

weekly news

Plunkett's weekly news update on:

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Improving rural livelihoods
through co-operative and social enterprise

Plunkett Foundation News

18th February 2011

Are you passionate about rural communities?

Plunkett Foundation vacancy

Communities Assistant

Salary: £19,000 - £21,500

Location: Woodstock, Oxfordshire

The Plunkett Foundation has been changing lives in rural communities since 1919. We work as strategic partners with numerous government departments, funders and support organisations.

We are the only national organisation providing dedicated support and expertise to rural communities who wish to set-up and run a community-owned shop. Join us as a Communities Assistant, and you'll work at the forefront of our extremely worthwhile organisation.

Using your demonstrable understanding of rural communities, you'll expand on our existing community shop activity and will help us extend the same support to other forms of community owned rural services. You'll be the first person people speak to when they contact us, and you'll be the one who co-ordinates all rural service delivery.

You'll also build relationships with external organisations that may be better placed to advise with certain queries, and will refer people to them. And you'll monitor and report on all the latest activity, as well as providing administrative support.

To succeed in this role you'll need to have a good understanding of the issues affecting rural communities, as well as the enthusiasm and organisational skills to help us deal with them. You'll need to be educated to degree level or equivalent in a business related subject, and will have experience of community or voluntary groups. You'll also have excellent interpersonal and communication skills, and will be willing to travel as necessary.

To find out more about this role and to apply please contact James Alcock, Community Retail Manager - james.alcock@plunkett.co.uk Full job description can be downloaded from <http://www.plunkett.co.uk/aboutus/opportunities.cfm>.

Closing Date: Friday 11th March 2011.

PLUNKETT ON FACEBOOK AND TWITTER

To follow the Plunkett Foundation on Facebook visit

<http://www.facebook.com/pages/Plunkett-Foundation/146827248663874?ref=ts>

To follow the Plunkett Foundation on Twitter visit <http://twitter.com/PeterCouchman> or

http://twitter.com/Mike_Plunkett , <http://twitter.com/HarrietPlunkett> or http://twitter.com/Kat_Plunkett

Co-operatives and Social Enterprise News

Record win for community-owned shops at Countryside Alliance Awards

Community-owned shops become winners in four regions, joining the running for national awards in March

The community-owned shop sector is celebrating a record win at this year's Countryside Alliance Awards, with four being selected as regional winners. The winners, stretching the length of the country, are: Humshaugh Village Shop, Northumberland; Storth Village Shop, Cumbria; The Shop at Strood Green, Surrey and The Galleries Shop and Café, Freshford, Somerset.



The winning shops are four of 255 community-owned shops across the UK, which open at an average rate of 19 per year – saving 5% of the 400 village shops that close each year. All four shops have been supported by rural charity Plunkett Foundation, manages the Community Shops Network and helps communities to set up and run community-owned shops and other services.

All four community-owned shops have been supported by the Plunkett Foundation. Both Strood Green and Freshford shops have been supported by the Village CORE programme, which offers a grant and loan package as well as business advice and mentoring. Humshaugh Village Shop and the shop in Storth in Cumbria benefited from free support available from the Plunkett Foundation to all rural communities looking to save their village shop.

Peter Couchman, Chief Executive of the Plunkett Foundation, said: "The success of the four winning community-owned shops demonstrates what can be achieved by rural communities given the right support. This award is a tribute to the hard work and dedication of those four communities."

The four village shops will now go on to compete in the national finals, the winners of which will be announced at the House of Lords on 30 March.

Peopleton Community Shop on Countryfile

It's been an exciting week for community-owned shops, with Hudswell's The Little Shop opening creating a media frenzy everywhere from local radio stations to BBC 5live, Kirdford Village Stores winning the Daily Telegraph's Best Village Shop in Britain award and four community-owned shops becoming regional winners at the Countryside Alliance Awards. And it shows no sign of slowing down; Sunday's Countryfile episode is dedicated to celebrating 60 years of Radio 4's *The Archers*, the longest-running radio drama, and to celebrate Countryfile visited a 'real-life' community shop in action – that of Peopleton in Worcestershire. Not only did Plunkett advise the BBC on the *The Archers* shop storyline, but Peopleton is our 250th shop opening, so it promises to be a very special episode! Find out more at <http://www.bbc.co.uk/programmes/b00z7hc8> or watch on **Sunday 27 February** at 7pm on BBC1.

Free rural empowerment seminars in Yorkshire

With support from the Yorkshire & Humber Empowerment Partnership and Harrogate Borough Council, The Plunkett Foundation is providing two free seminars with guest speakers and presentations, illustrating how rural communities can establish and operate a range of facilities and enterprises, including village shops, to support their locality. A full programme of the day can be seen here.

The event will include a sneak preview into the Plunkett Benefits Package which is being launched for community shops in March and the opportunity to apply for free membership to this package. Normally costing £240, the package provides access to group deals on electricity, debit card services, telecoms provider and insurance as well additional advisory support for your community and recommended services and suppliers estimating to save the average community shop £2,000 per year.

The event takes place on the 28th February at Conyngham Hall, Knaresborough. To sign up to attend the event, download the booking form from <http://www.plunkett.uk.net/node/2703>.

Social Enterprise Awards: Shortlist announced for England heat

The Social Enterprise Coalition has revealed the organisations and individuals shortlisted for the England heat of the Social Enterprise Awards. Winners of the England Awards will be announced on 1 March and will go through to the UK finals, where they will be joined by social enterprise organisations and people from Scotland, Wales and Northern Ireland.

The overall winners will be presented with their awards at a ceremony to be held at the Indigo O2 venue in London on 30th March 2011, where Leader of the Opposition, Ed Miliband, will speak and present the Best Social Enterprise Award. More than 1,000 people are expected to gather at the evening reception following the close of Voice11. This year's awards have been more hotly contested than ever before, with a record number of entries, double the number that is usually received. The shortlist can be viewed at <http://www.socialenterprise.org.uk>.

© Social Enterprise Coalition

£10m jobs fund for Scottish social enterprises launched

Scottish social enterprises will get £10m to train young unemployed people in their organisations thanks to a new version of the axed £1bn Future Jobs Fund.

Community Jobs Scotland, which will run throughout 2011-2012, will provide opportunities for up to 2,000 young people with the programme administered by the Scottish Social Enterprise Coalition (SSEC) and the Scottish Council for Voluntary Organisations (SCVO).

The coalition government scrapped the original Future Jobs Fund, which funded thousands of work placements for young people in England, Scotland and Wales, when it came into power last year.

SSEC chair Laurie Russell, also CEO of Scottish social enterprise The Wise Group, said: 'We will work to make a difference both to young people, so they can experience working in social enterprises and to regenerating communities across Scotland.'

© Social Enterprise Magazine

Farming and Food News

Good Food, Good Governance training available

Co-operatives UK, as part of the Making Local Food Work programme, is offering Good Food, Good Governance Simply Legal and Simply Governance workshops from March 2011 to March 2012. The events will take place regionally over the year and offer a fantastic opportunity for those involved in community food enterprises to learn more about legal and organizational structures and governing bodies.

The sessions combine case studies, practical hands-on workshops and guest speakers to ensure the most relevant information is provided. Find out more about the events at

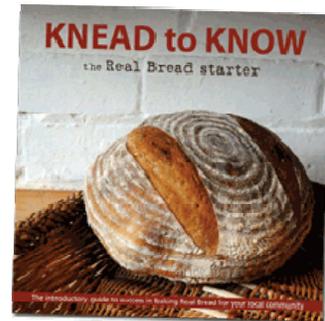
<http://www.makinglocalfoodwork.co.uk/about/gs/Training.cfm?frmAlias=/training/>.

© MLFW

Everything you 'knead to know' about bread...

The Real Bread Campaign has just published *Knead to Know: the Real Bread starter*, the introductory guide to bringing Real Bread back to the heart of your local community.

In his introduction to the guide, Campaign ambassador Richard Bertinet, the award-winning author of *Dough and Crust*, founder of The Bertinet Kitchen & Bakery, and BBC Food Champion 2010, says: 'Whether you are a professional baker, a home baker who would like to turn a hobby into a career or just someone who loves Real Bread, then this handbook will become an invaluable tool.'



Available from <http://www.realbreadcampaign.org> as a limited-edition book (£10 for Campaign members, £15 for everyone else) and as a PDF download, *Knead to Know* contains information on business models, legislation, money matters, equipment, ingredients, basic recipes, techniques, voluntary apprenticeships, courses, equipment and ingredient suppliers, further reading, and much more. Existing professional bakers will find helpful advice on making the transition from additive-assisted production to baking all-natural, Real Bread and how to market it successfully. Download a sample or order your copy at:

http://www.sustainweb.org/realbread/knead_to_know/

In amongst these wholesome slices of advice are tasty crumbs from people who know how to knead, including master bakers Paul Barker, Troels Bendix, Aidan Chapman, Paul Merry, and Andrew Whitley; as well as UK Community Supported Bakery pioneer, Dan McTiernan of The Handmade Bakery.

Part of Sustain: the alliance for better food and farming, and funded by the Big Lottery Fund's Local Food programme, the Real Bread Campaign champions locally produced loaves and finds ways to make bread better for us, better for our communities and better for the planet.

For more information please contact Chris Young: realbread@sustainweb.org or 020 7837 1228.

Consumers seeking value as food prices rise

The vast majority of shoppers are expecting food prices to rise and are actively seeking out value in order to deal with this, according to a consumer survey.

IGD shows that more than 91 per cent think food prices will be higher in the next 12 months. One-third of these believe food will be much more expensive, up from 19 per cent in October 2010. The latest ShopperTrack research also shows a quarter of shoppers say they will buy more of the lowest-priced supermarket private label products in the next 12 months, compared to 18 per cent in October 2010.

IGD chief executive Joanne Denney-Finch said the recent wave of publicity over food inflation was forcing consumers to re-think how they spend their money.

"There's been widespread media coverage of rising commodity prices and the pressures it is placing on the cost of food, and we see the effect of this coming through in our shopper research. This pressure, combined with higher living costs, is causing shoppers to reassess how they spend their money.

"We see the focus for shoppers is still about value rather than price alone. Shoppers are continuously assessing products based on the performance that they deliver and are prepared to pay a little extra where they see great value being demonstrated."

© Farmers Guardian

Commission urged to ban battery egg imports

The European Commission has been urged to issue a guarantee that farmers who miss the 2012 battery cages ban deadline are banned from trading their eggs across the EU.

Earlier this week Defra Secretary Caroline Spelman led efforts to quash an attempt by some member states to delay the implementation of the ban beyond the January 2012 start date.

Other member states, including Germany, France, Spain and the Netherlands, backed Mrs Spelman's calls to ensure the ban is implemented on time and the proposals were defeated.

EU Health Commissioner John Dalli indicated after the Council of Ministers meeting that the Commission will stand by the January 2012 date.

All countries will now be expected to comply with the ban, and the European Commission has given them until April to provide information on its implementation.

© Farmers Guardian

Rural Development News

Forest U turn 'won't mean other cuts'

DEFRA insists it will not cut spending in other areas after reversing plans to sell off England's public forests. The government department issued a statement following media speculation that the U-turn would force savings to be made elsewhere.

"The decision to end the forestry consultation will not lead to any further cuts to the Defra budget for flood defences, animal health or any other area," the statement said. "As this was a consultation, no potential sales were factored into the savings required to meet our Spending Review settlement," it added. "Therefore there will be no impact on Defra's spending plans in other areas."

The "myth busting" statement was posted on Defra's website on Sunday 20 February. It came three days after Defra secretary Caroline Spelman ditched the controversial forest sell-off on Thursday (17 February).

"I'm sorry, we got this one wrong," Mrs Spelman told MPs in the House of Commons. The consultation on the management of the Public Forest Estate had been halted and all forestry clauses in the Public Bodies Bill would be removed, she said.

Mrs Spelman also announced that an independent panel of experts would examine forestry policy in England and report back to her in the autumn. "I would first like to say that I take full responsibility for the situation that brings me before the House today," she told MPs. "Let me make it clear that we have always placed the highest priority on preserving access and protecting our forests.

"But the forestry clauses in the Public Bodies Bill, published well before we launched the consultation, gave the wrong impression as to the Government's intentions."

Mrs Spelman announced three steps she said would allow for more measured and rational debate about the future direction of forestry policy. "First, I have taken a decision to end the consultation on the future of the Public Forest Estate and I take full responsibility for that.

I am doing so because it is quite clear from the early responses to the consultation that the public and many MPs are not happy with the proposals we set out. "Second, the Government will support the removal of the forestry clauses from the Public Bodies Bill, currently at committee stage in the House of Lords.

"And thirdly I would like to announce that I am establishing an independent Panel to consider forestry policy in England."

The panel will advise on the direction of forestry and woodland policy in England, on the role of the Forestry Commission, and on the role of the Public Forest Estate.

© RSN

Rural counties 'ready for Big Society'

Two rural counties are among those reportedly ready to give people more power to improve their local area.

Norfolk and Cornwall will be among the first areas involved in the training of up to 5,000 community organisers this spring. Training will be delivered by Locality - a community-led network formed through the merger of the Development Trusts Association (DTA) and Bassac.

It has been chosen to carry out a range of work including developing a training framework and code of conduct for community organisers. It will also help establish an Institute for Community Organising.

The government claims community organisers will be well-trained and committed individuals who will deliver David Cameron's Big Society initiative. They will work closely with communities to identify local leaders, projects and opportunities, and empower the local community to improve their local area.

Up to 500 senior community organisers will be trained and given bursaries of £20,000 for their first year. They will be supported by a further 4500 part-time and voluntary organisers.

Nick Hurd, the minister for civil society, said the aim was to catalyse community action at a neighbourhood level - 'igniting the impulse to act'. Communities would be encouraged to take advantage of initiatives such as 'Right to Buy' community assets, and the 'Right to Bid' to run public services.

"Organisers, who will be driven by local communities needs, will encourage social action and enable individuals to shape the services that matter most," said Mr Hurd.

The Big Society is about empowering people and the community organisers will "play a key role by giving people a chance to improve the community in which they live."

The government believes getting well-trained people to help mobilise and facilitate communities is vital if the Big Society is to succeed.

Steve Wyler, chief executive designate of Locality, said it was an opportunity for national government to work with local groups and individuals.

Locality could draw on a wealth of experience to ensure community organisers were truly rooted in the needs of their communities, he said.

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International News

Call for nominations: Canadian Co-operative Awards

The Canadian Co-operative Association (CCA) is calling for nominations for its awards, including:

Canadian Co-operative Achievement Award

Honours outstanding individual contributions to the co-operative movement in Canada. For more information and Terms of Reference for nominations, go to <http://tinyurl.com/CoopAchievementAward>.

Submit nominations to:

Tanya Gracie

Program Officer, Member Services
Canadian Co-operative Association

275 Bank St., Suite 400

Ottawa, ON K2P 2L6

Email: tanya.gracie@coopscanada.coop

Global Co-operator Award

Recognizes an individual or organization who has consistently demonstrated an extraordinary commitment to the international development work of CCA and the Co-operative Development Foundation of Canada (CDF). For more information and Terms of Reference for nominations, go to <http://tinyurl.com/GlobalCooperator>.

Submit nominations to:

Julie Breuer

Director of Fundraising and Operations, CDF

275 Bank St., Suite 400

Ottawa, ON K2P 2L6

Email: julie.breuer@coopscanada.coop

Canadian Co-operative Hall of Fame: Pioneer Inductees

Building upon the launch of the Canadian Co-operative Hall of Fame in 2009, up to 5 pioneers of the Canadian co-operative movement (deceased) will be inducted into the Hall of Fame each year. For more information and Terms of Reference for Nominations, go to <http://tinyurl.com/PioneerInductees>.

Submit nominations to:

Tanya Gracie

Program Officer, Member Services

275 Bank St., Suite 400

Ottawa, ON K2P 2L6

Email: tanya.gracie@coopscanada.coop

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