

Press Release

15 December 2011



Community Oil Buying Scheme Aims to Cut Costs

Rural Action Derbyshire is delighted to announce the launch of a new domestic heating oil venture that it says will be good for individuals, good for the environment and good for Rural Action Derbyshire.

The scheme, which is supported by South Derbyshire Citizens Advice Bureau, will use the model of a local buying syndicate for domestic heating oil, but will roll it out across the whole of Derby and Derbyshire. This could be of huge benefit to the households in South Derbyshire who rely on heating oil.

Rural Action Derbyshire believes there will be great strength in harnessing the purchasing power of the many rural communities who are without mains gas, so that together oil-buyers will be able to make significant savings. And even with the scheme in its infancy, experience has already shown that it's possible to get a discount of around £50 on a single order. Community organisations and businesses will also be able to join the scheme, which will be run by Rural Action Derbyshire and based on a scheme already operated by its sister organisation in Oxfordshire.

South Derbyshire Citizens Advice Bureau Chief Executive Jackie Spencer says 'It is estimated that 25% of households using oil for central heating are experiencing fuel poverty. Oil is generally bought in bulk, which means huge bills, rather than fuel paid for monthly or weekly. Oil Schemes offer a way to relieve this burden, giving households affordable access to fuel. This Community Oil Buying Scheme will make a significant difference to the lives of many people living in rural South Derbyshire, particularly Netherseal, and we wholeheartedly endorse it'.

Rural Action Derbyshire is keen to emphasise the environmental benefits too. Delivery tankers guzzle a lot of fuel and the more deliveries they can make in one place, the less fuel they use. And the fewer tankers there are on Derbyshire's small country roads, the better.

As a charity that is rooted in local community action, Rural Action Derbyshire wants the new venture to reflect this philosophy. Chief Executive Sylvia Green says 'The key to making this work will be having local people who will collate the syndicate members' oil orders once a month and pass the information on to us; and who will then let the local members know the cost per litre and the delivery date. That's pretty much it. For doing this, they will get free membership of the scheme – an annual saving of £20. Scheme members will be able to order as many times as they like during the year, and the price will be negotiated centrally.

There's more information from Rural Action Derbyshire via www.ruralactionderbyshire.org.uk/oil, oil@ruralactionderbyshire.org.uk or 01629 824797.

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