



Working **together** for Dorset

10 June 2008

## **WORKING TOGETHER FOR DORSET**

More than 200 people from across Dorset gathered at the award winning Exchange building in Sturminster Newton on Thursday 5 June for the Dorset Strategic Partnership (DSP) annual conference.

Delegates were welcomed by DSP Chairman, Simon Raynes, who gave an overview of the myriad achievements of the partnership and its constituent elements over the past year.

He then introduced the keynote address, delivered by Richard Sheard, Regional Director for Local Government from the Government Office of the South West, about local strategic partnerships and community empowerment.

The main thrust of his speech concerned the fact that there is a huge bank of support and encouragement from central and regional government for local projects but the real power for community development lies within each individual community.

Conference was attended by people representing dozens of organisations from across the county including: Dorset Age Partnership, Dorset Community Action, the Primary Care Trust and Citizens Advice Bureau as well as housing associations and county, district, town and parish councils.

Two success stories were high-lighted: the Connecting Dorset Project, to connect all town and village halls with computers for public use, was explained by Steve Place of Dorset Community Action; the way in which affordable houses are championed, planned and built was explained by Janet Rees and Derek Hardy of the Affordable Housing Task Group.

Between presentations, delegates had the chance to visit exhibitions throughout The Exchange about the work of the many action groups and projects working for the people of Dorset under the umbrella of the Dorset Strategic Partnership.

The annual conference was closed by Cllr Angus Campbell, Leader of Dorset County Council.

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**Note to editors:**

1. For more information about the Dorset Strategic Partnership and its work see [www.dorsetforyou.com/dsp](http://www.dorsetforyou.com/dsp) or call Kate Hindson, Dorset Strategic Partnership Manager on 01305 251000.