



WILTSHIRE & SWINDON SMARTPLACE PROGRAMME END PROJECT REPORT

Project name eCorsham

Version 1.0

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Introduction

1. The Wiltshire & Swindon Smartplace Programme developed from the decision in June 2002 by a range of public and voluntary sector partners in Wiltshire and Swindon to work together with BT to secure the benefits of broadband and related technology for the people and organisations of Wiltshire and Swindon. The programme aims to maximise the benefits from ICT and broadband technology for businesses, learners and communities across Wiltshire and Swindon. It will bring benefits for all sectors, both public and private, voluntary and community, in a holistic way, with particular focus on delivering long-term employability.
2. The programme comprises five themes: Business Development, Learning & Skills, Community Capacity Building, Broadband Infrastructure, and Marketing. Each of these themes will be implemented by means of a series of individual projects which, when taken as a whole, will realise the aims and objectives of the programme. This project forms part of the Community Capacity Building theme.
3. Corsham (specifically the Westlea Housing Association project) was chosen for this pilot because the Housing Association has a pro-active management team which have an existing community capacity building strategy which this pilot supports and builds on. Specifically, the strategy plan aims to for the expansion and improvement of:
 - 3.1.1. New homes and services
 - 3.1.2. Customer care and service excellence
 - 3.1.3. Community development and quality of life initiatives

This pilot will support the 3rd of these activities

4. The housing association already has ICT support available and a vision of how to make better use of ICT which strongly compliments Smartplace.
5. The project has the opportunity to combine funding from various organisations such as committed contributions from North West District Council and Westlea themselves to create a more sustainable resource in the community.
- 6.

Project Objectives

7. The objectives of this project were:
 - 7.1. To recruit a Facilitator for the Pockeridge & Potley and Rudloe, Community Centres.
 - 7.2. To equip the Facilitator with a laptop, and broadband connection.
 - 7.3. 2 ICT access points – one at Pockeridge & Potley Community Centre, and one at Rudloe Community Centre.
 - 7.4. Having used the ICT (even for simple things such as send an email, checking for a job vacancy or even checking a football result!) the resident is far more likely to either seek out where they can access the services or actually use the facility than if they were simply told about it or read a leaflet.
 - 7.5. This project focuses on residents likely to be on the wrong side of the "digital divide". It will help to build the confidence of people who at present are unlikely to use ICT or broadband communications so that in due course they will be able to take advantage of the opportunities offered by other parts of the Smartplace programme to have access to learning, skills and experience of using ICT.

Project Deliverables

8. The project's deliverables are:
 - 8.1. Extra community worker capacity in Westlea housing association area of Rudloe and Pockeridge & Potley
 - 8.2. ICT support for those community workers
 - 8.3. Positive publicity for Smartplace by taking ICT to the residents instead of expecting them to go elsewhere
 - 8.4. A community access point in the both community centres, which helps make this facility more viable.

Achievement Against Objectives & Deliverables

9. A pilot project has been set up in Corsham.
10. Pockeridge & Potley Community centre has been given free Broadband access, with 3 PC's, with print facilities.
11. The second location, based in the Rudloe Estate proved unsuitable, so Westlea Housing Association, are liaising with Corsham Community Centre with regards to installing one PC with Broadband access and printing facilities within the centre which is open to the public every morning of the week.
12. A part time facilitator will be recruited by Westlea in the near future, in order to coordinate the project.

Conclusions

13. The project has not achieved all of the project objectives, and deliverables, although a second venue will be in place this year.
14. 55 people have used the facility since opening in May 2006.

Recommendations

15. Paid facilitators are the key to a successful ICT project such as eCorsham
16. An internet adult filtering package is highly recommended, in this type of project.
17. Access to Free Broadband and ICT facilities, is essential to helping bridge the digital divide and enhance social inclusion in this area of Wiltshire.
18. Consequently all efforts should be made to secure follow on funding so that initiatives developed as a result of Smartplace can continue to benefit the Corsham community.
19. The ownership of the project should be handed over to Westlea Housing Association at project end to so that its continuation is ensured.