

National Rural Conference 14th - 18th September 2020



The Rural Services Network is delighted to welcome you to the online National Rural Conference 2020!

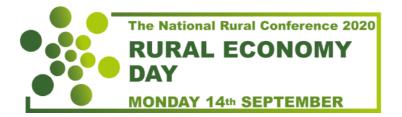


We are also delighted to announce that NICRE, the National Innovation Centre for Rural Enterprise has lent its support for our National Rural Conference.

With sessions spread out over the course of the week, the format may be different but delegates will still be able to benefit from the usual wide range of expert speakers, with 'plenary' session and 'workshop style seminar' sessions and a range of other material and podcasts which will be made available during the week.



The sessions on each day of the week are themed as follows and we have an excellent line up of rural speakers for you:











Please note that RSN reserves the right to refuse entry to our online events to non-members.





Feel free to share snippets of this event including your comments, questions and learnings on Twitter @RSNonline

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Welcome to our National Rural Conference from your hosts:

RURAL SERVICES NETWORK

Councillor Cecilia Motley

Chair of Rural Services Network, (RSN) Shropshire Council

Councillor Cecilia Motley is the Chair of the Rural Services Network and is delighted to welcome you to the Rural Conference this year.

She has been Shropshire Council's representative on the Rural Services Network since 2007 and a Vice Chair up to 2014 when she was elected Chair. Cecilia has been a local government Councillor since 2003 and is a past Leader of South Shropshire District Council. When Shropshire went unitary in 2009, she was elected to represent a large rural division in the south of the county and joined the Cabinet representing Rural Services and Local Communities. She therefore brings first-hand knowledge of the issues affecting rural and very sparse communities. She represents Shropshire on the Local Government Association and the County Councils Network. As well as that she is a Vice-Chair of the Shropshire Hills AONB Strategy and Partnership Boards and is a recent Member of Arts Council Midlands Board, representing Rural authorities.



Graham Biggs MBE

Chief Executive, Rural Services Network (RSN)

Graham has led the RSN since its creation in the early 2000s. For over 20 years he was Chief Executive of the former South Shropshire District Council, one of England's most sparsely populated districts. He has a wealth of experience in the management and delivery of services across sparsely populated districts. Graham is a Chartered Secretary and Fellow of the Chartered Institute of Secretaries and Administrators. He is also a Fellow of the RSA (Royal Society for the Encouragement of Arts, Manufacturing and Commerce). He was awarded an MBE in 1995 for 'Services to Local Government'. Graham has given evidence to a number of Parliamentary Select Committees relating to the Local Government Funding Formulae and rural policy. He acts as Principal Advisor to the All-Party Parliamentary Group on Rural Services for which the RSN provides the Secretariat. He is a Director of the recently formed National Centre for Rural Health and Care and represents the RSN on the Executive Committee of the National Rural Crime Network.



Graham is looking forward to hearing from delegates at the conference about their experiences of revitalising rural!





National Innovation Centre for Rural Enterprise

The National Innovation Centre for Rural Enterprise (NICRE) exists to foster rural enterprise and unlock the potential in the UK's rural economies.

Led by and built with internationally recognised expertise from three leading UK universities, Newcastle University Centre for Rural Economy and Business School, the Countryside and Community Research Institute (CCRI) at the University of Gloucestershire and Royal Agricultural Society (RAU), and the Enterprise Research Centre led from Warwick University, NICRE is working with partners across many public, commercial and third sector organisations.

What does NICRE do?

We are focussed on three, interconnecting activities:

Filling gaps in our knowledge of rural enterprise and innovation through undertaking and commissioning new research.

Providing evidence to influence better policy and support for rural businesses.

Developing practical solutions with businesses, rural communities and economic development agencies that demonstrate new approaches to rural innovation that can be scaled up to solve problems and realise new opportunities.

What are we aiming to change?

Practices - to increase impact on business practices to build improved research and innovation capabilities, new business models and stronger networks.

People – to increase capacity of rural business owners, senior managers and advisors and a wide network of enterprise and rural development practitioners and researchers.

Policies – to create stronger evidence-based policy design, delivery and support for rural enterprises, at national and local levels.

Places – to equip rural communities to tackle current and future challenges and successfully contribute to national or local economic growth and prosperity.

NICRE is funded by **Research England** and its founding University partners. For more information about NICRE click here





green energy uk Welcome from our Sponsor green energy uk

A little bit about Green Energy UK

Green Energy UK are the UK's only supplier of 100% green electricity AND gas to both domestic and commercial customers. They have been championing sustainability and an ethical approach to doing good business since 2001.









Their EKO Energy Tariff demonstrates their desire to provide choice for customers who want to do even more to help the environment in the UK.

Taking into consideration the impact that even green energy farms can have on local wildlife, the EKO Energy tariff has been independently verified as being sustainably generated from renewable sources.

For more information about **Green Energy UK** visit their website





nalc Welcome from our Sponsor **National Association of Local** Councils

The National Association of Local Councils (NALC) represents England's 10,000 local (parish and town) councils and their 100,000 local community leaders and councillors.

Their role has changed dramatically in the last few years reflected in a doubling of their yearly council tax share to £600m and they now contribute around £2billion in community investment.

They are increasingly expanding their role into health and well-being supporting vulnerable and lonely people and building dementia friendly communities. They are playing a key local role in tackling the climate crisis reducing car use, planting trees and investing in parks and open spaces. Their neighbourhood plans support local towns centres and the provision of affordable housing.

The coronavirus pandemic has had a severe impact on all our communities, and the test for the future is how we recover as a country and society, and how we rebuild our communities. Local councils were at the heart of the initial response to the pandemic and will play a vital role in the local leadership needed through the recovery and beyond. NALC is calling for local councils to be at the centre of recovery planning and the new drive on devolution.

NALC is a member of the Rural Coalition and supports their campaign to strengthen rural proofing and call for an effective national rural strategy.

NALC lobbies government and others to raise awareness of the potential role local councils can play. It provides support to councils with legal advice and resources to make them more effective. It has a range of publications and guides for councillors. It supports a network of 43 county associations across the Country which provide day to day support to councils and councillors and work closely with other local organisations.

You can find out more about our work at www.nalc.gov.uk and follow us on Twitter at www.twitter.com/nalc

Or why not attend our new programme of on-line events?

www.nalc.gov.uk/rebuildingcommunities





Established in 1991 and registered and regulated by the Regulator of Social Housing, **English Rural** is a specialist non-profit rural housing association with an active development programme – only building and managing homes in village locations, principally across the south of England. All the homes they build are community-led and designed to benefit local people. Their developments are high-quality and have a small footprint with an average scheme being only 6 homes. They are also one of the leading national advocates on affordable rural housing issues, with HRH The Princess Royal as their Patron.



English Rural has a reputation for excellence. Their homes are designed and built to high standards, usually using local design features and ensuring that the environmental impact is minimal as a result of property performance and use of renewable energy technology. They build beautiful homes that villages can be proud of and their homes consistently win awards for design and construction. Their unique approach involves forming a community-led local partnership to research, enable and deliver affordable homes.

English Rural's relationship with local partners such as parish councils, rural housing enablers, local authorities, farmers and landowners is crucial to their success. They are only ever invited in by a village and some areas have chosen to work with them multiple times over the years. The homes they build offer a range of tenures to suit different aspirations and needs.

English Rural is currently an Investment Partner with Homes England, which distributes government grants available for affordable housing. Where available, they will also look to secure additional grants to help fund homes.

At the heart of what they do are their residents and the rural communities they serve. For more information about **English Rural** visit **their website**

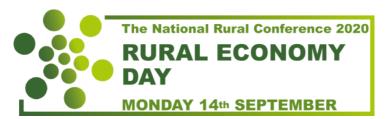


Conference Agenda

Welcome and Introduction to our Rural National Conference 2020

Welcome and Introduction videos available from our keynote speakers Rt Hon Philip Dunne MP and Lord Foster of Bath

Welcome from the RSN Councillor Cecilia Motley (RSN)



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10.00 Rural Economy Plenary

Professor Janet Dwyer

Professor of Rural Policy and Director of CCRI Planning for recession and recovery: re-thinking the innovation agenda

Nigel Wilcock

Executive Director of Institute of Economic Development Launch of Rural Opportunities Toolkit

14.00 Economy Seminar Session

Professor Sally Shortall

Duke of Northumberland Chair of Rural Economy Professor at the University of Newcastle Reflections on the future direction for the rural economy

Alan Menzies

Director of Planning and Economic Regeneration, East Riding Council Revitalising Rural

FEATURE

Feature on Rural Economy provided by Green Energy UK **Doug Stewart**

Founder and CEO of Green Energy UK Net Zero: A journey not a destination







10.00 Rural Connectivity Plenary

Ben Colson MBE

Chair of Bus Users UK

Facts and Myths that help point the way forward for rural transport

Gareth Elliott

Head of Policy and Communications, Mobile UK Improving Rural Connectivity: The Shared Rural Network

FEATURE

Feature on Rural Connectivity provided by NALC Cllr Sue Baxter NALC Chairman and Jonathan Owen NALC Chief Executive

Building stronger rural communities







10.00 Rural Housing Plenary

Ursula Bennion

Chair of National Rural Housing Alliance Working Across Housing, Health & Social Care

14.00 Housing Seminar Session

The Lord Best OBE DL

Tom Chance

Joint CEO of National Community Land Trust Network Community Led Housing in rural England and Wales

FEATURE

Feature on Rural Housing provided by English Rural **Martin Collett**

Chief Executive of English Rural







10.00 Rural Environment Plenary

Phil Brennan

Head of APSE ENERGY,

Association for Public Service Excellence

Assets, carbon and engagement – a role for local authorities

David Cope

Countryside Climate Network Coordinator, UK100 Countryside Climate Network, putting the rural voice into climate action

FEATURE

Feature on Rural Environment provided by Green Energy UK **Doug Stewart**

Founder and CEO of Green Energy UK Net Zero: A journey not a destination



10.00 Rural Health & Wellbeing Plenary

Professor Sian M. Griffiths OBE, JP FFPH

Revitalise Rural: the challenges for rural health through the Covid lens

14.00 Health & Wellbeing Seminar Session

Dr Debbie Freake

Director of Integration, Northumbria Healthcare NHS FT Rural Health Care: An Acute Perspective

Michelle Howard

Assistant Director, Housing and Wellbeing, East Lindsey DC The Campus for Future Living

FEATURE

Feature on Rural Health & Wellbeing provided by

Ivan Annibal

Managing Director of Rose Regeneration & Director of Operations at the National Centre for Rural Health and Care Focus on National Centre for Rural Health and Care and update on APPG on Rural Health and Social Care





Ivan Annibal

Ivan has a national reputation in economic and community development, with particular specialisms in coastal and rural issues. He has a practical "hands on" style to delivering programmes and projects. Ivan is currently developing resources to help VCS organisations during (and after) the coronavirus pandemic; reviewing a project which aims to tackle rural isolation and loneliness; and evaluating a community led local development project.

Ivan is chair of trustees at Rural Community Action Nottinghamshire (RCAN) and on the board of ACRE. He is a Senior Visiting Fellow at Lincoln International Business School and a Fellow of the Institute of Economic Development. Ivan is the Operations Director at the National Centre for Rural Health and Care (NCRHC).



Cllr Sue Baxter

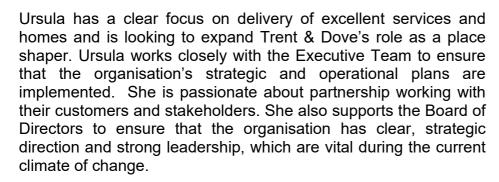
Cllr Sue Baxter Is Chairman of NALC and a councillor on two parishes in Worcestershire.



Ursula Bennion

Ursula Bennion is the Chief Executive of Trent and Dove Housing Association. Over a 25-year career in Housing, Ursula has worked across the sector in a wide variety of roles ranging from her first job as a trainee Housing Officer to Director of Business Development and now as Chief Executive.

During this time, she has worked with both traditional housing associations and also LSVTs which has provided her with a wealth of experience in dealing with the challenges and opportunities facing the affordable housing sector.



Ursula has most recently been appointed as Chair of Opendoor Homes a subsidiary of the Barnet Homes, a London based organisation.





The Lord Best OBE DL

Richard Best is an independent "cross-bench" member of the House of Lords and has successfully piloted 5 Private Members Bills through the House.

He has been involved in housing since the 1960's, was chief exec of the National Housing Federation and of the Joseph Rowntree Foundation/Housing Trust, a Rural Development Commissioner, chair of Hanover Housing Association, and President of the Local Government Association.

He chaired the Rural Housing Policy Review and later the Inquiry into Rural Housing for an Ageing Society, both sponsored by Hastoe Housing Association. He now chairs the Affordable Housing Commission.

Phil Brennan

The Head of APSE Energy is Phil Brennan.

APSE's bespoke Local Authority Energy Collaboration is a partnership developed by their member authorities which looks to leverage and maximise the opportunities afforded to local authorities by working together on a national scale in the green energy agenda.



Tom Chance

Tom Chance shares the position of Chief Executive of the National Community Land Trust Network with Catherine Harington. Tom joined the National CLT Network in May 2016 and now leads on the Network's projects, finances and operations, building the charity into a strong and sustainable organisation. He also shares responsibility with Catherine for the charity's strategy and business plan, and for building relationships with the housebuilding, finance, local government and community sectors.



Prior to joining the Network, he worked for the Greater London Authority in housing and planning policy, and as head of office for the Green Party Group on the London Assembly. He has also worked for a sustainable construction company, and as a consultant for clients such as the All-Party Parliamentary Group for Housing and Planning, World Habitat, Phases and various local authorities.



Martin Collett

Martin Collett, Chief Executive of English Rural, has over 15 years' experience in the rural housing sector. He is a Corporate Member of the Chartered Institute of Housing, graduate of the University of London and former Chair of the Rural Housing Alliance. Martin is also a Trustee and Chair of Audit and Risk Committee for the rural community business charity the Plunkett Foundation, a Director of the Rural Services Network, and a Trustee of the LGBT+ youth homelessness charity the Albert Kennedy Trust.



Ben Colson MBE

After fifty years active in the bus operating industry, Ben has been Chair of the trade association for smaller bus operators, mostly active in rural areas, and currently Bus Users, a registered charity whose aims to ensure that "everyone, wherever they are and whatever their needs may be, has access to the best possible transport links." He is a parish council chairman in Norfolk and remains close to the local transport scene at national and county level. The last twenty years of his working life he owned his own bus company, Norfolk Green, the only SME rural operator ever to be judged winner of the prestigious Bus Operator of the Year award. A Fellow of the Chartered Institute of Logistics and Transport he brings practical experience of operating and advocating.



David Cope

David is the Countryside Climate Network Coordinator for UK100, the network for ambitious local leaders who want to deliver a transition to clean energy and net zero for their communities. His challenge is to help raise the voice of rural councils alongside urban authorities in the national discussion about climate action.

David's career has spanned policy, strategy and change leadership roles in the public and charitable sectors. Alongside his work for UK100 he is a trustee for two environmental charities, a company director for a sports governing body and runs his own consultancy business.





Rt Hon Philip Dunne MP

Rt Hon Philip Dunne MP was first elected MP for Ludlow in 2005, having been a Councillor on South Shropshire District Council (2002-07). Ludlow is the sixth largest constituency in England comprising some 600 square miles of sparsely populated rural country stretching from the Welsh border to within six miles of Wolverhampton city centre, with over half within the Shropshire Hills AONB.

Philip was a Whip (2008-12), a Minister in Defence (2012-16) and Health (2016-18). He has been a member of the Environmental Audit Committee for the past year.

He was the inaugural Chair of the APPG for Rural Services (2006-08) and is the current Chair of the APPG.



Professor Janet Dwyer

Janet joined the CCRI in 2002 after working for more than a decade in a government agency and an independent policy think-tank. She was awarded the title of Professor of Rural Policy in 2010 and became Director of the CCRI in 2013.

Janet directs and undertakes research related to agriculture, the environment and rural development. Her research expertise centres on European and UK rural development policy and practice, with particular interest in integrated approaches, environmental sustainability and institutional adaptation. Janet is well-known in policymaking circles in the UK and EU, has skills in facilitation and consensus-building, and is a regular speaker at international conferences.

She is a fellow of the Royal Society of Arts, a founder and steering group member of the Uplands Alliance, and an active member of the UK Agricultural Economics Society. Recent projects include a farm survey of Exmoor; PEGASUS - a major, EU-28 study on public goods and ecosystem services from farming and forestry; supporting the government of Malta to review its agriculture policy and prepare its RDP for 2014-2020; and a pan-EU study on Rural Development impacts (RuDI).

In 2017, Janet was elected an Associate of the Royal Agricultural Societies of the UK, and also the French Academie d'Agriculture. And in 2019, she was appointed President-elect of the UK Agricultural Economics Society and a Director of Rural England CIC.





Gareth Elliott

Gareth joined Mobile UK in 2017. He heads up policy and communications with a focus on mobile coverage and future infrastructure requirements and deployment.

Before coming to Mobile UK, Gareth spent three years as a Public Affairs Manager with HS2 Ltd. During this time Gareth worked to deliver the hybrid Bill through its Parliamentary stages to Royal Assent and worked with key stakeholders across the country to build support and advocacy for the project. Prior to HS2 Ltd. Gareth worked as a consultant at Insight Public Affairs with clients across the transport and infrastructure spectrum and before that with the British Chambers of Commerce as a Senior Policy Advisor



Lord Foster of Bath

Don was the Liberal Democrat Member of Parliament for Bath from 1992 until his retirement in 2015 when he moved to live in a very rural part of Suffolk. During his time in the House of Commons he served on numerous committees including the Select Committee on Education.

As well as serving as his party's spokesman on a range of issues he was a government Minister in the Department for Communities and Local Government and government deputy chief whip.

He now sits in the House of Lords where he recently chaired the Select Committee on "The Rural Economy" whose report, "Time for a strategy for the rural economy" was published on 27th April 2019.





Dr Debbie Freake

Dr Debbie Freake is currently Director of Integration at Northumbria Healthcare NHS Foundation Trust. Debbie worked as a GP in the North East for many years and since 2001 has carried out a variety of Board-level clinical and managerial roles in both commissioning and provider organisations. Over the years her passion has been for clinical service redesign and transformation.

Debbie more recently enjoyed a lengthy secondment to North Cumbria where as Director of Strategy in the acute Trust she was responsible for the co-design of and subsequent consultation on the strategy for delivery of clinically and financially sustainable secondary care services for one of the most challenging - and challenged - rural health and care economies in England.

Debbie has also worked since 2006 as a healthcare management consultant specialising in work with struggling teams and organisations. She has recently become a Trustee for the Cumbrian Mobility Network, which aims to build community capacity and use total transport and social enterprise approaches to build flexible sustainable and integrated travel solutions.



Professor Sian Griffiths OBE, JP FFPH

Professor Sian M Griffiths practiced as a service based public health physician at local, regional and national level in UK before moving to her academic post in Hong Kong. A former Regional Director of Public Health and Director of Public Health for Oxfordshire, she was President of the Faculty of Public Health of the Royal College of Physicians between 2001-4. In 2003 she chaired the Hong Kong SAR government's SARS Inquiry, joining the Chinese University of Hong Kong (CUHK) as Director of the School of Public Health and Primary Care in 2005. Since 2013 she is Emeritus Professor at CUHK and was Senior Adviser on International Academic Development to the previous Vice Chancellor until 2018.

In the UK, her current roles include interim Advisory Member of the Board of Public Health England and Chair of the Global Health Committee, Visiting Professor at Imperial College, London and and Deputy Chair of the Charity Gambleaware. She was Chair of Staffordshire University's Centre for Health and Development until July 2018 and has just joined the Board of the National Centre of Rural Health and Care.





Alan Menzies

Initially he worked for Lambeth Borough Council undertaking various roles including five years as a Business Adviser in Central Brixton following the first Brixton riots in the early 1980's.

In 1986 he was appointed by Essex County Council to establish a youth business support network, enterprise centres and business advisory service to support young people entering self-employment. Alan became Essex County Council Economic Development Officer in 1993.

Alan moved to Beverley in 1995, as Head of Economic Development, Tourism and Marketing at East Riding of Yorkshire Council where he is now Director of Planning and Economic Regeneration and Deputy Chief Executive. The work areas include planning and development management, forward planning, building control, rural policy and strategy, sustainable development, coastal issues, tourism, economic development, regeneration, inward investment, business support, press office, corporate marketing, transport policy and asset management, adult education and skills.

Alan is also Chair of Governors at Bishop Burton College which has a long tradition for the provision of land use/agricultural skills training at both Further Education and Higher Education levels. He is also a lifelong Crystal Palace supporter.



Jonathan Owen is Chief Executive and has previously held senior positions in a county, district and London Borough.







Professor Sally Shortall

Professor Sally Shortall is the Duke of Northumberland Chair of Rural Economy, in Newcastle University. Her main research interests are the role of women on farms and in rural development, rural development policy more generally, social changes in farming practice and the links between evidence and policy. She has published widely on these topics, including books, peer reviewed journal articles, and policy reports.

She is currently president of the European Society for Rural Sociology, and First Vice-President of the International Rural Sociology Association. Sally Shortall has worked with the European Parliament, the European Commission and the Food and Agricultural Organisation (FAO).

She is currently the PI conducting research on women in agriculture in Scotland with colleagues from the James Hutton Institute. This research is funded by the Scottish Government; She is also PI on an ESRC funded project which explores and addresses the regional impacts in Northern Ireland of the global energy-climate-food security nexus. The focus is primarily on global energy availability and climate change and their impacts on regional food security; and she is working with colleagues in the Agri-Food and Biosciences Institute in Belfast on research to establish how best to implement rural proofing measures, and to identify best practice and barriers to best practice.



Doug Stewart

Doug spent his formative career at Ford Motor Company in a number of sales and service roles, followed by a move to a start-up IT company and eventually setting up his own business retailing Volkswagens and Audis as a franchised dealer.

Having sold the motor business at the turn of the millennium, Doug found himself in the fortunate position to choose what to do next. The blueprint for his venture was an ethically sound business model that contributed to the wider issues of life through commerce.

The newly deregulated electricity market offered this opportunity and so Green Energy (UK) plc was born with the express intent of rewarding consumers who took active steps to do something about the wider environmental issues we face. Whilst the business has evolved, these values have remained.





Nigel Wilcock

Nigel is Managing Director of the economic development consultancy Mickledore Ltd. and has 20 years' experience in regeneration and economic development and was previously Regional Development Director for Ernst & Young.

Prior to Ernst & Young, Nigel worked for the North West Development Agency and Deloitte. Nigel is a graduate economist and a member of the Chartered Institute of Marketing. His experience is in leading large-scale regeneration and economic development projects and he has done this both nationally and internationally.

In the UK he has worked on assignments across every region as well as advising national government. Nigel has a particular specialism in European State Aid and also advises corporate clients on public sector funding opportunities.

Nigel has been a member of the Institute since 2006; became Chair of the North West Branch of the IED in 2006 and was elected as a national Director in October 2010. Since December 2014, Nigel has been Executive Director of the IED.





NOTES



NOTES



ABOUT THE ORGANISERS RURAL SERVICES NETWORK (RSN)

The RSN is the national champion for rural services, ensuring people in rural areas have a strong voice. We are fighting for a fair deal for rural communities to maintain their social and economic viability for the benefit of the nation as a whole. We have over 120 local authorities and over 200 rural businesses and charities in membership.

We work hard to make representations on issues affecting rural services. promote active networking on rural issues and establish and broadcast rural best practice. We also promote debate and interaction between agencies and across sectors for example rural housing and rural health.



The RSN is developing **Revitalising Rural**, a document which sets out our asks of Government in key policy areas for rural communities and service providers. We have been consulting widely on these asks and you can find out more at www.rsnonline.org.uk/revitalising-rural

If you are not a member of Rural Services Network, but you are interested in our events or would like to find out more about the benefits of membership, please contact nadine.trout@sparse.gov.uk

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