"Amplifying and Articulating the voices of Rural Women at a Local, Regional and Strategic Level"

nirwn
Northern Ireland Rural Women's Network

NIRWN NEWS

Summer 2011 Issue 14

FORKHILL WOMEN GRADUATE AT LOUGHRY COLLEGE

Congratulations to members of Forkhill Women's Centre on their successful completion of the College of Agriculture, Food and Rural Enterprise's (CAFRE) Advanced Diploma for Personal and Business Communication.

The Advanced Diploma aims to provide people with the necessary communication skills required to work in business, community or rural development sectors. It offers a unique opportunity to get back onto the learning ladder, enhance career prospects and gain a recognised Queen's University qualification. The programme is suitable for people at all stages of their careers and is particularly relevant for those who feel that the lack of qualifications is hindering their career progression.

Majella Murphy, Development Officer with NIRWN reflected on the course benefits. She said: "It has allowed many women to gain additional qualifications that are relevant to their career paths, and has bridged the gap between earlier qualifications and the requirements of the labour market today, allowing them to identify work and volunteer opportunities.

l-r Catherine Mc Stravick, Jacinta Reel, Kathryn Curphey, Anna Connell, Majella Murphy (NIRWN), Rosemarie Garvey, Eimar Murray and Sabrina Mc Keever. Catherine Mc Stravick was jointly awarded the Pierce Communications Award for achieving the highest marks on the course

For further information regarding this course contact the Course Manager at CAFRE, Roy Nelson on 028 867 68115 or email roy.nelson@dardni.gov.uk

INSIDE THIS ISSUE

Forkhill Women Celebrate	1
New Member Group	2
WCRP Update	3
Local Girl in Tall Ships Race	4

BETTER VALUE RURAL BROADBAND

An announcement by OFCOM to reduce significantly the prices that BT Wholesale can charge internet service providers (ISPs) in primarily rural, less densely populated areas, has been welcomed.

Agriculture and Rural Development Minister Michelle O'Neill said: "In today's digital society, broadband communication is increasingly important for business development and growth, delivery of government services and to our everyday lives. But some rural areas of the north are being left behind. Without access, or a decent level of access to broadband, these communities and businesses are being denied the opportunity to join the digital age.

"OFCOM's decision has the potential to redress this imbalance and narrow the digital divide between urban areas and more rural parts of the north.....It will also benefit some of the most isolated and vulnerable groups in our rural areas, and address feelings of exclusion and isolation, by helping younger and older people to access these new technologies and the opportunities provided by them."

ANOTHER NEW MEMBER GROUP FOR NIRWN

Congratulations and welcome to Girls Allowed Women's Group in Stewartstown, County Tyrone.

Having recognised that Stewartstown did not have a women's group the women pictured decided to form their own with the help of NIRWN officers Majella Murphy and Edna Walmsley. The group meet in the Crieve Centre Stewartstown each Thursday evening and have completed an action plan which will assist them to organise this year's activities. They have come together for friendship and fun and will welcome new members who can contact the chairperson Nicola Coyle through NIRWN.

We are very pleased to welcome Girls Allowed to the NIRWN rural family and look forward to continuing our support to them.

NEW ACTIVITY GROUP

Alzheimer's Society — Leading the fight against dementia

Organised by the Alzheimer's Society, Activity Groups are for people in the early stages of dementia and their carer or friend to attend together.

The group commenced in May 2011 and have met in Magherafelt, Cookstown and Maghera to date. Activities included ten pin bowling, walks & outings, theatre/music/art & sports activities. Further recreational and social activities are planned for later this year and will also include music therapy and reminiscence sessions.

WHEN & WHERE . . .
Varied venues throughout Mid Ulster
On Mondays between 1-3pm

CONTACT . . .
Dawn Beckett, NHSCT Activities, Ferrard House, 32 Station Road, Antrim, BT41 4A
Tel: 94 461717
E: dawn.beckett@alzheimers.org.uk

RURAL TRANSPORT FUND

INTERESTED IN SECURING FUNDING TOWARDS YOUR GROUP'S TRANSPORT COSTS?

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 **October, November and December 2011.** The scheme allows groups to apply for a £100 voucher for one trip which they can use to subsidise part of their transport costs.

Groups are eligible to apply to the scheme if;

- They are non-profit making.
- The majority of members are based in a rural area
- They have 17 or more people travelling

To request an application pack please contact Melanie Parker or Geraldine Finnegan:

Tel: 02890 540620
Fax: 02890 540598
Email: melanie.parker@drdni.gov.uk or Geraldine.finnegan@drdni.gov.uk

RURAL TRANSPORT FUND FOR NORTHERN IRELAND

CLOSING DATE FOR RECEIPT OF COMPLETED APPLICATIONS IS: 31st August 2011

WCRP SOCIAL ECONOMY EVENTS

The WCRP held two social economy events for the wider women's sector during March in Derry/Londonderry and Belfast. Both events were well attended and emphasised the entrepreneurial role of local women. Speakers at the events gave their views and experience of setting up and running a social economy business and described some of the benefits to local communities.

In Northern Ireland social enterprises account for between 5-8% of economic activity, comparable to the tourism industry (5.6%) and construction industry (5.1%). Women are running organisations providing childcare, catering, community facilitation, plumbing and carpentry services. These examples show that women can be innovative and it's notable that 26% of social enterprises are described as 'women-led' – almost twice as many compared to small businesses.

The North West event involved women from Cresco Trust, Avert Foyle Women's Aid, NOW and the WOMEN'S TEC. Helen Crickard from WOMEN'S TEC, spoke at the Derry and Belfast events and highlighted the value of non-traditional skills training for women, the importance of being multi-skilled and being able to seize opportunities in order to compete in the difficult economic climate.

The Belfast event showcased Shankill Women's Centre's new social economy 'Small Wonders II'. Betty Carlisle, MBE, spoke at the event and a video was shown of the journey Shankill has taken to turn a derelict building into a community business. The video is available to watch from their website http://www.shankillwomenscentre.org.uk/content/video-making-small-wonders

l-r: Speakers at the NW event: Helen Sayers (Cresco Trust), Eleanor McGuckin, (Avert Foyle Women's Aid), Brian O'Neill (NW Marketing), Maeve Monaghan (NOW), Margaret Logue (Derry Women's Centre), Helen Crickard (Women's TEC)

Footprints Women's Centre spoke about their catering business set up in 1997 and their daycare business established in 2003. Footprints' catering includes an on-site cafe as well as a function and delivery service. The profit made from its businesses are put back into the women's centre and used to ensure that crucial services, that are often difficult to finance, can still be provided. Footprints catered lunch at the Belfast event, showcasing their professional service and quality food.

There have already been positive outcomes following the social economy events. Avert Women's Aid, who spoke at the NW event, has received a social entrepreneurial grant from UnLtd. Strathfoyle Women's Activity Group has received funding from North West Marketing to carry out a feasibility study on potential social economy options. Greenway Women's Centre and Derry Women's Centre are both currently considering social economy options for their centre.

WCRP would like to thank all the women's centres who attended and took part in the events. Speaker presentations are downloadable from the WCRP website at **www.wcrp.org.uk**

LOCAL GIRL PARTICIPATES IN TALL SHIPS EXCHANGE PROGRAMME

Ocean Youth Trust Ireland (OYTI) along with European partners recruited 14 young people from Northern Ireland and the South of Ireland to be part of an International Exchange Programme on board the Tall Ship Wylde Swan. The young people from Ireland were joined onboard by 24 young people from Scotland, France, Denmark, Belgium and Holland to take part in the 2011 Tall Ships Race from Waterford to Greenock.

The Wylde Swan

Onboard was one local girl Grainne McClenaghan from Bellaghy who had the opportunity to take part in the adventure of a lifetime through NIRWN's close links with OYTI. Grainne said "Never did I think I would be at the top of the rigging of a Tall Ship but this adventure gave me the opportunity not only to do just that, but to meet people I would never have the opportunity to meet otherwise. I feel privileged to have been selected for this race and thank NIRWN for their assistance in guiding me through the process. I would especially like to thank Edna for all her help - I appreciate it and am now continuing my work with the Ocean Youth Trust by volunteering with them this summer and for many more to come. It was an adventure, an excellent learning opportunity for me and I made some great friends who I think will be friends for life".

MONEY ADVICE SERVICE OFFERS IMPARTIAL FINANCIAL ADVICE

the Money Advice Service™

The Money Advice Service has officially launched in Northern Ireland! Funded by the Financial Services Authority, the Service provides face to face sessions within organisations free of charge. All information is impartial and sales free and independent from the Financial Services Industry. The aim of the service is to help prevent financial difficulties and address the underlying root causes of poor financial decision making, including knowledge, financial literacy and money management skills. Topics covered are: Budgeting weekly or monthly spending | Saving and borrowing | Protecting and insuring the individual and the family | Retirement planning | Loans including Mortgages | Understanding tax and welfare benefits better | Jargon-busting – translating technical financial language into terms that people understand.

For more information, please contact the main office on 0333 321 2424 (Belfast) or contact Patrick McLean directly on 07423 458 379 or email pmclean@a4e.co.uk. Visit the website for further details at www.moneyadviceservice.org.uk

NORTHERN IRELAND RURAL WOMEN'S NETWORK
www.nirwn.org.uk

15 Molesworth Street
Cookstown
BT80 8NX
T: 028 8676 9191
F: 028 8676 5644
E: info@nirwn.org.uk

Unit 18 Stylux Business Pk
Lower Waterloo Road
Larne
BT40 1NP
T: 028 2826 7552
E: edna@nirwn.org.uk

Unit 1
Forkhill Business Centre
29 Main Street
Forkhill BT35 9SQ
T: 028 30889483
E: majella@nirwn.org.uk

Department of Agriculture and Rural Development
DSD Department for Social Development
rural Development Programme
Rural Community Network