



Talk Up The Town

Cinderford's Regeneration Newsletter

Issue 2 – December 2006

Welcome to the second issue of **Talk Up The Town** the regeneration newsletter for Cinderford in the Forest of Dean, Gloucestershire. This quarterly newsletter from the Cinderford Regeneration Manager contains information about progress being made to regenerate and revitalise Cinderford and its surrounding area.

The Forest of Dean District Council is leading on the regeneration of Cinderford working in partnership with Gloucestershire County Council, the Forestry Commission, the South West Regional Development Agency and the national regeneration agency English Partnerships. The partners are working together to prepare the **Cinderford Business Plan** which will promote both physical regeneration, and new learning opportunities in the town and its surrounding area. Importantly, the Business Plan will feed into the statutory planning process and will help underpin a new Area Action Plan for the town.

Quick win projects up & running

This summer, Cinderford Regeneration Board made £50,000 available to get some regeneration projects off the ground.

The Youth Arts Fringe Festival was the first quick win project to be completed. Festival organisers secured **£4,000** from the Board to help run the event from 26th June to 7th July. This year the Festival attracted many new participants in a range of arts workshops that culminated in a live finale at the Wesley Hall, Cinderford.

The GL14 Community Project won **£18,700** towards the creation of a new Community Learning Centre in Dockham Road. GL14 celebrated their arrival in town with a formal launch on 29th September.

The Forest of Dean Music Makers secured **£28,000** to enable their £250,000 MusicSpace project to go ahead.

Building work will start on 8th January 2007, at the former caretaker's bungalow at Heywood Community School.



Mayor of Cinderford, Max Coburn, being shown GL14's new computers.

Business Plan update

The baseline research for the emerging Business Plan was completed in September. This report can be downloaded from www.Cinderford2016.net

Please send any comments or queries you may have about this newsletter to

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The report informs us that Cinderford cannot stand still, will need to build on its strengths and resolve its problems to become a more balanced and sustainable place, where the community has a better quality of life. As a first step towards a cleaner, greener future for the town, the Business Plan is proposing that the following principles underpin all future regeneration projects and initiatives:-

- **Use local, natural and renewable materials.**
- **Bring the forest into the town.**
- **Utilise sustainable forms of energy.**
- **Ensure new buildings are energy and water efficient.**
- **Make use of local skills and labour.**
- **Make quality a priority.**
- **Involve the community throughout.**

The Plan is proposing 7 key themes which will seek to address what the community wants the area to be like in ten years time:-

1. LIVING

Provide a mix of new housing types and to deliver more affordable housing for first time buyers and low income families. Make better use of the existing housing and empty buildings. Ensure that all new housing is of top environmental quality, making the most of the attractive forest setting and local materials.

2. WORKING

Support existing businesses and attract a wider range of new employers to boost the local economy. Improve local skills and knowledge to help businesses flourish and for people to obtain higher paid jobs.

Provide a more attractive environment for people to do business.

3. PLAYING & VISITING

Let's put Cinderford "on the map" and give visitors more of a reason to come to the area. This will mean improving the town centre environment. We also need to support and improve sports, leisure and other recreational facilities.

4. CONNECTING

Better access is needed to stimulate the town's economy and unlock land designated for development – particularly in the Steam Mills area. Both existing and new development will need to be well served by public transport. The entrance points, or gateways to the town need to be improved. The town centre would benefit from less traffic.

5. GREENING

We need to bring the forest into the town and explore opportunities for "greening" the town. Any new development proposals will need to respect the forest setting, as well as its more immediate neighbours.

6. COMMUNITY

Cinderford has some good community facilities eg. CANDI, Artspace, GL14, and these need to be supported. There is also a need to provide new facilities to improve the overall quality of life in the town.

7. LEARNING

A Community Learning Plan is being developed to promote both formal and informal learning opportunities for all, to deliver sustainable economic

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development, social progress and health and well-being.

Consultation work

Public consultation on the Business Plan forms part of the statutory planning process. Information was displayed at the first event, held alongside the *Dancing through the Dean* event on 8th July in The Triangle. Over the last few months, this has been followed by staffed exhibitions, exhibition displays at the library and Belle Vue Centre, attendance at specific events and stakeholder meetings. Examples include: a presentation to the Forest's Local Strategic Partnership Conference on 20th September; Miner's Welfare Hall exhibition on 23rd Sep; Forest Showcase event on 8th October; Forest Business Futures workshop session for local businesses on 16th October; a presentation to the Forest's Landlord's Forum at the Belfry Hotel, Littledean on 17th October; and a discussion with Churches Together at Cinderford Methodist Church on 14th November.



Miner's Welfare Hall – 23rd September

Meetings have also been held with the Parish Council's at Drybrook, Ruardean,

Mitcheldean, Littledean and Ruspidge & Soudley surrounding the town, to introduce them to the consultation process and encourage the Parish Councils to submit a formal response to this important early stage.

Town Centre Enhancement Proposals

One lucky Cinderford resident has won £50 worth of *First Shop Local Shop* shopping vouchers for sending in her comments relating to the Town Centre Enhancement proposals. Mrs Poole of Westerley Close, Cinderford is particularly keen to see the introduction of a new one way traffic system.

Go Forest – Business Enterprise Challenge

On 15th November, the Miner's Welfare Hall hosted the first **Go Forest** business enterprise challenge. The Forest Education Business Partnership (FEBP) was responsible for organising **Go Forest** during National Enterprise Week. This new event was designed to offer some 160 students a mixed bag of hands-on challenges to demonstrate their skills.

The Cinderford Regeneration Manager set ten competing teams a town planning challenge. Each team had to visit a specific shopping frontage in Cinderford and consider which buildings should stay, be improved or knocked down and replaced!

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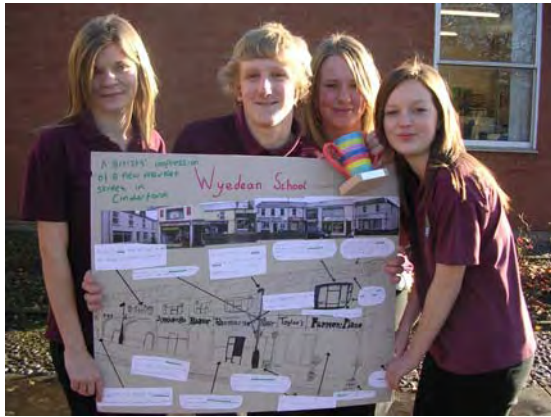
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Winning team - Christian Brown, Rosanna Howes, Mary Davies and Sophie Howells.

Andy Robertson (FEBP) congratulated all the winners by handing out purpose made ceramic trophies produced by Reckless Designs in Coleford. In addition to their trophy, the "Wydean Planners" won a special prize of £40 shopping vouchers from the regeneration consultants Halcrow. The winning team members can look forward to spending their *First Stop Local Shop* shopping vouchers in Cinderford, Coleford, Newent or Lydney.

Cinderford Community Learning Plan

A Learning Plan is being developed as part of the Cinderford Business Plan. Over the next ten years, economic development in the town will depend upon business survival and growth, supported by a vibrant labour market with both improved skills and confidence. This means developing skills, knowledge and attitudes through formal and informal learning, leading to a confident and creative community.

A new Learning Team was established in July and has now met three times. The

Learning Team is working with the Gloucestershire Learning Partnership to secure funding to help both co-ordinate work on the ground; and, to enable some new events and training courses to be launched in the New Year. The team are keen to encourage people of all ages to surprise themselves by trying something new and to sign up for new "Skill Swaps" that could involve learning how to make a Shepherd's Pie in return for some IT training!

Learning from others – Sherwood Energy Village , Nottinghamshire.

Ten people from the Cinderford Regeneration and the Consultative Group headed north on 2nd September to visit Sherwood Energy Village. After an inspiring presentation from SEV's Managing Director Stan Crawford, the Group learned how this former 120 acre colliery site was being transformed using the highest eco-design standards to create new workplaces, jobs for local people and over 190 new homes.

A group of unpaid volunteers had championed this concept for 5 years before the land deal was completed and the finance was in place to help deliver their vision for the site adjacent to the Sherwood Forest.

The strongest message of the day, was their steadfast commitment to the environment. This theme underpins all development at SEV – all buildings are designed with energy efficiency, renewable energy fuel sources, and with site biodiversity in mind.

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Cinderford Business Network

Forest of Dean District Council is supporting the *Parklife Business Parks Project* which aims to support the creation of strong business community on and around key business parks in the Forest. *Parklife* is already successfully established at Vantage Point Business Village in Mitcheldean.

The Cinderford Regeneration Manager is working with *Parklife's* Business Advocate Fred Reed to establish a new business network based around the Forest Vale Industrial Estate.

A business breakfast meeting has been scheduled for 8.00am on 9th January at the Cinderford Rugby Club. Local businesses are invited to come along to find out what *Parklife* has to offer, and how the Cinderford Business Plan will be working to support local employers.

For more information contact: Fred Reed, 07813 841742 or email – parklifefred@glosfirst.co.uk

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