



PRESS RELEASE

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Store is the Core – a new programme to support rural retailers in the South West

Store is the Core a new advisory programme supporting village retailers across the South West is inviting retailers to sign up for one-to-one advice and training from specialist retail advisers and mentors. The programme aims to support 150 village shops over the next 18 months and follows a highly successful pilot which ran during 2008.

Ken Parsons, Chief Executive of the RSA, said, "The RSA is delighted to be a partner in the consortium supporting this excellent project, working with the rural community councils of the South West and their representative body, SWAN. We very much hope that eligible retailers will take advantage of this opportunity. We believe that this scheme can help ensure access to vital services and maintain a vibrant and sustainable future for our rural communities. The support provided by Defra and SWRDA to make this scheme happen has been invaluable. Ideally of course we would like to see similar schemes throughout England, where support for rural shops and post offices lags far behind the assistance they receive in both Scotland and Wales".

Store is the Core is managed by Community First (Wiltshire), with funding from the Rural Development Programme for England (RDPE). Community First is part of the national network of Rural Community Councils which support and promotes the work of the voluntary sector in rural communities and market towns. They are a sector leader both locally in Wiltshire and throughout the region in the support of village and community retailing.

Ken Parsons added, "The RSA has worked closely with Wiltshire Community First over a number of years to support rural retailers and we are sure that Tim Coomer and his team will make a significant difference to the businesses supported by this initiative".



Funded by



European Agricultural Fund for Rural Development:
Europe investing in rural areas.



Notes to Editors

The programme is funded By:

The Store is the Core programme is funded by the Rural Development Programme for England (RDPE). RDPE is part financed by the European Agricultural Fund for Rural Development 2007-2013: Europe investing in rural areas. RDPE in the South West is delivered and managed by Defra.

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