key part of the regeneration of the shopping area, with future links to the Stroudwater Navigation Canal and its towpath, now that restoration has re-commenced, as well as the Cotswold Way National Trail which passes through the town's outskirts, and the National Cycle Route 45 which will extend to Swindon.

All of these carry tourists and the town is keen to attract them. The High Street project will be a first step towards encouraging increased use of bikes, particularly by schoolchildren.



It's only natural...

A Natural Burial Ground has been established within **Coleford** Town cemetery, encouraging 'green' burials where nothing which can't biodegrade is allowed. The NBG was supported by a grant from the Gloucestershire Environmental Trust. There is a sculpted 'doorway' to the area which will accommodate an estimated 290 natural burials. Already, Coleford Town Council has had requests for details and a number of people have expressed interest in pre-purchasing a plot.

Work on Coleford's long-awaited Community Enterprise Centre is currently on time and on budget. It is anticipated that the build will be completed by January 2010, ready for fitting out, and opened in April. Contractor's staff invited local primary school children for a site visit and asked them to provide some original art for the hoardings at the site



Work progresses on the Community Enterprise Centre, where youngsters have helped decorate the site entrance

entrance. Pupils from Lakers School and users of the Adult Day Care facility have added their own touches.

The current library and youth and community centre are still operational while the new building is under construction. The Enterprise Centre will house a new library and day care centre for adults with learning disabilities as well as a youth centre and a hall and catering kitchen for community use. Offices and meeting rooms with administrative and ICT support available for small businesses and social enterprises will also be offered through the Coleford Area Partnership.



Coleford's Natural Burial Ground... already attracting interest

Reports submitted by member towns do not necessarily reflect the views of the GMTF Board.

Communities get together around the county

Two inter-related issues of interest to all market towns in the county were addressed in the latest brace of Forum networking meetings, both well attended by members.

In Stow-on-the-Wold in May, the accent was on the credit crunch and how councils and businesses are addressing the problems arising from the slow-down. GMTF used the occasion to showcase its study of members' experiences and there was a lively exchange of views and some sound advice. To see the full results of this survey, visit our website www.town2town.org.uk.

There was also a presentation of how youth facilities had been enhanced in Stow, along with a street tour highlighting the town's Civil War heritage and a visit to the Unicorn Trust Centre, where Britain's Paralympic equestrian team train.

The Summer networking event was at Beechenhurst, in the heart of the Forest of Dean, where the accent was on tourism. Members gained some sound advice on showcasing their respective areas as well as visiting the ancient Speech House and the modern Geomap, which demonstrates the geological make-up of the area.

Headline findings from a second survey of the impact of the recession on rural tourism commissioned by the Forum were revealed. To see the full results of this survey, visit our website www.town2town.org.uk.

The Annual General Meeting, was held at Wotton-Under-Edge in September 2009.



ABOVE:
Networking in
Stow-on-the-
Wold

RIGHT: A visit to
the Geomap in
the Forest of
Dean



Meet the board

Peter Godfrey	Forum Chair, Lechlade	peter@pjga.com
Bob Watters	Forum Vice Chair, Lydney Area in Partnership	bobwatters@ymail.com
Janet Marrott	Coleford Area Partnership	marrott@tiscali.co.uk
Glenys Sykes	Wotton under Edge Town Council	clerk@wotton-under-edge.com
Roger George	Stow on the Wold	roger@rggeorge.plus.com
John Ellis	Chipping Campden Town Council	ellis.consultant@virgin.net
Pearl Stokes	Churchdown Parish Council	pearl.stokes@ukgateway.net
Martin Harwood	Fairford Town Council	martinharwood560@btinternet.com
Chris Howell	Coleford Town Council	chris@howell1706.fsnet.co.uk
Chuck Pavey	Tewkesbury Town Council	malcolm@chuckpavey.orangehome.co.uk
Mattie Ross	Stonehouse Town Council	mattie.ross@btinternet.com
Jenny Hincks	Cirencester Town Council	charles.hinks@sky.com

Development funding tops **£5,000** for communities so far. More applications welcome!

The Forum's Development Fund continues to be extremely popular with member communities.

Since the Fund began in 2002, well over £140,000 has been awarded to projects, generating more than £500,000 in match funding.

£5,000 of the £15,000 in the Development Fund has been distributed this year to a wide range of member communities for a host of different

projects. The fund continues to provide quick and easy access to small levels of funding for the foreseeable future. More applications from member communities are welcomed. For a GMTF Development Fund application form and more details, contact Geoff Wheeler (01453) 545583 or geof.wheeler@btinternet.com

Here's how member communities have used Development Funds:

Kitchen facelift for Winchcombe Guide Hall

The Winchcombe Guide Hall management committee has received £1,000 to help give the hall's kitchen a much-needed facelift.

The Hall is home to the town's guides and brownies and a whole host of local charitable organisations – but the small kitchen is in desperate need of some attention.

"We were delighted to receive such a generous contribution from the Forum," said Mary Brown, Chairman of the Guide Hall's management committee.

"We are particularly grateful to John Gerrard from the Friends of Winchcombe and Abbey Fields Community Centre who put the application forward on our behalf."

John said: "The Guide Hall is such an important community asset I felt it was important to support it. The kitchen needs new units, cooker, fridge and water heater as well as damp proofing. The £1,000 grant will go a long way towards making it happen. The Forum has been an active supporter of Winchcombe community projects over many years."

Community partnership is given a helping hand

A partnership representing Fairford, Lechlade, Kempsford and Quenington successfully applied for almost £400 from the Forum's Development Fund.

The East Cotswold Strategic Partnership used to share the tasks of chairing and minuting its meetings around the four councils in turn, but this caused problems with co-ordination.

Martin Harwood from Fairford said: "The four communities face many issues that local people feel are

We needed the Forum funding to help us produce a document which will explain our plans in the most professional way possible

often neglected by the county and district councils – so we believe it is important to present a united face. This money has helped pay for a part-time administrator which will make a big difference to the way in which the Partnership works.

"The developing Cotswold Water Park is throwing up issues that affect all the East Cotswold parishes and the need for a co-ordinated approach has been demonstrated on several occasions already. Our latest project, to get the disused Fairford to Lechlade railway track reopened as a cycle path, is entering an important phase.

"We needed some support to help co-ordinate meetings, take notes and handle correspondence and we're very grateful to the Forum for the grant."

Churchdown Park plans get Forum support

Early, ambitious plans for the future transformation of Churchdown Park, including creating a wildlife pond, walking trails, flood alleviation and more play and leisure facilities for a wider range of local people, received a major boost from the Gloucestershire Market Towns Forum fund.

Churchdown Parish Council is a member of the Forum and received a grant and expert advice from a community planning expert, funded through GMTF, to help prepare the plan for the park and publish the proposals to help win the necessary additional funds to make it all happen.

Parish Council clerk Ruth Warne said: "It is estimated the transformation will need substantial funding but plans are at the very early stages of discussion. We needed the Forum funding to help us produce a document which will explain our plans in the most professional way possible to maximise our chances of

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DEVELOPMENT FUNDING

CCTV scheme to reduce anti-social behaviour in Wotton

A £2,500 contribution from the Forum's Development Fund helped Wotton under Edge expand its CCTV system to cover the busiest area of the town.

"There was previously no coverage of the town centre and there were incidents of anti-social and criminal behaviour which we knew could have been deterred or better detected with these additional cameras," said Town Clerk Glenys Sykes.

"The extra coverage has reinforced the reduction in antisocial behaviour in the town centre and particularly around pubs and food outlets, improving life for town centre residents and making the town centre more friendly to both residents and visitors."



Continued from page 9

getting grants from a variety of sources. But we also received a tremendous amount of practical support from a specialist consultant funded by the Forum, to help prepare the plan. We are very grateful that the Forum has supported us in this way."

Forum boost for award-winning business club

In this particularly harsh economic climate, the Fairford and Lechlade Business Club is playing an increasingly important role encouraging networking and promotion of local companies.

Now, thanks to a £1,000 grant from GMTF, the Club will have full administrative support, and its website at www.flbizclub.co.uk will be further developed.

The Club's administrator, Chris Roberts, said: "We are delighted to have received a grant from GMTF to help with the running of this successful award-winning Club. We now have more than 70 members from Fairford and Lechlade and outlying villages as well as Cirencester, Stroud, Cheltenham and Tetbury.

"Evening meetings are held monthly on the fourth Thursday, but the Club has just introduced breakfast meetings for March, June, September and December. If you would like to learn more, call 01285 712150 or email admin@flbizclub.co.uk."

Chipping Campden's new website is launched

A £2,000 grant from the Development Fund has helped the Cotswold town of Chipping Campden to launch its own community website.

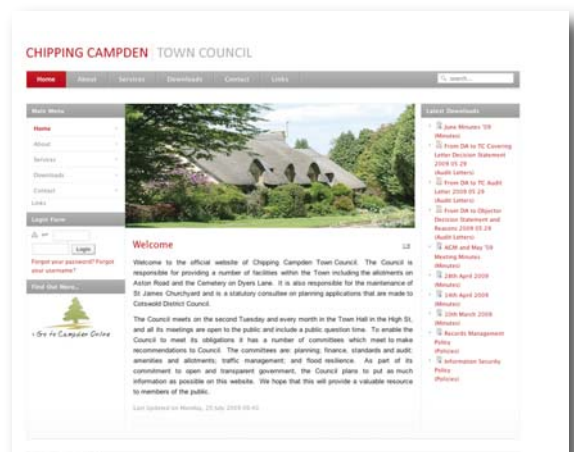
This is the first website for the town which will be in the control of the community

Town Councillor Michael Haines said: "We could not have launched www.chippingcampdenonline.org without this very generous support from the Forum. The website will not only keep local people informed and support the Town Council, the community and local businesses, it will also eventually generate income from the local Tourist Information Centre by offering secure, on-line accommodation booking for visitors to the area.

"This is the first website for the town which will be in the control of the community. The old tourism website was out of date and could not support on-line booking which has to be the way forward in terms of encouraging visitors to the town.

"We have also set up a dedicated Town Council site with feedback and contact mechanisms within the campdenonline.org hub. We hope that this will lead to a greater interactive understanding between the Council and the local community and in the longer term an improved service that meets more of the community's needs."

A grant has helped launch Chipping Campden's new community website



Driving the appeal for new minibus forward

A Development Fund grant has helped drive Winchcombe Day Centre’s fundraising campaign for a new minibus into its final lap.

The Day Centre provides day care for more than 40 elderly or infirm local residents three days a week, and while some are collected and delivered to their homes by individual volunteer drivers, by far the greatest numbers travel in the centre’s ancient mini-bus.

John Gerrard, Day Centre Chairman, said: “The outdated loading and seating arrangements of our old minibus are unsuitable for handling the increasing numbers of wheelchair-bound and severely disabled members that we now carry. This is putting an unacceptable strain on our volunteer drivers and their assistants.

“We launched a £35,000 campaign to buy a new 10 seater mini-bus with special tailgate access facilities for loading and offloading wheelchairs and severely disabled members, and improved wheelchair stowing arrangements and better seating.

“Thanks to the Forum’s £2,000 Development Fund grant, all we need now is £5,000 to reach our goal.”

The Forum’s support is particularly welcome

Community Radio Station receives Forum boost

North Cotswold Community Radio at www.northcotswoldonline.com has received £1,500 from the Gloucestershire Market Towns Forum to help keep it on the air.

Chipping Campden, where the volunteer-run radio station is based, is a member of the Forum and therefore local community organisations are able to apply for a Development Fund grant.

John Bowlt from the radio station, which has been on air for two years, said: “The Forum’s support is particularly welcome as we are currently lobbying our member of parliament for a change in the OFCOM rules which will allow the station to apply for an FM licence.



“All of our staff are volunteers, but we need help with the costs entailed in running the web-based station, including rent, computer equipment and on-line services.”

The show must go on in Churchdown

It’s on with the show for the actors of the Churchdown Players... thanks to a £1,500 grant from the Forum.

The Players – who were formerly known as the St Andrew’s Dramatic Society – had to leave their venue of 50 years at short notice and have since moved to the Churchdown Community Centre. But without some essential kit, including a special stage back cloth and lighting bar, they may have had to delay future performances.

Ruth Warne, Clerk to Churchdown Parish Council which applied for the grant on behalf of the Players, said: “In order to be able to put on performances from October, the Society needed some essential kit.

“We were delighted to hear we had been successful in winning a grant from the



The Churchdown Players present their own take on the smash TV comedy ‘Allo ‘Allo

Market Towns Forum for the Players – which means that it’s on with the show!”

Additional funding was received from Tewkesbury Borough Council, Churchdown Parish Council, Churchdown Community Association

and the Players themselves.

The Churchdown Players are a village institution which draws people of all ages together from across the community, and their popular performances raise money for local charities.

Forum summary of accounts 2008-2009

Statement of Financial Activities (Incorporating an Income & Expenditure Account) for the year ended 31st March 2009

	Unrestricted Funds £	Restricted Funds £	Total Funds 2009 £	Total Funds 2008 £
Incoming resources from generated funds				
Voluntary income	22,080	110,429	132,509	57,871
Investment income	2,317	—	2,317	3,056
Incoming resources from charitable activities				
GCC Service Level Agreement	—	13,750	13,750	15,000
Total Incoming resources	24,397	124,179	148,576	75,927
Resources Expended				
Charitable activities				
Grants Paid	—	17,775	17,775	22,622
MCTN Grants	—	58,706	58,706	—
Support	22,746	10,393	33,139	64,747
Charitable activities	—	—	—	512
Governance Costs	2,607	—	2,607	1,762
Total resources expended	25,353	86,874	112,227	89,643
Net Income/(expenditure) for year before transfers	(956)	37,305	36,349	(13,716)
Gross transfers between Funds	(15,000)	15,000	—	—
Net Income/(expenditure) for the year	(15,956)	52,305	36,349	(13,716)
Reconciliation of funds				
Total Funds brought forward	99,339	3,330	102,669	116,385
Total Funds Carried Forward	83,383	55,635	139,018	102,669
Balance sheet as at 31st March 2009				
			2009 £	2008 £
Current Assets				
Debtors	—	—	—	786
Cash at bank	89,114	55,635	144,749	105,408
Creditors	(5,731)	—	(5,731)	(3,525)
Net Current Assets	83,383	55,635	139,018	102,669
Total assets less current liabilities	83,383	55,635	139,018	102,669
Net Assets	83,383	55,635	139,018	102,669

The trustees are satisfied that the company is entitled to exemption from the provisions of the Companies Act 1985 (the Act) relating to

Funds

Unrestricted:

General funds 83,383 99,339

Restricted funds:

Development Fund 555 3,330

MCT Network (MCTN) 47,204

SLA (GCC) 7,876

55,635 3,330

Total Funds 139,018 102,669

The trustees are satisfied that the company is entitled to exemption from the provisions of the Companies Act 1985 (the Act) relating to the audit of the accounts for the period by virtue of section 249A (1), and that no member or members have requested an audit pursuant to section 249B (2) of the Act. The trustees acknowledge their responsibilities for:

- ensuring that the company keeps proper accounting records which comply with section 221 of the Act, and
- preparing accounts which give a true and fair view of the state of affairs of the company as at the end of the financial period and of its profit or loss for the financial period in accordance with the requirements of section 226, and which otherwise comply with the requirements of the Act relating to financial statements, so far as applicable to the company.

These Financial Statements have been prepared in accordance with the special provisions for small companies under Part VII of the Companies Act 1985 and with the Financial Reporting Standard for Smaller Entities (effective January 2007).

Approved by the trustees and signed on its behalf by:



P Godfrey



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