

New post to back local retailers (April 2008)

Gloucestershire First has appointed Stephen Lambe to assist and support retailers in Tewkesbury, Winchcombe and Bishops Cleeve.

In a two-year project funded by Severn Trent Water, he will devise a retail support programme to help retailers build their businesses.

Stephen joins Gloucestershire First from the Forest of Dean district council, where he was retail support officer and a member of the market towns regeneration team which ran the successful First Stop-Local Shop scheme funded by Rural Renaissance.

In his new role, Stephen will work with Tewkesbury borough council, town and parish councils, local shop owners and other business groups such as Tewkesbury and Bishops Cleeve chambers of commerce and Winchcombe business forum.

It will include a marketing campaign to encourage people to shop locally, providing retailers with advice on available training schemes and suggesting environmental improvements.

Stephen, who lives in Tewkesbury and will be based at the borough council offices, said all retailers not just those affected by flooding would benefit. "Having worked in market town regeneration, I know that success can be achieved with the right kind of support.

"I want to encourage residents to buy locally whenever possible and am looking at loyalty schemes and other incentives to move this forward.

"There are a number of training opportunities retailers could benefit from and I can provide a signposting service to assist them select the right one. Much can be done to improve the shopping experience and this will form a central part of the programme being developed.

"A steering group representing local traders will manage this project and I am currently out and about meeting as many as possible to find out exactly what's important to them," said Stephen.

Retailers requiring more information are invited to contact Stephen on 0781 6134592 or by email: Stephen.lambe@teewkesbury.gov.uk

This initiative is managed by Gloucestershire First, the countywide economic partnership established to support and develop the economic wellbeing of Gloucestershire. By bringing together relevant partners in the field of economic development, including local authorities, the South West RDA and the private sector, it provides an overall strategic plan for Gloucestershire. Further information on its work is available on www.glosfirst.co.uk