



Ruby Ride

“Ride the Ruby Country” newsletter

December 2010 Issue 1

Welcome to the first “Ruby Ride”, newsletter for “Ride the Ruby Country”. My name is Mark Betson and I am the recently appointed Project Coordinator, working for the [Ruby Country Partnership Ltd](#) . I started working on “Ride the Ruby Country” on 1st September and since that time I have been busy setting up the project, meeting people, discussing ideas, creating interest in the project and supporting new business ideas.

My work involves working with communities and businesses in Ruby Country to ensure the most is made of the opportunities arising from the work being carried out by Devon County Council to improve parts of the bridleway network in Ruby Country including the creation of a new multi-use trail linking Cookworthy Forest to the Granite Way just outside Okehampton.

I am actively looking for people to work with and am really interested in hearing from you if you have an existing equestrian business, would like to diversify an existing business to include equestrian and sustainable tourism elements, are setting up a similar business from scratch and need some help, or feel that you should be part of the network of goods and services providers to this tourism sector.

I am keen to talk with local communities about potential enterprises and other ways local people might benefit from “Ride the Ruby Country”.

In short, there are many ways for all kinds of businesses and community interest groups to benefit from “Ride the Ruby Country”. If you would like to discuss ideas, please contact me. It would be good to talk with you and work together.

**Equestrian,
multi-use trail
and sustainable
tourism project
in the heart of
rural Devon.**



News at a gallop

“Ride the Ruby Country” started on 1st September 2010.

Project is currently working with 20 businesses including 4 start-ups all focussing on equestrian or sustainable tourism ideas.

3 training workshops arranged for early 2011, free to project partners and members of the Ruby Country Partnership.

Endurance ride planned for 22nd May 2011.

Facilities to hire at Cookworthy

So, what is “Ride the Ruby Country”?

It is a new approach connecting businesses and local communities to access improvements, in this case the work being carried out by Devon County Council as part of the Equestrian Devon Project, highlighted in the Rights of Way Improvement Plan.

The role of the Project Coordinator includes:

- Working closely with Devon CC to promote the new routes being created and improved and to advise Devon about public opinion for potential new routes and rides
- Informing communities and businesses of the potential of opportunities arising from the new and improved infrastructure
- Motivating and supporting start-up businesses in Ruby Country allied to the project in particular those adjacent to the Pegasus Way and Ruby Way
- Creating and developing all project publicity for the benefit of project partners
- Developing a new website to include business and community information, and downloadable content
- Developing close working relationships with specialist organisations in the fields of equestrian and sustainable tourism, marketing, business development and social enterprise
- Working with local communities to develop ideas based upon interests in the built, cultural and natural environment, developing strategies to encourage tourists to come to Ruby Country as a matter of choice and to linger, explore and sample the distinctive qualities of settlements, countryside and the local produce available.
- Developing and delivering a programme of training workshops and seminars to improve the effectiveness of businesses
- Creating, along with partners a diverse events programme attractive to local people and visitors alike
- Attending other organisations events reaching out to and connecting with many.
- Bringing businesses and communities together for mutual reward ensuring benefits of the project are enjoyed by as many people in Ruby Country as possible.

Most people in Ruby Country could benefit!

The “Equestrian Devon Project” in Ruby Country

The Rights of Way Improvement Plan for Devon highlights the need to improve the bridleway network across the county but particularly in areas with a high density of horse owners, a lack of good routes and where there is potential for the area to become a haven for equestrian tourism.

Luckily this includes Ruby Country and through a successful bid to the “Investing in Devon Fund” £100k was allocated to the development of the bridleway network in this part of Rural Devon.

Part of “Ride the Ruby Country” the Pegasus Way is a multi-use trail being developed between Cookworthy Forest and the Granite Way near Okehampton. This new route will become an attractive proposition for local people and visitors to explore Ruby Country and undertake longer rides to include areas of free riding on Dartmoor or going further afield towards North Devon and Exmoor, Cornwall or perhaps even further.

Connecting routes will also be developed to create more circular “petal” rides, wherever possible avoiding roads and where this is not possible, utilising quiet lanes.

Through the “Equestrian Devon” Project “Ride the Ruby Country” will create c.5 miles of new trails, c.2 miles of enhanced trails, associated way marking, 2 improved main road crossing points and assist with the development of publicity and trail information.

All trails will be accessible by cyclists and walkers too, some trails being suitable for wheel chair and push chair and with a surface accessible to all.

For more information regarding the Rights of Way Improvement Plan for Devon, visit: www.devon.gov.uk/rowip

Supported by Devon County Council



Wanted!

“Ride the Ruby Country” invites you to become a project partner. If you are involved with horses, tourism, or are a supplier of goods and services in Ruby Country please contact the project.

If you have a favourite ride and would like to share it with others please send it in for inclusion in future newsletters and on the project website.

Do you have any digital images of Ruby Country landscapes or habitats, people riding horses, or anything relating to sustainable tourism? Are you able to let “Ride the Ruby Country” use them on posters/newsletter/website etc? If you do and would like to share them, please send them in. All images used will be credited to originator. Sorry, no fee available.

Ideas! Do you have an idea you think the project could pursue, include in a newsletter, have on the website, etc? Contact the Project Coordinator.

Interesting horse related articles, drawing, poems etc for future newsletters and inclusion on the website? Why not share your artistic talent?



What impact will “Ride the Ruby Country” have on the local community?

- New tourism infrastructure
- Increased visitor and community access to the natural, built and cultural environment
- Increased visitor spend within local communities and increased and supported business opportunities
- Greater spread of visits outside of the main tourism season
- Active community involvement in discovery and promotion of community assets
- Increased links and joint working between communities and businesses
- Increased healthy exercise opportunities
- New community enterprise opportunities
- Reduced car usage in visiting and experiencing Ruby Country
- Support for the development of activity-based tourism, targeting high value, high growth markets
- **Helping to make Devon and Ruby Country in particular the “destination of choice” for equestrian holidays**
- Increased business engagement with Ruby Country and a deeper networking relationship.

Contact: Mark Betson, “Ride the Ruby Country” Project Coordinator,
Ruby Country Centre at Cookworthy Forest, Beaworthy, Devon. EX21

Email project@ridetherubycountry.co.uk tel 01409 220009

www.ridetherubycountry.co.uk

Training opportunities

“Ride the Ruby Country” is pleased to announce the following dates in 2011 for business training workshops. These are **free** to all recognised project partners and members of the RubyCountry Partnership. If you are not a partner or a member you may still attend if there are spaces, for a small fee of £15.

Saturday 15th January

Bite Sized Marketing

Saturday 19th February

Finding and securing new customers

Saturday 19th March

Creating a free website for your small business

Workshops are being held at the Ruby Country Centre in Cookworthy Forest and will run from 1pm to 5pm

For a more detailed description of each workshop, please visit www.ridetherubycountry.co.uk

To book onto one of these course, contact the Project Coordinator using one of the methods on page 3 of this newsletter.

News from Ruby Country Partnership

Having taken on the lease for Cookworthy Forest Centre and been successful in renting out some of the office space, Ruby Country Partnership would like to rent out another office space.

Measuring 17 square metres and costing £60 per week with easy-in, easy-out conditions, this office would be the ideal place for a small starter business to benefit from wireless broadband access.

The front meeting room is also available to rent from £40 per part day. Refreshments and/or lunch can be provided if required for an extra charge.

For more information visit www.therubycountry.com

Diary dates

Not much to invite you to at the moment.

Sunday 22nd May 2011

Pleasure Ride starting from Cookworthy Forest, in association with EnduranceGB, SW Riders and BHS. Time and route to be confirmed.



News from around Ruby Country

In October Black Torrington was awarded second prize in the Best Kept Small Village in Devon competition run by CPRE and sponsored by Mole Valley Farmers. Congratulations Black Torrington from “Ride the Ruby Country”.

If you have any news for inclusion in Ruby Ride please send contributions to the Project Coordinator, Mark Betson.

Coming up in Ruby Ride 2

- “Focus On” “Ride the Ruby Country” business partners.
- Competition.
- More news from the project and around Ruby Country.
- Ruby Rides described and illustrated
- Update from Devon County Council
- Remember, if you would like to be involved with “Ride the Ruby Country”, have any comments, contributions, news items, or want to discuss ideas, then contact me.

www.ridetherubycountry.co.uk

“Ride the Ruby Country” is supported by;

