



ENTERPRISE MINISTER ARLENE FOSTER RELEASES FINDINGS OF REPORT INTO THE SOCIAL ECONOMY SECTOR

The report sought to determine the sector's potential to contribute to the economic regeneration of our communities, and to establish the best mechanism to take this work forward. It outlines a range of recommendations to help unlock the potential of the sector in partnership with key stakeholders, as well as informing strategic policy direction and any future action plans within the context of the Executive's draft Economic Strategy.

Arlene Foster said: "The Executive values the contribution of the social economy sector and the report's findings will ensure that current policy initiatives are in line with the sector's future needs."

The Minister added: "My Department will work with the social economy sector to facilitate an entrepreneurial and collaborative approach to its continued development in partnership with key stakeholders."

The report also recognises the achievements of the Social Economy Network (SEN), which ceased operations on 31 August 2011. Any future plans to support and develop the sector will be taken forward in partnership with the SEN Board.

The Minister said: "I would like to place on record DETI's appreciation for the work of the SEN Board and staff in often challenging circumstances given the current economic climate."



Audrey Murray, SEN Chair said: "The SEN Board agrees with the findings within the report and we are delighted to

work with DETI to ensure that a new support mechanism can be established to bring the social economy sector to a new level."

For more information visit the DETI website: www.detini.gov.uk/deti-social-eco-index.htm

NIRWN's Policy officer Louise Coyle travelled to London on the 8th September as a representative of NIWEP (Northern Ireland Women's European Platform) to attend a NAWO event in the House of Lords.



Louise Coyle, NIRWN's Policy Officer outside the House of Lords

NAWO is the National Alliance of Women's Organisations and as part of their annual AGM they held a round table discussion entitled 'Strengthening Women's Voices in Government'. Speakers included Helene Reardon-Bond, Government Equalities Office, Liz Law, Northern Ireland Women's European Platform, European Women's Lobby and UK Joint Committee on Women.

RURAL TRANSPORT FUND VOUCHER SCHEME

The Rural Transport Fund is pleased to announce the release of application packs for their Voucher Scheme in your area. These will cater for trips being made during the months of **January, February and March 2012**. The scheme allows groups to apply for a £100 voucher for one trip which they can use to subsidise part of their transport costs. Applications are now open to groups in all rural areas. If successful the scheme will provide £100 towards the cost of your transport.

To request an application pack please contact: Financial Operations & Transportation Division, DRD, Room 3-29 Clarence Court, 10-18 Adelaide Street, Belfast, BT2 8GB

Tel: 02890 540620

Email: melanie.parker@drdni.gov.uk or Geraldine.finnegan@drdni.gov.uk

Closing date for receipt of applications is 30th November 2011



Would you like to become a Focus Farm?



Under the Northern Ireland Rural Development Programme (NIRDP) 2007-2013, Measure 1.1 is designed to meet the objective of improving the competitiveness of the agriculture and forestry sectors. The Focus Farm Sub-measure contributes to this objective by providing farmers and farm families with innovative training and information actions.

The Focus Farm Sub-measure involved the recruitment of a number of farm businesses to 'promote good practice by example' on their farms. These farms are available for groups to visit, where they can learn, share experiences and solve common problems through discussion, farm walks and demonstrations, led by the focus farmer.

It is now intended to appoint a further 5 focus farms in defined geographical areas and sectors. The gaps are Beef & Sheep farms in North and South Tyrone. **Female applicants are especially welcome**, that is a lead or business partner or a female associated with the farm business. Focus farmers are **eligible for financial assistance** to establish and maintain their farm as a training facility.

It is intended that the programme will open in November 2011 with advertisements appearing in the local press and a closing date early - mid December. An information Roadshow will also take place in local venues. Interviews for the programme will take place early January 2012.

For more information contact:
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Email: pdonnelly@ai-services.co.uk

Have you Checked out our Website Lately?



Visit our website at www.nirwn.org.uk to:

- View latest NIRWN events
- Download our newsletters and Policy Responses
- Read about other events taking place in your area
- Keep up to date with Public Appointments
- Download our Committee Roles & Responsibilities Training Pack and other useful information
- Access links to other organisations, including Rural Community Network, your local Rural Support Network and Local Action Group

Catch it, Bin it, Kill it - Flu Advice

Flu is a highly infectious and very common viral illness that is spread by coughs and sneezes.

A flu vaccine is available free on the NHS if you are pregnant, 65 or older, have a serious medical condition, are a healthcare worker or carer or live in a residential or nursing home



The flu vaccine is available from October each year. If you think you need it, talk to your GP or practice nurse.

NORTHERN IRELAND RURAL WOMEN'S NETWORK

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