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| Investment / Sponsorship Opportunity Title | Rural Green Doctor Energy Advice Programme | Number | 28 |
| Originator's name | Rhiannon Perkins | Validated | 23 April 2013 |
| Originator's organisation | Groundwork Caerphilly | Date | 18 April 2013 |
| Email Id | Rhiannon.perkins@groundwork.org.uk | Tel. No. | 01495 222605 |

1. WHAT IS THE OPPORTUNITY (e.g. wildlife, plant life, site, attraction, facility or role etc. in the Valleys Regional Park)? Please also provide a jpeg quality photo if applicable / possible.

This opportunity will support the RDP-funded Rural Green Doctors programme in designated rural wards of Caerphilly County Borough. The Rural Green Doctors programme aims to improve basic services in rural areas by offering free, comprehensive energy surveys of community buildings and making recommendations to introduce energy saving measures.

Most community buildings are run by unpaid volunteers who often don't have the skills, time, or access to information, to assess the efficiency of their community building. Rural Green Doctors are qualified energy advisors who support the volunteers by offering tailored advice to save the group that runs community buildings energy, money and reduce their carbon footprint. Where relevant they compare energy suppliers and make recommendations to switch suppliers.

Community buildings include, but are not limited to, community centres, places of worship and community clubs.

Case Study

Centre: Ael-Y-Bryn Community Centre, Rhymney

Background: The Centre had extremely large heating bills and volunteers were concerned about their sustainability of heating the Centre with escalating energy bills.

During the initial energy assessment of the building some issues were highlighted. As a result a large hot water cylinder was disconnected and drained to avoid unnecessary heating of vast quantities of unused water. A boiler programmer was installed and Rural Green Doctors helped the volunteer establish a complex 7-day heating programme to ensure the Centre is only heated when in use. Finally, Rural Green Doctors installed insulation into the ceiling above the main foyer to reduce heat loss through the roof.

The Centre is now much more energy efficient with the boilers only running for half the time and not constantly heating a large tank of water. It is heating up to a comfortable temperature more quickly.

"We are very grateful for the help and advice the Rural Green Doctors have given us. We were spending a lot on our energy bills and now we're expecting significant savings. Being able to program the heating means that we can make sure the centre is not heated when it's not being used. Since the hot water cylinder was disconnected, we've noticed that the centre heats up much more quickly" - Keith Williams – Ael Y Bryn Community Centre

2. WHERE IS THE LOCATION?

Over 80% of the Caerphilly County Borough is designated as rural. The Rural Green Doctors will work with any community buildings that require support in rural areas. Rural wards are:



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Aberbargoed,
Abercarn,
Aber Valley
Argoed
Bedwas, Trethomas and Machen
Crumlin
Darran Valley
Llanbradach
Maesycwmmmer
Moriah
Nelson
Newbridge
New Tredegar
Penyrheol
Pontlottyn
St Cattwg
St James
Twyn Carno

The current programme runs until September 2014 with plans, subject to resourcing, to extend this to other areas in south east Wales (e.g. Torfaen and Newport).

3. PLEASE INDICATE WHAT TYPE OF SUPPORT IS REQUIRED:

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| In-kind support required? | YES | |
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If YES, please indicate what type of support is required and the benefits this will provide

There are few opportunities to volunteer with this programme; Rural Green Doctors engage with groups who run community buildings, carry out energy assessments and make recommendations. Occasionally, they will make physical improvements to community buildings and volunteer support would be beneficial but these opportunities would be very sporadic.

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| Financial support required? | YES | |
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If YES, please indicate the value of the support required and the benefits this will provide

Rural Green Doctors is 80% funded by Rural Development Plan (RDP) to carry out energy assessments and provide free energy advice to groups/individuals that run community buildings. However, 20% match funding, to the value of approximately £10,000 is still outstanding. This will fund running costs of the programme, including salaries and travel reimbursements.

Donations of any amount would be very welcome to allow us to continue supporting community buildings. Financial support would enable us to meet revenue costs of running this programme and

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will contribute to salaries of staff. A donation of £600 will enable us to run this valued programme for one month, during which time we will engage with two new community buildings and provide ongoing support to those previously engaged.

4. HOW WILL THE INVESTOR / SPONSOR BENEFIT?

Sponsorship of the programme will allow investor to reach a large community audience. For example the programme will reach a large community and the organisation would benefit from the increased exposure of its brand, whilst also promoting its corporate social responsibilities.

Rural Green Doctors will inform groups they work with that the programme has been part financed by your organisation, and/or the programme name can reflect the supporting organisation. All promotional material could also include the partners.

This may be specifically attractive to energy companies with a customer focus.

5. WHY SHOULD THIS INVESTMENT / SPONSORSHIP OPPORTUNITY BE A HIGH PRIORITY?

This is an excellent opportunity for an organisation to support a unique programme in South Wales that is generating interest from the local communities, local press and national organisation. The programme educates local people about our rural environment and how it impacts on the whole region. The programme is starting to reach a wide audience and is planning to expand its reach once the current phase is completed. South East Wales.

We increasingly meet groups that run community buildings who are struggling to meet rising energy costs. To ensure that people who live in our areas and use the community buildings can access services for a reasonable cost Rural Green Doctors strive to make recommendations to save money. These cost savings should mean that fewer services are cut and the sustainability of these buildings, often the hub of a community, are more secure.

Councillor Rob Gough, Llanbradach Community Centre – “I would like to thank (Rural Green Doctors) very much on behalf of myself and the management committee of Llanbradach Community Centre for your help support and advice you gave us relating to energy conservation in our centre...As you are aware the income generated from bookings pays for the running of the centre and for some time we have been struggling to pay gas and electric bills in the region of £8500 per year. The quality advice and guidance we have received from you will enable us to make substantial savings on these bills”.

6. ANY OTHER COMMENTS?

We can discuss specific areas of interest with organisations if they wish.

Any donation amount would be valued! We can market the funder and notify the communities we



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work in that the project has been part-funded by an organisation.

7. PLEASE PROVIDE A LOCAL NAME AND CONTACT DETAILS FOR MORE INFORMATION

Rhiannon Perkins, RDP Programme Manager, Groundwork Caerphilly

rhiannon.perkins@groundwork.org.uk 01495 222605



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