

RURAL NEWS DIGEST #9

April 2010

Welcome to the latest Leicestershire Rural Partnership Rural News Digest.

National

- **Rural Prospects: A Report on the Future of Rural Development in the UK (Centre for Rural Economy, Newcastle University)**

The CRE has published a significant new report outlining 5 key rural issues including, rural economies, rural communities, housing, broadband and an ageing rural population. The full report, including analysis and policy commentary can be found at <http://www.ncl.ac.uk/cre/publish/otherpublications/Prospects%20final.pdf>.

- **A New Age of Agriculture – Our Agenda for British Farming (Conservative party)**

The Conservatives have published 'A New Age of Agriculture - Our Agenda for British farming'. This new policy paper contains a set of policies that aim to foster a more productive, sustainable and competitive farming industry. The paper has five key aims: to enable increased production whilst protecting the environment, to promote fair competition, to reduce the burden of regulation, to further reform the Common Agricultural Policy, and to take action on animal disease.

The paper also sets out pledges to:

- Commission within the first three months of taking office an industry-led review of all existing regulations with a view to reducing burdens without compromising standards.
- Introduce legislation on country of origin labelling if a comprehensive voluntary agreement cannot be reached.
- Ensure that all food served in Government departments meets British standards of production, wherever this can be delivered without increasing overall costs.

http://www.conservatives.com/News/News_stories/2010/02/A_New_Age_of_Agriculture.aspx

- **Economic Well-Being: Understanding Economic Well-Being & Economic Well-Being – Guidance for Local Authorities (Commission for Rural Communities)**

The CRC are encouraging decision makers to explore and adopt a perspective on economic well-being for rural areas that is wider than traditional economic policies which focus on GDP-led economic growth. They believe that a wider measure or index of economic well-being should lead to a more balanced approach to economic growth that can deliver a broader range of positive impacts.

The CRC has recently produced two publications, *Understanding Economic Well-Being* and *Economic Well-Being – Guidance for Local Authorities* which they hope will encourage local communities and local government to include economic well-being as an objective in their work. These publications are based on research carried out for CRC in 2009 by consultants Globe Regeneration and Rural Innovation which is summarised in their report *Promoting Sustainable Economic Well-Being - Spreading Good Practice* – which can be accessed via the link below.

Understanding Economic Well-Being explains economic well-being and its relevance to communities, public policy makers and service delivery organisations. It also describes 13 good practice economic well-being case studies which help to illuminate the concept of economic well-being at a local level.

Economic Well-Being - Guidance for Local Authorities provides guidance to local authorities interested in promoting economic well-being. It explains the relevance of economic well-being to their work including its links to their statutory roles.

<http://www.ruralcommunities.gov.uk/projects/economicwellbeing/overview>

- **Future Challenges for the CAP (Dr C.P. Veerman)**

In a presentation to the Oxford Farming Conference, Dr Cees Veerman put forward his views on the future of the Common Agricultural Policy (CAP). Future EU policies would need to give due attention to global challenges such as climate change and energy supply, the environmental impact of a significant increase in world population, increased globalisation and liberalisation, and increased focus on the quality of human and animal life.

Veerman argued that the CAP system developed in response to the needs of the 1960's is no longer fit for purpose and that support for farmers should be decoupled from production. He proposed that the role of government 'should be restricted to support knowledge development and dissemination and support entrepreneurship with education and research and to create a favourable business climate for entrepreneurs and innovative developments.'

http://www.ofc.org.uk/images/stories/File/Veerman%202010_Future%20Challenges%20for%200CAP.pdf

- **An assessment and practical guidance on Next Generation Access (NGA) risk in the UK: Final report (CLG)**

This study identifies the areas that are likely to be left behind in the initial wave of market-led next generation broadband. It takes a forward look at the level of provision likely to be in place in 2012, 2015 and 2017 under different scenarios. The report will help to inform public authorities looking to invest in next generation broadband and will be considered by Broadband Delivery UK which has been charged with responsibility for overseeing the investment of the Next Generation Fund [which is intended to ensure high-speed broadband for 90% of households by 2017].

<http://www.communities.gov.uk/publications/communities/assessmentngafinalreport>

- **Planning Policy Statement 4: Planning for Sustainable Economic Growth (CLG)**

PPS4 sets out the Government's comprehensive policy framework for planning for sustainable economic development in urban and rural areas. Of particular relevance to rural areas are policies EC6: Planning for Economic Development in Rural Areas, EC7: Planning for Tourism in Rural Areas, EC12: Determining Planning Applications for Economic Development in Rural Areas and EC13: Determining Planning Applications Affecting Shops and Services in Local Centres and Villages. Whilst it is clearly stated within PPS4 that the intrinsic character of the countryside has to be protected, it is clear that local planning authorities also need to adopt a proactive role with regards to supporting suitable applications that enable the economy to develop in rural areas.

<http://www.communities.gov.uk/publications/planningandbuilding/planningpolicystatement4>

- **The Village Hub – Community Access and Information Points (West Devon Borough Council/Torrige Borough Council/South Hams District Council)**

In 2009, South Hams District Council, West Devon Borough Council and Torridge District Council undertook a project to look at how ICT could be used to deliver services in small villages across these three areas. The research was undertaken by Rose Regeneration. This incorporated a review of good and less good practice about how ICT has been used to provide public services elsewhere, and consideration of the practical challenges of delivering ICT at the 100-1000 population level. There are three documents available to download: a newsletter which gives a project summary, a toolkit which gives practical guidance on using technology to deliver public services in rural areas, and a report to the councils concerned which looked at the costs and benefits of introducing ICT to deliver public services in small villages.

<http://www.westdevon.gov.uk/doc.asp?doc=16973&cat=2905>

- **Pesticides and Farmland Birds (The Voluntary Initiative)**

The Voluntary Initiative seeks to minimise the environmental impacts of pesticides. This particular publication advocates steps that can be taken by farmers to reduce the effects of pesticides on birds and how to help to create and/or maintain wildlife habitats on farms. Four easy steps are set out within the document:

- Integrated farm management
- Responsible pesticide use
- Providing field margin habitats
- Offering in-field options

http://www.voluntaryinitiative.org.uk/Attachments/Resources/1284_S4.pdf

- **Community Infrastructure Levy: An Overview (CLG)**

This document provides an overview of the Community Infrastructure Levy (CIL), a new planning charge that will come into force on 6 April 2010 through the Community Infrastructure Levy Regulations 2010. It explains the key features of the new charge, its rationale, purpose and how it will work in practice. The document is designed to inform all those who have an interest in the levy and who might be involved in its operation. The Government will also issue guidance on specific aspects of establishing and running a CIL regime.

Local authorities in England and Wales will be empowered, but not required, to levy on most types of new development in their areas. The proceeds of the levy will provide new local and sub-regional infrastructure to support the development of an area in line with local authorities' development plans.

<http://www.communities.gov.uk/publications/planningandbuilding/communityinfrastructurelevy>

- **Green Belts: A Greener Future (Natural England & CPRE)**

This joint report by Natural England and CPRE is a major survey of the environmental state of Green Belt land and the benefits it provides for people and wildlife. Green Belt covers 13% of the land surface of England and 30m people live in or next to Green Belts. The report confirms that Green Belt policy has been highly effective in achieving what it was intended to do despite considerable development pressures in the last half century. The countryside round, and between, the towns and cities protected by Green Belt has remained largely undeveloped, certainly compared to areas without Green Belt or other equivalent planning controls in place.

The report emphasises the need for multi-functional use of land, particularly in the face of climate change and population growth. Green Belt is already making a contribution which could have even a greater significance in the future if it is managed effectively to maximise the benefits that a natural environment can deliver. A multifunctional approach is advocated – including production of local food, educational visits, access for recreation and provision of sustainable energy – and the need for such activities to be integrated across as much of the Green Belt as possible. The full report and summary can be located at:

<http://naturalengland.etraderstores.com/NaturalEnglandShop/ne196>

- **Post Office Closures were Flawed (Consumer Focus)**

This report highlights flaws in the consultation process around the Post Office closure programme. The consumer champion, Consumer Focus, argue that lessons must be learnt by providers of essential local services for the future. An unprecedented number of people – around 2.7 million – tried to air their views about the closure programme through writing to their local MP, taking part in newspaper campaigns or other means. However, Post Office Ltd failed to effectively engage consumers in shaping change to the network, with only around one in 13 directly contributing to the formal decision-making process to close local Post Offices. As a result Post Office Ltd missed opportunities to obtain valuable local knowledge of how cutbacks would affect communities, and many consumers were left feeling that the consultation process was a sham.

The research reveals that consumers thought Post Office Limited communicated information about the closure programme consultation poorly, rating its communications 4.2 out of 10 on average. Less than 20% of consumers were aware that the closure proposals were subject to a consultation to which they could respond. The poor communications, combined with the short six-week consultation period which gave little time to respond, made it difficult for consumers to engage effectively. The vast majority of consumers instead took part in local activities such as petitions, which proved far less effective in influencing the final decision on closures than a formal response.

<http://www.consumerfocus.org.uk/news/learn-lessons-from-post-office-closure-programme-and-put-consumers-at-heart-of-changes-to-public-services-urges-watchdog>

- **Food 2030 (Defra)**

Food 2030 is a national food strategy that has been developed across government. It aims to give direction and coherence to food policy not only within Whitehall and its agencies but also across the private and voluntary sectors. The strategy was developed in partnership with the food and farming industries as well as consumer groups, the third sector and international organisations. The long term sustainability of the food system is the central concern for Food 2030. A plentiful supply of healthy, safe and affordable food is essential for a good quality of life, and the ability to produce this food depends on the way we manage and maintain the natural systems that provide the essential inputs and services for our farms and fish stocks; clean water, fertile soil and pest control are all provided for free by healthy ecosystems.

Food 2030 addresses sustainable development through its stated priorities, including:

- Enabling and encouraging people to eat a healthy, sustainable diet
- Ensuring a resilient, profitable and competitive food system
- Increasing food production sustainably
- Reducing the food system's greenhouse gas emissions

<http://www.defra.gov.uk/foodfarm/food/strategy/index.htm>

- **Consultation on taking forward the establishment of a body to monitor and enforce compliance with the groceries supply code of practice (BIS)**

In August 2009, the Competition Commission recommended that Government took the steps necessary to establish an effective body to monitor and enforce compliance with the groceries supply code of practice (GSCOP) and give it the power to levy penalties on retailers for non compliance with the GSCOP. The consultation will run until 30th April 2010 and is seeking views on the following:

- What powers the body monitoring and enforcing compliance with the GSCOP should have, in addition to the body being able to hear anonymous complaints.
- Access to the body.
- Who the monitoring and enforcement body could be, including some possible options.
- Should a sanctions regime be introduced and how might it operate alongside any appeals mechanism.
- The funding of the body monitoring and enforcing compliance with the GSCOP.
- This consultation is relevant to large grocery retailers with an annual turnover of £1 billion in the UK and those businesses that supply large retailers with grocery produce either directly or through intermediaries. Trade associations and other non Government organisations may also have an interest.

<http://www.bis.gov.uk/Consultations/establishment-of-a-body-to-monitor-and-enforce-compliance-with-the-groceries-supply-code-of-practice>

- **Land Use Futures: Making the Most of the Land in the 21st Century (Foresight)**

Foresight, a Government think-tank, has published its final report on the future of land use. Looking ahead 50 years, the report concludes that a new approach to managing the UK's land is needed to meet future challenges.

The report outlines that land is a versatile national asset, playing an important role in people's physical and mental wellbeing as well as supporting prosperity. However several factors will increase pressure on land, including:

- Climate change and a growing population with more people living alone
- New demands as incomes rise in the future – more space for living and better transport.

Decisions will be needed on crucial issues such as:

- How to balance local and national interests
- The appropriate mix of incentives and regulation to guide future land use change.

Over the next 8 months, Foresight will work with departments and stakeholders to work out detailed proposals for moving forward.

<http://www.bis.gov.uk/news/features/2010/2/making-the-most-of-land-in-the-21st-century>

- **State of the Countryside Update: Housing Demand and Supply (Commission for Rural Communities)**

This report highlights that between 2006 and 2031 demand for new housing as a result of projected household change will grow at a greater rate in rural districts than in urban districts. Urban districts will grow by 27% whilst rural districts will grow by 35%. The CRC believe that rural communities should be at the heart of community led planning that meets their local needs. They consider that growth, if well-managed, will foster more viable local services, more affordable and well designed housing, and appropriate economic development.

<http://www.ruralcommunities.gov.uk/events/stateofthecountrysideupdatehousingdemandandsupply>

- **Towards a New Professionalism: the Skills Strategy for Agriculture and Horticulture (AgriSkills Forum)**

This strategy seeks to ensure that industries that lie at the heart of the UK's agriculture and horticulture production deliver a skilled workforce capable of delivering increased food production and tackling environmental challenges. The strategy is the first to be developed by industry for industry. It portrays a profession of highly skilled and technically knowledgeable

farmers and growers in a priority industry that seeks to be fully valued and seen as an attractive career of choice. The key Forum organisations responsible for developing the strategy were Lantra, the Sector Skills Council for the environmental and land-based industries, National Farmers Union, Agriculture and Horticulture Development Board, Landex, and the National Federation of Young Farmers' Clubs.

<http://www.agriskillsforum.co.uk/>

- **Rural Advocate Report 2010 (Commission for Rural Communities)**

This report highlights the Rural Advocate's concern that the long-term future of the countryside is in jeopardy because so many young people are being forced out of rural areas to find homes, jobs and support. Recommendations are put forward on the key issues, these being lack of affordable housing, poor access to employment and skills training, inadequate public transport and poor communications (broadband and mobile phone coverage).

<http://www.ruralcommunities.gov.uk/events/ruraladvocatereport2010launched>

- **Government Response to the Matthew Taylor Review: Updated Implementation (CLG)**

This updated plan sets out how the Government is taking forward and implementing recommendations from the *Taylor Review of Rural Economy and Affordable Housing*.

<http://www.communities.gov.uk/publications/planningandbuilding/taylorimplementationplanupdate>

- **Business Link launches online service to support the farming community**

Business Link has recently launched a [new online service to support the farming community](#). It includes links to:

- Running a business - information on managing employees, business planning, start ups, diversification, sales and marketing along with health and safety
- Funding and grants
- Protecting the environment - stewardship schemes, wildlife, managing waste and land conservation
- Livestock - animal welfare and disease control
- Crops and horticulture - production and plant health
- Organic systems and standards

- **Practical help served up for struggling pubs**

Pubs Minister John Healey has announced a 12 point action plan to give practical support to community pubs up and down the country, backed by £4million in government funding. New help will include £3.3million for business support to make pubs more successful and help communities buy into struggling pubs to keep them running. Business support is also in place for struggling membership clubs, "beer ties" will be slashed, and a consultation is underway on proposals to cut the requirement for music licences in certain venues.

Councils will also be given new powers through the planning system to intervene before a pub is demolished, giving a pause in the system for the local community to have their say. Restrictions on sales which prevent premises continuing as pubs will be also banned. The planning laws will allow pubs to branch out their business without planning permission into new commercial ventures, ranging from restaurants to gift shops and books shops, without the additional expense and time of seeking approval from the council.

The measures will give landlords the opportunity to have direct access to specialist, tailored business advice through 'Pub is the Hub', currently a voluntary support service for community pubs. Government funding of more than £1million will ensure that the group act as a specialist first-stop shop for advice on business support and diversification. Pub is the Hub will act as a gateway to advice, supporting pubs directly or passing them on to the most appropriate service such as Business Link.

In Leicestershire this support could be combined with our Vibrant Villages scheme through either our [retail support grant](#) or the [community spaces grant](#) For further information about Vibrant Villages please e-mail:fiona.walker@leics.gov.uk
<http://www.communities.gov.uk/news/corporate/1511255>

- **Provisional Estimates of Farm Incomes in the United Kingdom 2009 (Defra)**

The report shows provisional estimates of Total Income from Farming (TIFF) for 2009 and Farm Business Income (FBI) for 2009/10. The two measures differ in their composition and intended uses. TIFF, which shows the performance of the whole of agricultural industry, fell by 6.2% in real terms in 2009. FBI compares performance across different types of farming and represents return on labour and capital invested in farm businesses. FBI is forecast to increase in 2009/10 on specialist pig, specialist poultry, LFA and lowland grazing livestock and mixed farms. This reflects firmer prices for finished and store livestock combined with lower input costs. However, incomes on specialist cereal and general cropping farms are expected to fall as a reduced cropping area combined with lower average yields and prices led to a lower crop output. This drop in output was only partially offset by a fall in costs.

A seminar will be held in Peterborough on 30 June 2010 to discuss prospects for the farming industry. To register your interest, contact Amanda Mitchell at Amanda.Mitchell@defra.gsi.gov.uk or on 01904 455059.

<http://www.defra.gov.uk/evidence/statistics/foodfarm/farmmanage/farmincome/documents/account.pdf>

- **Britain's Waterways in the Third Sector (British Waterways)**

Following British Waterways '[Twenty Twenty Debate](#)', the Chancellor of the Exchequer included plans within his March 2010 Budget for British Waterways' 2,200 mile, 200 year old waterway network to be moved out of direct state control and into a new third sector trust organisation.

A report from last year entitled '[Setting a new course: Britain's waterways in the third sector](#)' set out some of the opportunities that mutualisation would offer.

<http://www.britishwaterways.co.uk/newsroom/all-press-releases/display/id/2673>

Creative Rural Communities: Rural Cultural Strategy Initiative (Rural Cultural Forum)

This report indicates that rural communities and artists in England and the United Kingdom are making a very significant contribution to the nation's creative economy. This contribution is conservatively estimated to be around £500 million p.a., comparable in relative terms to that generated to the national economy by the urban creative industries and the urban arts and cultural sector.

The main strategic aims and objectives of the rural cultural strategy are:

- to promote cultural equity for rural communities, and ensure fairer provision of future arts funding and cultural investment for regeneration programmes in rural areas.
- to encourage a wider role for the professional arts, media and design sector (urban and rural) in support of rural economic regeneration, social inclusion, and environmental sustainability initiatives in the countryside.
- to develop a five year cultural investment strategy for rural communities that will sustain the social and economic benefits of arts and culture-led regeneration programmes in rural areas.
- to work closely with DCMS, DEFRA, Arts Council England and the Commission for Rural Communities to ensure that future arts and culture-led rural regeneration initiatives address key Government policies promoting the creative economy (DCMS); access to great art for everyone (ACE); sustainable rural communities (CRC); and economic and environmental sustainability (DEFRA).

<http://www.ruralculture.org.uk/campaigns/strategy/>
<http://www.ruralculture.org.uk/projects/>

- **Rural Insights – Residents Survey 2009 (commission for Rural Communities)**

This is a comprehensive survey by Ipsos MORI of the perceptions and priorities of rural people, across the different types of rural settlements – in towns, villages, hamlets and across sparse and less sparse areas of England. Public transport is seen as the highest priority for improving quality of life by those in rural areas and especially those in sparse areas. Housing, job prospects and the state of economy feature strongly among priorities for the future.

<http://www.ruralcommunities.gov.uk/projects/ruralinsightsdeliveryproject/overview>

Regional

- **EMRAF Framework (East Midlands Rural Affairs Forum)**

The Rural Action Plan takes into account of recent economic changes and focuses on four new priorities areas:

- Sustainable and Inclusive Communities (Including Housing)
- A Thriving Rural Economy
- Quality Services Accessible to All
- High Quality Rural Environment

An electronic copy can be downloaded at www.ruralaffairs.org.uk/uploads/plan/Framework.pdf
Please contact Lynn Hage, EMRAF Communications Officer, on 01623 727600 if you would like a hard copy of the document.

- **BLIMP: Broadband Line Information Monitoring Project (emda)**

East Midlands Development Agency (emda) is promoting the Broadband Line information Monitoring Project (BLIMP) which measures broadband speeds that are being achieved in the real world. A full spread of participants by location and type of user will generate a better understanding of how broadband connectivity affects communities across the region and where to target interventions.

If you register on the [BLIMP website](#), you will be able to download a programme which automatically measures the speed of your broadband. From this, emda can create an up-to-date, self-maintaining atlas of Internet connectivity. You can uninstall the tool at any time, it

does not collect any personal information and should not significantly impact upon the performance of either your computer or the speed of your broadband connection.

- **Unlocking the Potential of the Creative and Cultural Sector: A Meta Review of the Evidence Base (emda)**

In October 2009, emda commissioned Experian to synthesise existing research and data on the creative and cultural sector in the East Midlands. This work aimed to draw out the key trends and issues for the region and identify and prioritise gaps in the evidence base, providing best practice examples from elsewhere to demonstrate how the gaps can be filled.

This Meta Review has brought together the disparate evidence base on the sector at the regional level, to consider the components, activities, role and future of the creative and cultural sector. It has highlighted that there is a great deal of research into this sector at the national and regional level, but there remain important gaps in the evidence base.

Experian established a working statistical definition to underpin their analysis of the creative and cultural sector. Using this definition it was found that creative and cultural industries are a significant employer in the East Midlands, with over 16,000 businesses employing over 150,000 people. However, with the exception of sport, the creative and cultural industries are underrepresented in the region. The report identifies that the forthcoming (Integrated) Regional Strategy for the East Midlands provides an opportunity to re-evaluate the role the creative and cultural sector plays from both an economic and wider perspective and to ensure that the sector is appropriately reflected in this key regional document.

<http://www.ruralaffairs.org.uk/uploads/news/emdafinalreport.pdf>

- **New Regional Director for Rural Community Action East Midlands**

Julie Bowers will be joining the EMRAF staff team of Patrick Shore and Lynn Hage from the beginning of April 2010, as the new Regional Director for Rural Community Action East Midlands. Julie will be responsible for the Co-ordination of EMRAF and will be contactable on 01623 727600 or by e-mail to jbowers@rcan.org.uk

- **Rural Development Initiatives launch training project**

Rural Development Initiatives Ltd have received approval for a two year programme of forestry and woodland training courses and grant aid for farmers, foresters and land based businesses in the East Midlands. As part of the Lantra administered Landskills East Midlands, Forestry Skills East Midlands is funded through the Rural Development Programme for England by emda and Defra. The programme will cover a wide range of business and technical skills including machine operations, woodfuel, silviculture, pest control and marketing. Training is demand led, so if business identify a need for other skills the project will seek to source appropriate training. In addition there is a fund for technical training which can pay up to 70% of the cost of technical courses such as forest machine operator certification. RDI will work with local training providers in the region to ensure delivery of training at a time and place to suit the business. For more information contact Project Officer, Carrick Armer on 01765 609355 or e-mail carick.armer@ruraldevelopment.org.uk

Leicestershire

- **Inspire Leicestershire Grant Programme**

Building on the success of the Rural Business Support Programme 2006-9 and the Market Towns Initiative, the Leicestershire Rural Partnership has successfully secured further funding

to support businesses within rural Leicestershire. Aligned to the Leicestershire Rural Economic Priorities 2009-12, the Leicestershire Rural Partnership has established 4 grant schemes which business can apply to for funding support. These are the shop front improvement grant, workspace development grant, rural visitor grants and equestrian development grant. All grant schemes will provide up to a maximum of 50% of total project costs. Full details about the grant schemes available through INSPIRE Leicestershire are available at www.oakleaves.org.uk/inspire For more information about funding available through the Leicestershire Rural Partnership please contact either Tom Fisher 0116 3058098 tom.fisher@leics.gov.uk (from 26th April 2010), Fiona Walker on 0116 3055673 (before 26th April 2010) or Louise Driver on 0116 305 7973 louise.driver@leics.gov.uk.

Events

- **EMRAF Annual Conference – Bookings now being taken**

The 9th EMRAF annual conference “Rural People Shaping Rural Communities” will be held on Friday 2nd July 2010 at Eastwood Hall, Eastwood, Nottinghamshire. Come along to this free conference and explore the benefits of Community Empowerment:

- Hear why community empowerment is important
- Learn how others have made a difference
- Explore how community empowerment could help you
- Get involved in delivering the East Midlands Rural Framework

Once again organisations will be invited to attend the ever popular Market Place. Stalls will be limited so book early to be guaranteed a place. For delegate booking forms and market place booking forms please contact the Conference organisers Rural Community Action Nottinghamshire on 01623 727600 and ask for Pam Baker or Melanie Saxton. Alternatively you can email pbaker@rcan.org.uk or msaxton@rcan.org.uk

- **Food and Drink: A World of Opportunities (EMITA)**

East Midlands International Trade Association (EMITA) is hosting a seminar on Wednesday 21 April 2010 to explore the export potential of food and drink from the region and to unwrap the opportunities this sector holds for East Midlands businesses wishing to export for the first time or to develop into new markets.

The event is taking place at The Olde Barn Hotel, Marston, Nr Grantham and will commence with registration and light refreshments from 5.00 pm. The presentations will begin at 5.30 pm and the evening will draw to a close at 7.30 pm followed by a networking buffet which will showcase produce and specialities from the region. To reserve a place please contact Elizabeth Robinson of EMITA – elizabethrobinson.emita@emd.org.uk A charge is payable for non-members of EMITA.

<http://www.emda.org.uk/events/date.asp?date=21/04/2010>

[http://www.emita.org.uk/Events/Food and Drink A World of Opportunities /](http://www.emita.org.uk/Events/Food%20and%20Drink%20A%20World%20of%20Opportunities/)

- **Making Local Food Work for People and Planet (Making Local Food Work)**

This is a national conference for all those interested in community food enterprises. It is being held on 5th May 2010 at the Friends Meeting House in Manchester. This event will explore how community food enterprises benefit both people and planet. Community food enterprises come in many different forms from farmers’ markets to community-owned shops and Community Supported Agriculture enterprises. The event is the third in a series of conferences hosted by Making Local Food Work, a Big Lottery funded programme which helps people take ownership of their food and where it comes from.

The event will explore:

- How community food enterprises can reduce the impact of food on the environment.
- How people can take ownership of their food and where it comes from.
- How community food enterprises can provide a fair deal for producers and consumers.

<http://www.makinglocalfoodwork.co.uk/news/news.cfm/newsid/137>

Next issue of the Digest will be out in **May 2010**.....best wishes until then.

If, in the meantime, you notice anything worth sharing please let me know.

Matthew Kempson (matthew.kempson@leics.gov.uk, 0116 305 6179) www.oakleaves.org.uk.

Interested in keeping up to date on issues affecting rural Leicestershire?

**Please register with the Leicestershire Rural Partnership to receive updates at
www.oakleaves.org.uk/register.html**