



STAR ENERGY Community Fund



Final Report

2010 – 2011 Projects

THE PROJECTS

LINCOLNSHIRE	4
Toilet block at Old Willow Works, Beckingham	4
Nettleham play equipment	6
NOTTINGHAMSHIRE & LEICESTERSHIRE.....	7
Around Rempstone Countryside For All	7
HAMPSHIRE.....	9
Support Our Stars at Weston Corbett & Patrick	9
Play equipment for Horndean Recreation Ground	11
New scout hut for Stockbridge	12
New allotments for Longstock.....	14
SURREY	16
Restoration of Farley Green pond	16
Albury Village Hall enhancement project.....	18
Relateen young people’s counselling service.....	20
Hearing for all at Shere Village Hall.....	21
New surround for Shere Swimming Pool.....	22
Safe surfacing at Shere Village Nursery.....	23
Sports hall conversion at South Godstone	24
WEST SUSSEX	25
New college cricket pitch at Storrington	25

Enhancement of Storrington Pond..... 27

LINCOLNSHIRE

Toilet block at Old Willow Works, Beckingham

Star Energy location: Beckingham

Grant £20,000

The project



An ambitious project to save a crumbling historic gem was given a boost from the Star Energy Community Fund. The Old Willow Works in Beckingham was used between the 1890s and 1940s for basket-making. It is one of the country's last remaining rural craft sites, but two centuries of being in an isolated

location at the mercy of the elements had taken its toll. Three years ago, it was on the verge of demolition. But then a lifeline arrived. A group of enthusiastic villagers launched a campaign to restore the works as a community heritage centre.

Funding for renovation of the main brick-built barn had been secured from the Heritage Lottery Fund, but there was a shortfall. Star Energy stepped in with a grant of £20,000, which was used to convert an old stable block into an environmentally friendly toilet block. The external facility uses rain water capture for flushing.

Outcome

In the spring of this year, the toilet block was finished. The Old Willow Works is now a permanent display for the local archive and a place for education and training events. The project has hit the local headlines by being part of a pioneering scheme to provide employment for eight young local men who had each been out of work for at least six months. They have been turning their hands to building, painting and decorating.

Colin Gibson, Project Co-ordinator, said: "With Star Energy's kind contribution, the toilet block will be a great asset to the whole refurbishment, allowing this precious building to be fully utilised and enjoyed by the local community and visitors."

Nettleham play equipment

Star Energy location: Nettleham

Grant £6,000



The Project

Bill Bailey's Memorial Field in Nettleham is close to a busy road, so the safety of children using the playground was a major concern. The parish council made the decision to enclose the play area and sought help from the Star Energy Community Fund.

With a grant of £6,000, metal bow-topped fencing and a gate were installed, which have not only made the play area

significantly safer for children, but also separated it from the rest of the field on which dogs are allowed to run off the lead.

Outcome

The work was undertaken in the summer of 2010 and the results are now being enjoyed by around 20 children at any one time who use the playground outside of school hours. The area appeals to those from ages three to 16.

Julia Finn, clerk to Nettleham Parish Council said: "The fencing has made a significant difference to the play area, making it a safer and more pleasant environment. It's a delight to see local youngsters enjoying their new improved place to play."

NOTTINGHAMSHIRE & LEICESTERSHIRE

Around Rempstone Countryside For All

Star Energy location: Rempstone

Grant £7,000

The Project



The idea for Manor Farm Environmental Education sprang from a desire amongst local families to learn more about the countryside in Rempstone. Following a survey, which found that eight in ten were interested in more opportunities to get closer to nature, Manor Farm was set up to provide outdoor learning and promote the benefits of outdoor play.

With a £7,000 donation from the Star Energy Community Fund, four large educational events were held at the centre, branded *Around Rempstone Countryside For All*. Admission was free to the activities and displays, ranging from owl handling to a nature trail. Activities such as bug hunting, pond dipping and rural crafts were also provided.

Allied to this, five events have taken place in villages around Rempstone, taking activities such as bat walks, rural crafts and forest activities to the community. All have used local tradesmen where possible.

Outcome

The 12-month project has been a great success. Amongst those who have benefitted is the Harry Carlton family of schools. Sue Lees from the organisation commented: "I would like to thank the Star Energy Community Fund for providing this great opportunity for our families, most of which have never experienced the great outdoors, farms, or creating things from nature, even though they live in a rural area."

A spokesperson for Manor Farm Environmental Education added: "We had a number of ambitions for this project and it is superb to see them realised. Our aims were to minimise the barriers to participating in learning activities, promote family and local community spirit and foster respect and understanding for the natural environment. It has been such an exciting project to be part of, and it wouldn't have happened without Star Energy's grant."

HAMPSHIRE

Support Our Stars at Weston Corbett & Patrick

Star Energy location: Humbly Grove

Grant £12,000

The Project

St Lawrence's Church in Weston Patrick has been described by English Heritage as a 'small scale gem of Victorian Gothic'. Parts date back to the 12th Century, but the existing church was re-built in 1868 to a design by the celebrated Victorian architect, Thomas Henry Wyatt, who lived in the parish and is buried in the churchyard.

Originally, the east wall of the church was highly decorated with tiles and paintwork, and the chancel ceiling was covered with 1,200 small gold stars. By the late 1920s, high Victorian decoration was considered unfashionable and the east wall decoration was painted out and a wooden altar screen built to cover the tile work.

Support our Stars was a project initiated by the church trustees to re-introduce the fine original decorative detail as intended by the architect. It was to involve re-instating the 1,200 stars on the chancel ceiling, removing the altar screen and reintroducing the decorative paintwork on the east wall.

Outcome

After five painstaking weeks of work undertaken by specialist church decorators, the church was returned to its past glory. Once the woodworm-infested wooden screen had been removed, for the first time since 1926, the lower fifth of the stained glass windows was visible. It also exposed fine Victorian tiles on the wall behind the original altar. Paint from corbels on the north and south walls were also successfully removed, unveiling the original decoration, and the stars were stenciled and gilded.

Mem FitzPatrick of the T H Wyatt Trust said: "Over the years, Star Energy and the local residents have worked hard to be good neighbours, and this project has certainly further

enhanced Star Energy's reputation. We are all delighted with the results, which have been widely publicised, bringing many more visitors to the church to enjoy its beautiful interior."

Play equipment for Horndean Recreation Ground

Star Energy location: Horndean

Grant £5,000

The Project



To help keep the younger residents of Horndean fit and healthy, the parish council was keen to install some fitness equipment in the local recreation ground.

The ground, which was otherwise used for playing football, would boast fitness machines that were appropriate for older children, but could also be used by adults.

It was felt that the new equipment would help to address a shortage of facilities for young people in Horndean and would encourage more families to exercise together. It was estimated that between 10,000 and 15,000 people would benefit.

Outcome

During April and September last year, the outdoor fitness equipment was installed along the northerly edge of the recreation ground, which provided a pleasant and sheltered area in which to exercise, and which was also convenient for players and supporters to use when football matches were taking place.

The recreation ground now has a leg press and a chest press, and a further two pieces of equipment have been installed at another play area owned by the parish council.

Horndean parish clerk Tracy Predeth said: "People like to keep fit and this is something different from the normal play equipment. It's good for bringing the community together and it encourages healthy living. We are very grateful to Star Energy for helping us to provide an invaluable health-giving facility for our village."

New scout hut for Stockbridge

Star Energy location: Stockbridge

Grant £10,000

The project

Some 400 people are set to benefit from a new state-of-the-art scout hut in Stockbridge. Dr Rebecca Ferris, chairman of the scout group, explains: "Stockbridge, like many small rural communities, has very limited facilities for young people. The scout group is currently the only regular out-of-school activity for children and young people." The scout group serves Stockbridge and nine surrounding villages. It has nearly 60 scouts, beavers and cubs between the ages of five and 16.

While the old building served the community well, it was time to replace it with a modern, warmer and drier brick-built headquarters. It will feature a meeting hall, storage space, kitchen and community office. There will also be environmentally friendly features such as an air source heat pump.

The cost came to £182,000, which was made up by donations from Star Energy and other organisations and fundraising led by the scouts.

Outcome

The new hut is set for completion in September 2011, and an opening evening and celebration is planned for the following month. It will be accessible to all, including wheelchair users, and will be available to other youth and community groups.

Dr Ferris added: "The project has seen a tremendous amount of support, with assistance coming from all quarters – I'd like to take this opportunity to say thank you."

The plan is to replace the old and rapidly deteriorating hut with a new one providing 131 square metres of flexible hall. Stockbridge has limited facilities for younger people – the scout group is the only out-of-school activity on a weekly basis. Local research highlighted the additional need

for a youth club which would use the new building. With hire opportunities to other community groups, it is estimated a total of 400 people could use the new hut every week.

New allotments for Longstock

Star Energy location: Stockbridge

Grant £2,420

The Project



Many of the 200 households in Longstock do not have the land for growing fruit and vegetables. During 2009, a small group of residents set about providing an allotment site for use by residents. Having identified a suitable 1.5 acre plot, a proposal was put to Longstock Parish Council to lease this land, known as The Glebe, from the Church Commissioners.

The land needed fencing, an entrance gate and the laying on of water. The Star Energy Community Fund stepped in with a donation of £2,420 for these start-up costs.

Outcome

The field has been divided into 12 plots, some of which will be let as half-plots. One plot has been set aside for the village's youth club. Once established, the allotments will be self-funding from rental income.

All of the plots have now been taken up, and another year of fresh fruit and vegetables is eagerly awaited along with the allotment holders' communal shed which the committee is now raising funds for this year. Regular visits to tend the crops means that the site has become one of the social meeting points of the village. The local youth group meets regularly at their plot, learning how to sow seeds, construct creative scarecrows, tend their vegetables and enjoy the delight of harvesting a bumper crop of courgettes. The children were so delighted that many of them entered their produce in the village Flower and Produce Show.

Sue Parish, a member of the Longstock Allotment Association, said: "The provision of allotments will provide a long term benefit for the village residents. It will allow more individuals

and their families to grow their own food; share horticultural expertise; encourage youngsters to learn new skills and provide health benefits from the increased exercise.”

SURREY

Restoration of Farley Green pond

Star Energy location: Albury

Grant: £3,300

The Project



Farley Green Pond in Albury is the last of seven balancing ponds that take water from the local roads. It plays a vital role in helping to avoid the flooding of nearby homes, but its effectiveness has been hampered by the sand and soil that flow in with the water and cause it to silt up.

The parish council asked the advice of a local water management company, and agreed a proposal to clear the pond of all silt, enlarge it and build a silt trap beside it. It was also decided that the pond would be enhanced to create a teardrop shape. A new liner would be installed with suitable protection beneath; it would be topped with previously dug material and sand; and replanted with 'recycled' reeds and rushes to enhance its wildlife value. The silt trap would then be dug out on a regular basis to ensure its effectiveness.

Outcome

With a £3,300 grant from the Star Energy Community Fund, combined with the help of a Rural Enhancement programme, the pond has now been cleaned, enlarged, re-lined and replanted. There were some anxious moments last year when lack of rainfall meant that it remained empty, but the summer rain soon resolved that. The parish council has now made arrangements for regular maintenance to prevent the problem from occurring again.

Joanna Cadman, the Clerk for Albury Parish Council said: "We're so grateful to Star Energy for its generous grant. This year, the pond is well stocked with both plants and wildlife, and is again

the focal point of Farley Green. The pond is an attractive amenity and a valuable dipping resource for school nature trips.”

Albury Village Hall enhancement project

Star Energy location: Albury

Grant: £6,500

The Project



Three years ago, Albury Parish Council embarked on an ambitious plan to enhance the rural environment of the parish. The successful initial phase was to transform the main road through the village by removing self-seeded trees to open up the views, and replacing metal railings with green oak posts.



Attention was then turned to the car park of the village hall and adjacent land alongside the Tillingbourne River. With a £6,500 donation from the Star Energy Community Fund , alongside other donations, the four-step project began to: redecorate the Memorial Library, which is widely used for meetings of up to 16 people; landscape the car par park using concrete

edging and new planting; landscape the adjacent riverbank by clearing undergrowth and providing an attractive seating area; and make a recycling facility less obtrusive.

Outcome

The improvements are now complete and the difference is striking. A new boiler has been installed and the central heating system extended into the newly painted Memorial Library, secondary glazing will now help cut down the heat loss, whilst a new computerised booking system, electronic security and up-graded kitchen facilities will all help with future bookings. The new village hall sign now complements the re-furbished car-park and clearance of the banks of the Tillingbourne.

The village bus stops have also been transformed with a green oak bus shelter (thought to be the first in Surrey), a bench for the comfort of passengers and fence.

“Star Energy’s funding certainly changed our initial ideas into something of real importance and significance,” said Roy Hogben of Albury Parish Council. “The creeping urbanisation that was starting to blight the parish has now been effectively stopped thanks to your financial involvement.”

Relateen young people's counselling service

Star Energy location: Albury

Grant: £2,000

The Project

National charity, Relate, sought Star Energy's help to expand its young people's counselling project to Tillingbourne School in Chilworth. The service, Relateen, is for children and young adults aged 10 to 18 who have been affected by the breakdown of their parents' relationships. The project focused in particular on a satellite service in the Tillingbourne ward of Guildford Borough Council, which covers Albury and surrounding villages.

The service began counselling 10 and 11-year-olds at Tillingbourne Junior in January 2010. It sees three to four clients weekly and has a waiting list. The grant from the Star Energy Community Fund was spent on counsellor pay and training to extend their skills.

Outcome

During the year April 2010 to April 2011, Relateen was able to offer 213 sessions, with an impressive 87 per cent attendance rate. Demand is growing, particularly amongst the harder to reach individual males.

In an anonymous client questionnaire, an 11-year-old girl who attended a session commented: "It was very helpful. The counsellor understood my feelings and she helped a lot... Compared to when I started coming, my house is much happier." Monica Atkins from Relate added: "Our service has provided an effective way of making counselling available to pupils and families who have difficulty in accessing support services. We have provided a non-judgemental environment where young have been able to discuss their emotional distress, which has made a big difference in helping them to function effectively in school and socially."

Hearing for all at Shere Village Hall

Star Energy location: Albury

Grant: £3,900

The Project



Shere Village Hall is the hub of local life, playing host to a number of societies and clubs. However, some local people avoided attending village events as the poor sound quality in the building was making it hard for them to follow and enjoy proceedings.

The sound system was nearing the end of its life and needed to be replaced. The hall also had no facilities for people with hearing difficulties. The solution was to install a permanently wired system that also

included a sound loop for deaf-aid users.

Outcome

The sound system has been up and running for about a year and is working perfectly. It is in constant use by the various societies and clubs, and the members all feel that it is a vast improvement on the previous system. In particular, set up and dismantling times have been dramatically reduced.

It has also been used at one or two large public meetings, again with excellent results. The parish council is now exploring the opportunities for purchasing a hand-held wireless microphone, which will be compatible with the system.

Michael Dodd of Shere Parish Council, said: "We're so grateful for Star Energy's support with this project. It was very worthwhile and will last us for some time to come."

New surround for Shere Swimming Pool

Star Energy location: Albury

Grant: £15,000

The Project



The public swimming pool is a much-loved facility in Shere, and is enjoyed by some 1,300 people.

However, the volunteer members who run the pool, had long been concerned about the slip hazards of the concrete surround. It comprises concrete slabs which have, over time, settled unevenly.

The movement of the slabs had also upset the drainage channels for the splash water from the pool making the area even more dangerous. Previous attempts to minimise the problem with concrete filler had not been a permanent solution.

The club approached Star Energy and received a grant of £15,000, which allowed it to commission contractors to replace the old surround with new, non-slip paving slabs, which are laid on a mild concrete bed. This will allow engineers to access the pipework of the pool much more easily in the future should an issue arise.

Outcome

The work is now complete and the swimming pool is being widely enjoyed this summer. Some other improvements were also made to the site using Star Energy's grant, including installing an underground water supply pipe and widening the tread of a narrow step up to the changing cubicle.

Peter Gellatly, Treasurer, Shere Swimming Pool Club, said: "We are keenly looking forward to the start of the new season without the concerns over the danger of the old surround. We anticipate further very positive comments on the new look to the pool, thanks in large part to Star Energy."

Safe surfacing at Shere Village Nursery

Star Energy location: Albury

Grant: £3,310

The Project



The ethos behind Shere Village Nursery is to provide affordable pre-school education so that all children in the community have an equal start in life. The nursery had been gifted a piece of land from Shere Recreation Ground for their sole use as the children's outdoor playground. However, with fees kept to a minimum, the parent volunteers who manage the nursery were struggling to fund the restoration of the overgrown plot.

Having worked hard to remove the nettles and brambles and erected a fence, the surfacing was still to be addressed. Some concrete remained from the cricket nets and the ground was uneven, which resulted in frequent minor injuries from children tripping.

The Star Energy Community Fund was approached and agreed to fund a new safety surface. A specialist rubberised surface was installed over the concrete in a few hours as a wet pour.

Outcome

The new playground surface at Shere Village Nursery is much safer for the 27 children, aged two to four years, who attend. Candace Brooke, chair of the nursery management committee, said: "On behalf of the staff, I'd like to say a huge thank you to Star Energy for making this grant available. It has made a massive difference to the safety of the outdoor area. The children love playing outside and grazed knees are now a thing of the past!"

Sports hall conversion at South Godstone

Star Energy location: Bletchingley

Grant: £1,500

The Project



The South Godstone Sports Hall was already well used by various local sports clubs, but the Association Committee was keen that the only community building in the area should also attract bookings for social functions. However, feedback was that the hall was too bland and ‘hollow sounding’.

The committee, therefore, set to work raising funds to install a suspended fabric ceiling. With a £1,500 boost from the Star Energy Community Fund, the work began. Pulleys had to be securely fastened to the centre of the hall ceiling and likewise to points on the wall, which required the erection of scaffolding. The works continued with a catenary wire being mounted on the entire circumference of the hall, which entailed twenty fixing points and the re-enforcing of the four corners of the hall, to prevent failure under strain.

Steel poles were shackled to suspend from the pulleys on ropes to take the weight of the ceiling and cleat hooks fastened above head height on to which the ropes would be secured.

Outcome

The entire project was overseen by a member of the Committee and in May 2010 the suspended ceiling was raised and met with full approval by the Association members and sports and community groups. Terry Tomlinson of the South Godstone Sports Hall Association said: “The fabric ceiling has brought an ambience to the hall that will make it far more appealing for social functions. We’d like to place on record our grateful thanks to both Star Energy and Godstone Parish Council for their generosity in bringing this project to fruition.”

WEST SUSSEX

New college cricket pitch at Storrington

Star Energy location: Storrington

Grant £3,500

The Project



Rydon Community College is a local community secondary school for 10 to 13 year olds and a community education centre for adult learning. Its existing artificial cricket pitch was old and worn, and had been condemned as unsafe.

The school has no permanent square, so the artificial pitch was both the practice and match pitch, meaning that the school had been forced to play its matches elsewhere.

A new pitch was essential, as well as a mobile net cage. Star Energy Community Fund 'stumped up' part of the funding, along with Lord's Taverners, and the work began during the 2010 summer holidays.

Outcome

Rydon Community College held a small celebratory opening of the new facility with John Barclay, previously Captain of Sussex, past President MCC and Head of Arundel Castle Cricket Foundation. The College Cricket team then demonstrated their skills in the net during a coaching session.

"The new cricket pitch is a real boon for the college", said Allison Murphy, Headteacher. "Our own cricket team is really proud when other schools come for matches here, but the pitch is also

being enjoyed by local church teams, and our female students who are offered cricket as an option.”

Enhancement of Storrington Pond

Star Energy location: Storrington

Grant: £2,500

The project:

The village pond in Storrington is a much-loved facility, and is particularly useful for the adjoining primary school's nature studies. The Parish Council set about an enhancement project – split into two phases – to make it more accessible to the community and more attractive to wildlife.

The first phase, which was supported by the Star Energy Community Fund, is now complete. An ecological survey was carried out to ascertain the vegetation and wildlife habitat. The report outlined ideas for improvements to make the pond more environmentally friendly and accessible to a wide range of visitors including locals, tourists and school children. The latter were invited to take part in a competition to provide their ideas to improve the pond and the winning entries were incorporated into this report.

The outcome:

Phase 2 will include introducing disabled access; designing and installing an interpretation board; and developing a plan for management and improvement of the natural resources.

A great deal of clearance work has been undertaken to make the area around the pond accessible and this has proved successful. The Parish Council has also entered into an agreement for monthly water sampling exercise to be undertaken in order to plot trends, identify potential problems and to monitor levels of wildlife.

Tracey Mockler at Storrington & Sullington Parish Council, said: "The enhancement of Storrington Pond is a significant project that is expanding the site's appeal and value further. We are expecting the improvements to encourage a variety of wildlife to the site and improve their habitats; improve access around the pond and to the water's edge; and increase the pond's recreational value for a variety of user groups."