

## LEADER AGM SHOWCASES LAUNCH OF CHURCH HERITAGE TRAILS

Coast, Wolds, Wetlands & Waterways (CWWW) LEADER, a European funding programme delivered through Defra with the East Riding of Yorkshire Council as accountable body, is holding its annual general meeting on 25 April at the Driffield Showground.

A Local Action Group, consisting of key people from public, private and voluntary organisations, manages the programme and is committed to carrying out an agreed plan of action which aims to realise the potential of the area's heritage and culture for the benefit of the local communities.

The LEADER area covers a large rural part of the East Riding, together with the Ryedale and Scarborough districts of North Yorkshire.

As well as the AGM business, the meeting will see the launch of some new church trails by the Historic Churches and Rural Communities Project.

These trail leaflets, which are for churches in and around the northern Wolds, Filey and Howdenshire, will be launched by David Neave, local historian and trustee of the East Yorkshire Historic Churches Trust. He said: "East Yorkshire has many of the finest historic churches in the north of England, which represent our greatest and most accessible heritage asset. It is vital that their future is ensured by continued support from the communities whose history they enshrine."

The leaflets can be viewed and/or downloaded from the East Yorkshire Historic Churches Trust's website by visiting [www.eychurches.org.uk](http://www.eychurches.org.uk)

The project is encouraging local people to get involved in helping to look after the fabric of their local churches by organising church maintenance workshops. It is also carrying out an audit of churches of all denominations, looking at their overall role in the local community, in order to produce a 'state of the nation' report. Churches requiring assistance will be identified, particularly those at risk of redundancy.

Phil Thomas, church buildings officer for the Diocese of York, has welcomed the initiative. He said: "This is an imaginative and necessary project. The challenge of how our rural churches can be developed and sustained in the future in order to service the widest spread of interest groups and activities in their villages is a important issue and one which must be urgently addressed."

For more information or to get involved please email David Neave: [d.r.neave@hull.ac.uk](mailto:d.r.neave@hull.ac.uk)

### NOTES FOR EDITORS

The church trails launch and photo opportunity will take place at 2.45pm at the LEADER annual general meeting at Driffield Showground, 25 April 2012. You are invited to send a reporter/photographer.

Information about the Coast, Wolds, Wetlands & Waterways LEADER programme can be found at: [www.ruralprogrammeseastyorkshire.co.uk/rdpe](http://www.ruralprogrammeseastyorkshire.co.uk/rdpe)

The LEADER programme is financed by the European Agriculture Fund for Rural Development and Defra as part of the Rural Development Programme for England.