

Opening doors in the community



PROJECT

Dorstone's Front Room

SUPPORTED THROUGH

Nexus

FUNDING RECEIVED

£5,000

Matt Smith, Rural Regeneration Zone Partnerships Manager; Sophie Mead, Community First and Karen Usher, Dorstone's Front Room

A vibrant community in Herefordshire has opened its own "front room" to bring villagers even closer together.

Dorstone's Front Room provides a daily meeting place where people can read newspapers and magazines, enjoy a cup of tea or coffee and catch up on village news.

The centre also offers a book and DVD lending library, a selection of greetings cards, local produce and monthly displays by artists and craftspeople.

Dorstone's Front Room – housed in the former village shop – was opened in December 2008 and seeks to create a family's front room atmosphere. It is run by 20 volunteers.

With a population of just 300, the village sits in the beautiful Dore Valley and is the western gateway to the Golden Valley in the Black

Mountains which attracts many visitors and tourists.

The community project has been funded under the Nexus programme with a grant of just under £5,000.

The money has been spent on providing disabled access to the toilet, re-fitting the kitchen, purchasing business equipment to run the project and to offer local business services, and help towards furnishing the 400 square metre space.

The remaining funds came from contributions from the local community.

Karen Usher, chairwoman of management committee of Dorstone's Front Room, said: "Without the grant, we could not have gone forward with this project to provide this wonderful new community space.

"It is early days but we are averaging 12 to 15 visits a day and we feel we are providing the hub of a wheel for a vibrant and thriving community which dates back to Neolithic times."

Dorstone has a pub, village hall, church and playing fields. It also has a post office which is earmarked for closure and it is viewed that the Front Room will provide an important antidote to this situation should it arise.

Matt Smith said: "The project will provide the kind of social hub that a Post Office provides in a village of this size, a place for people to meet and catch-up which is vital for communities."

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CONTACT

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