

## Tried and Tested Routes to Successful Grant Applications and Diversification Projects

### Business Skills Training: Register NOW on the number below

Business Training is available at Oaklands, North Herts College and Hertford Regional College. Informal, friendly small classes are available to help you put together a business plan, the focus of any new or expanding business initiative, with additional guidance to help you implement your business ideas. Business Skills Training is available to farmers and all rural businesses.

### Key Steps to writing a grant application at Smallford Campus on 10 December 2002 from 4.30 pm - 6.30 pm

This short training session is designed to assist with understanding the requirements of completing a grant application together with the fund holder's criteria.

### A Village Shop success story in Partnership with the AGRE Project and the Countryside Agency

Rob and Linda Thurlow's village post office and newsagents was inconveniently situated in a village high street on a bend which was easily missed, with no parking and away from the village's general grocery store and passing trade.

The layout of the shop did not enable Rob & Linda to promote the stock to its best advantage. The serving space behind the counter was so small it was very unsatisfactory and a major problem serving their customers. Together with the Post Office computer system Linda readily admitted the situation behind the counter was all too cosy and inefficient.

### Need to know more?

To find out how you can benefit from a Countryside Agency Vital Village Community Services Grant and help your village or business thrive, our next rural business network seminar will be held at Woolmer Green Village Hall on 12 December 2002 from 6.30 pm - 8.30 pm.

### AGRE Business Support Services Used

Rob and Linda attended AGRE Computer training at Hertford Regional College to help them to adapt to the post office's new computer system and improve their IT Skills. Rob had heard about the Vital Villages Grants Scheme and both Linda and Rob attended an AGRE Rural Business Network Seminar on the Countryside Agency's Vital Villages Grant Scheme. Not convinced this grant would really help, it was only with the encouragement of Cllr. Nigel Poulton that Rob and Linda decided to go for it and apply for the Countryside Agency Vital Villages Community Grant. The result was 50% grant, which enabled Rob and Linda to move the shop across the road into new high street premises.

### New Beginnings

The grant enabled Rob and Linda to move their shop to a prime high street position adjacent to the village grocery store and provide a much more convenient service to their existing customers. The new shop was clearly visible to passing traffic and they were able to increase their sales area by 45%. This meant the business could introduced more services to help increase profitability. The Post Office has two spacious sales points with up to date modern equipment to speed up the process and provide a more efficient service to their customers. Rob said, "Without the grant and the AGRE project we would never have made it." I would recommend all village shops to talk to the AGRE project and go along to the Seminars to find out how the project can help your business.

Please do not hesitate to contact any member of the **AGRE Team** on  
**01279 655261**

who will be pleased to help with your enquiries and look forward to working with you.

Partners:





# AGRE

November 2002

# newsletter

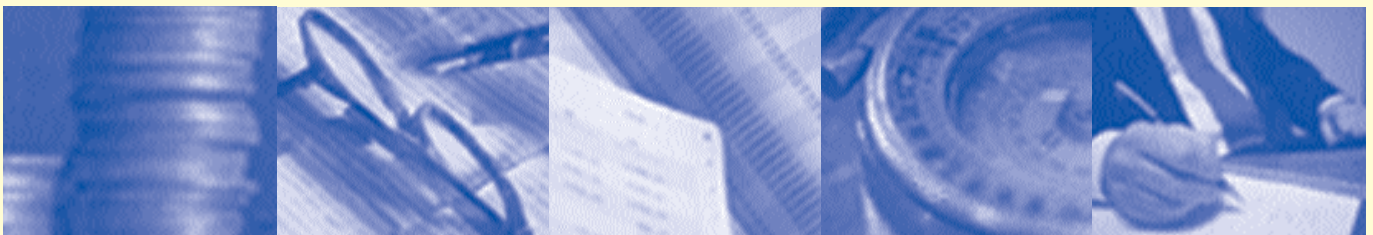


## **Welcome to our November 'GRANTS' Edition of the AGRE Newsletter and East Hertfordshire4Business, the new business support funding Website.**

Did you know that only seven per cent of small businesses currently take advantage of grants that are available? There are more than 1,500 schemes available at national, regional and local level in the UK worth over £5bn a year. We know that many small businesses are deterred by lack of time to find out what grants are available and hundreds of millions of pounds in potential grant funding goes unclaimed every year.

AGRE and East Herts District Council now help businesses in the District to quickly find out what grants are available through their East Hertfordshire 4 Business Website [www.open4business.info/easthertfordshire](http://www.open4business.info/easthertfordshire) - Open4business is provided by [j4b.co.uk](http://j4b.co.uk) which enlightens UK businesses about grant availability.

### **GRANTS AVAILABLE FOR BUSINESSES IN EAST HERTFORDSHIRE**



**Awards**

**Funding**

**Grants**

**Local Schemes**

**Loans**

**This Website ...** will tell you, exactly what is a grant, what a grant pays for and how you find out what is eligible. Information is available on GRANTS, SOFT LOANS, AWARDS AND LOCAL SUPPORT. More information on all East Herts District Council Grants is just a quick click away on the East Herts logo



### **No Access to the Internet?**

Do not be deterred if you do not have access to the Internet. The AGRE Team are available to help you with your enquires and EHDC funding Officer, Darren Barker, is live at the end of a telephone! Darren is available to give advice and visit you on site, or talk to groups regarding funding opportunities, not only from East Herts District Council but also from other funding sources. Claire Pullen, EHDC, Corporate Grants Officer, will also give general information on District Council Grants and other support available to the voluntary and community sector.