

Press release

9 November 2009

Unicom launches community support scheme

Community groups in Sheffield are being invited to apply for funding support at the launch of a new community support scheme in the city.

The scheme, organised by business telecoms firm Unicom, aims to reward community groups from across Sheffield which help local people.

Speaking at the launch of the initiative, Unicom Operations Director Chris Earle said:

“Unicom is keen to play its part in recognising and rewarding some of the fantastic community groups and organisations which provide invaluable services and improve the quality of life for Sheffield people.

“Many of the community groups in this area are taken for granted with people working tirelessly behind the scenes to raise money to fund their activities.

“However, at times corporate support is vital to ensure these invaluable groups can maintain their presence in our city.”

Unicom is based on Carver Street in Sheffield city centre and provides telecoms services to local businesses. Established in 1998, Unicom has helped nearly 300,000 businesses save a total of £500 million off their utilities bills.

The Unicom Community Support Scheme will consider applications which support disadvantaged people, promote sport and the arts, support education and development and help the environment.

A panel will meet twice yearly to consider applications which must be on behalf of a community group rather than an individual.

For an application form and further details, log onto

www.switchingon.com/communitysupport

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Notes to Editors:

About the Unicom Community Support Scheme:

- The scheme will only consider activities that benefit the local community
- Applications must be from a group or organisation and not an individual
- Typical awards will be between £100 and £500
- Political, religious or commercial activities, or those involving animals, will not normally be considered.
- The community support scheme panel will meet twice yearly in May and November to consider applications.

About Unicom:

- Unicom, a trading name of Universal Utilities PLC, is a telecommunications service provider specialising in the small business market.
- Unicom has attracted its business customers by offering discounts of up to 60% off BT's prices, at the same time as keeping customers on the BT network. Unicom currently supplies in excess of 450 million minutes of call time to its customers each year. Unicom differentiates itself by offering a high standard of personal customer service, with no premium rate 0845 or 0870 numbers, no recorded messages or menus, and no overseas call centres. Unicom boasts one of the highest customer retention rates in the industry.
- Unicom has a directory enquiry service, 118 777. Based on calls from a BT or Unicom telephone line, 118 777 is 28% cheaper than 118 118, and 53% cheaper than 118 500. Calls from other networks may vary.
- Unicom was ranked 26th in the Sunday Times Profit Track 100 listings in April 2006, 89th in the Sunday Times Fast Track 100 index in December 2006 and 96th in the Sunday Times Profit Track 100 listings in April 2007. In September 2007 it achieved a ranking of 95th, and in September 2008 a ranking of 88th, in the Sunday Times Microsoft Tech Track 100 index.
- Unicom is a patron company of The Outward Bound Trust.