



WILTSHIRE & SWINDON SMARTPLACE PROGRAMME END PROJECT REPORT

Project name eCalne

Version 1.0

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Distribution

This document has been distributed to:

Name Position

Contents

Document History 2

Distribution..... 2

Contents 3

Introduction 4

Project Objectives..... 4

Project Deliverables..... 4

Achievement Against Objectives & Deliverables 5

Conclusions 5

Recommendations..... 5

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. Calne (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 has supported each of these activities

4.

Project Objectives

5. The objectives of this project were:
 - 5.1. To develop a pilot for Community Capacity Building in Calne.
 - 5.2. To demonstrate that a tiered approach to allowing people access to ICT who otherwise would not use it or attend places where ICT was available, will improve the chances of them using electronic services and from there improve their job skills and life opportunities.
 - 5.3. Create two access points in the Calne area where Smartplace and other services can be accessed.
 - 5.4. Enable broadband connection in a 3rd location (the drop in centre) where young people can access the internet.

6.

Project Deliverables

7. The project's deliverables were:
 - 7.1. Extra community worker capacity in Westlea area of Coleman's Farm
 - 7.2. ICT support for those community workers
 - 7.3. Positive publicity for Smartplace by taking ICT to the residents instead of expecting them to go elsewhere
 - 7.4. A community access point in the community centre which helps make this facility more viable.

- 7.5. A community access point in Sheltered Accommodation premises which will allow elderly residents access to services they would otherwise be unable to get at. This group may prove very useful as a case study to Smartplace to disprove (or otherwise) the idea that ICT is only of value to younger citizens.
- 7.6. Access point in the Young people's drop in centre in the town centre which will enable young people to access ICT.

Achievement Against Objectives & Deliverables

8. eCalne now consists of 2 drop in centres, Coleman's Farm Community Centre and The Youth Drop in Centre, with a 3rd centre based in James House a residential home for the elderly. Each comprises 2 PC's with printer and free Broadband access to the internet.
9. Two part time facilitators are now employed, to carry out one on one taster sessions, and hold short courses.
10. The project has produced excellent publicity for the Smartplace Programme, and has provided the programme with a collection of case studies.
11. The partnership with Westlea Housing Association has proved most beneficial, as Westlea have provided the technical support for the ICT, and have been responsible for recruitment of the Facilitator, and volunteers.
12. The Colemans Farm Community Centre has been refurbished, and is renting its rooms and facilities, to other local voluntary groups.

Conclusions

13. The Project suffered delays due to planning permission problems with the Colemans Farm Community Centre, but otherwise the Project has exceeded all the Project outcomes.
14. An excellent partnership with Westlea Housing Association is the basis to the projects success.
15. Project has built in sustainability due to Westleas commitment to community capacity building.
16. £11k has been fund through small lotteries fund, and the Extended Schools Project.
17. A further £5k is secured in rent payments to the Colemans Farm Community Centre.
18. New innovative projects arriving, a young girls club, is organising classes with the older ladies from James House, helping to bridge the generation gap.
19. 2 Volunteers have been trained to help with ongoing technical problems.

Recommendations

20. A more efficient way of processing CRB checks would prevent the loss of volunteers.
21. The overall success of the eCalne Project and the ongoing demand for one on one taster sessions, the continual recruitment of willing volunteers and ICT courses demonstrates that there is an overwhelming demand for Facilitator led ICT and e learning in the Calne community.
22. Access to Free Broadband and ICT facilities, is essential to helping bridge the digital divide and enhance social inclusion in this rural area of Wiltshire.

23. 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 Calne community.