

Cheaper loans scheme gears up to launch in June

All credit to the team, but they still need help



by Tricia Jamieson

tjamieson@thekmgroup.co.uk
@triciajamieson1

Work on setting up a credit union for Tenterden is progressing well.

The organisers are looking to launch it on Friday, June 12 – but they still need volunteers.

Town councillor Sue Ferguson, who is in charge of marketing and publicity, said: “We are making excellent progress and are ready for the launch with the Bishop of Dover, the Rt Rev Trevor Willmott.

“We have a lot of people on side but still need volunteers to help get the credit union going and then run it.”

The scheme is called Tenterden Savers and is part of Kent Savers.

Credit unions provide loans at a low rate of interest and are a cheaper alternative to borrowing money from pay-day loan companies.

The idea for one for Tenterden came from the vicar of St Mildred's, Canon Lindsay Ham-



Members of the Tenterden Savers team, clockwise from front, centre, Canon Lindsay Hammond, Gary Willard, Mike Stephens, the Rev Eileen Harrop, Steve King, Ian Bampton, Ron Basher, Julia Bampton and Sue Ferguson

mond, after the Archbishop of Canterbury, the Most Rev Justin Welby, attacked pay-day lenders.

A public meeting last year led to backing from church and community leaders. Tenterden Town Council has already pledged £15,000 of public money.

Cllr Ferguson said that £1,000 for computer equipment had come from county councillor Mike Hill.

“We are looking for beneficiaries to get the credit union going,” she said. “We will need

money and volunteers. We have a number of professional people on board but can always do with more.”

Sessions for people interested in volunteering will be held soon.

Tenterden Savers will be based at St Mildred's Church Hall in Church Road.

Cllr Ferguson said: “We are very grateful to the church hall committee and the parochial church council for their help in providing use of the hall.”

The credit union will be run

alongside an advice service.

Cllr Ferguson said: “Some people who come to the credit union will not be eligible for loans, so we have to know where we can refer them.

“We want to be able to point them in the right direction so they know where they can go for help.”

A Twitter account has been set up at @tenterdensavers

■ For information, go to www.tenterdentown.co.uk/contact-tenterden-savers