

## Press Release

### Funding Fair Success

Over 60 rural businesses or community groups looking for grants to support their ideas attended a funding fair at Escot House this week.

The evening was organised by “Making it Local” in order to help projects find funding within the East Devon and Blackdown Hills Areas of Outstanding Beauty. Making it Local is intended to strengthen the rural economy in the area by supporting small businesses, helping communities make the most of their assets and using the environment to increase rural income. It is a locally managed grants scheme hosted by Devon County Council and incorporating funding from the EU, Defra and Leader.

People attending the evening appreciated the chance to hear about grants and loans and talk through their projects.

Paula Collingwood from Colyford Memorial Hall Trust said “We are really pleased we can get advice from Making it Local on how to apply to a variety of different funds and hope to learn from others who have run projects like this before.”

Kate Howell “Making it Local have been really helpful in giving me advice and a positive view of my business idea. It is really useful to be notified about funding or courses in the area and to connect into local networks.”

The funders attending all found the evening useful, introducing them to projects that might apply and giving them the chance to pass on advice on making a good application.

Paul Diviani, Chairman of Making it Local, said “We feel very strongly that people working hard to improve their communities – often as volunteers - and small businesses who are the backbone of our rural economy, need this kind of support. The event has been so successful that we plan to run another in the spring.”

People can register their interest for a future event or even get involved by joining the stakeholders group which guides priorities for future bids for European rural funding by getting in touch with the Making it Local team at [makingitlocal@devon.gov.uk](mailto:makingitlocal@devon.gov.uk) or phoning them on 01823 680626.

Press Release Ends