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£5,000 PRIZE MONEY FOR COMMUNITY GROUPS TAKING SMALL GREEN STEPS

Devon charity, Devon Community Foundation is challenging community and voluntary groups across the county to demonstrate the steps they are taking to save energy on a daily basis – and win a share of the £5,000 prize money for their group.

The Small Green Steps Award 2010 is the brainchild of Foundation trustee, Michael Gee, who is offering the prize money. He believes that even small community and voluntary groups can make a valuable contribution when it comes to tackling climate change.

Michael comments, “Very simple measures like switching to low energy light bulbs, turning your thermostat down, cycling to work and recycling waste can all add up to make a huge difference.

“We think community groups are well structured to implement some of these small but vital changes – and to perhaps act as an inspiration to larger organisations in the process!”.

Last year’s winners included Woolfardisworthy sports and community hall, which demonstrated their energy saving through installing a wind turbine, photo voltaic panels, an underground source heat pump and underground cooling for their bar cellar pumps.

Faith and Brian Butler from Woolfardisworthy sports and community hall explained, “We wanted to provide a community centre that was a gift to the next generation rather than a borrowing from their future. Our recent additions meant we were able to cut our electricity costs from £10.99 per day to 38 p.”

Other winners included Clinton Hall in Merton, which also installed photo voltaic panels and North Devon Mental Health Forum, Clarity, Kingsteignton Bowling Club and St Giles on the Heath Community Hall which all implemented a whole range of low key recycling and travel saving initiatives.

Entry to the Small Green Steps Competition is simple, with groups being asked to provide brief information on the small green steps they’ve taken in the areas of saving energy, travelling wisely, saving resources and educating the local community about climate change issues over the last 24 months. Entrants also need to explain how they would use the prize money to implement their next green initiative.

Judges for the competition include Micheal Gee, trustee of Devon Community Foundation, well known environmentalist Professor Ian Mercer, CBE, Kylie Russell from the Environment Agency and the Energy Saving Trust Advice Centre.

Kylie Russell explains, "We hope that The Small Green Steps award will demonstrate that even groups with limited resources and incomes can play a valuable role in tackling climate change by making small but important changes."

Groups who would like to enter should visit www.devoncf.com or call Laura on 01884 235887.

For information on examples of green steps your group can take visit www.justact.org.uk/actions/.

Closing dates for entries is 19th July 2010.

- ends –
- Press enquiries to Sarah Gunn on 01752 509581