



## **Press Release information – Leader 4 Torridge & North Devon**

**Release date: 15 December 2011**

**Subject:** Launch of the Green Business Exemplars Grant Competition

### **Details:**

Small businesses with a green idea can take advantage of a new competition for grants of up to £10,000. The grant is part of the Leader 4 Torridge and North Devon programme funded by Defra and the European Union. The Green Business Exemplars competition was launched by Stewart Wallis, chief executive of the new economics foundation (nef), Rob Zarywacz, business writer for the North Devon Journal and Bruce Douglas from Defra. “To support the low carbon and environmental sustainability priorities of the programme, we are looking to fund at least five projects that can demonstrate excellence and good practice in ‘greening’ a business, product or service,” said Leader 4 Chairman Viv Gale. “Projects receiving grant support could include the development of new sustainable products and services or those linked to the environment; reducing carbon impact through more efficient use of resources; improved waste, energy or water management systems; support for biodiversity or addressing climate change.”

In launching the competition, Stewart Wallis said, “In a changing world of debt ridden economies and rising commodity prices, we need to build thriving local communities. This new fund can demonstrate to North Devon new ways to green the economy, protect jobs and protect biodiversity.”

Rob Zarywacz emphasised the innovation and ideas among North Devon businesses, “We have many businesses starting up, lots of green businesses and people investing thousands of hours to develop their businesses – these people will get us out of recession if we support them with the positive opportunities from this grant scheme.”

Bruce Douglas from Defra, one of the main funding bodies of the Leader programme said, “developing the economy in support of the high quality environment is a core priority in the Rural Development programmes. Leader 4 had great success with their earlier business grant scheme and this is a positive addition to their programme.”

“An important part of the Leader programme across the UK and Europe is sharing good practice and encouraging innovation,” said project officer Jenny Carey-Wood. “The green exemplars will be written up as case studies to be published on-line and in hard copy to share information with other businesses and rural areas in Europe.”

The competition is based on **submitting an Expression of Interest by 16 January 2012** on a form downloaded from the Leader 4 website – [www.leader4.org](http://www.leader4.org) . Businesses need to check the criteria online to see if they are eligible to enter the competition and if they become a finalist, they will have to provide 50% funding towards their project. Shortlisted entries will be visited by a competition panel member and the finalists chosen by the panel will be invited to submit a full Leader 4 application for the grant. Any queries not answered online can be emailed to [GBE@northdevonplus.co.uk](mailto:GBE@northdevonplus.co.uk)

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