



**AGENDA FOR SPARSE RURAL AND RURAL SERVICES NETWORK
EXECUTIVE AND BOARD OF DIRECTORS OF THE RURAL SERVICES
PARTNERSHIP LTD MEETING**

Venue:- No 63 Bayswater Road, London W2 3PH

Date: Monday 20th May 2019

Time: 11.15am to 2.30pm

Please note change of venue - this meeting will take place at No 63 Bayswater Road, London W2 3PH

Visitor information and a link to the map for the venue can be found below:

[No 63 Bayswater Road Travel information](#)

- 1. Apologies for Absence**
- 2. Notes of the Previous Meeting**
Held on 14th January 2019 to consider any relevant items.
(Appendix A - Starts on page 5)
- 3. Notes of the Main Meetings**
Rural Assembly Sub SIG held on 8th April 2019 to consider any relevant items
(Appendix B - Starts on page 11)
- 4. To consider any items arising from the Social Care and Health Group meeting of 8th April 2019**
(Appendix C - Starts on page 16)
- 5. Notes of the RSP Partner Group Meeting**
(Appendix D - Starts on page 19)
- 6. Notes of the RSP Vulnerability Group Meeting**
(Appendix E - Starts on page 24)
- 7. Membership of the Executive**
(a) Following the May elections

Providing a voice for rural communities and service providers

David Inman, Director Kilworthy Park, Tavistock, Devon PL19 0BZ
Tel: 01822 813693

www.rsonline.org.uk email: admin@sparse.gov.uk twitter: @rsonline

(b) Interest from Martin Collett, Chief Executive English Rural Housing Association (David Inman, Corporate Director will circulate hard copies of the CV at the meeting)

8. Fair Funding Review and 75% Business Rates Retention – verbal report

9. Report to the Executive by David Inman on Rural Towns

(Appendix G - Starts on page 27, G (a) - Starts on page 29, G (b) - Starts on page 33)

10. RSN Budget, 2019/20

To consider the attached papers.
(Appendix H - Starts on page 58)

11. Spending Review Discussions with other Rural Groups

Copy of Submission made (Appendices I (a - Starts on page 64) & (b - Starts on page 66))

12. Report to the Executive by Brian Wilson on the Housing Survey.

(Appendix J - Starts on page 75)

13. Verbal Report to the Executive on Advertisements in the Rural Bulletin

14. Rural Strategy Campaign:

(a) **Lords Select Committee Report on Rural Economy. Summary and Recommendations Sections attached.** (Appendix K - Starts on page 78)

(b) **Proposed Regional Roadshows**

(c) **Working with the Rural Services APPG**

(d) **Engaging with RSN/RSP Members**

15. Current Staffing Issues

16. Regional Meetings Update

| Date | Region | Town | Primary Topic being considered |
|----------|------------|--|--------------------------------|
| 23.05.19 | North East | Durham County Council Cancelled (European election) Awaiting confirmation of either 14 th or 28 th June at Council | Sustainable Communities |

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| | | | |
|-----------------|---------------------------|---|---|
| | | Chambers, Greenlane Offices, Spennymoor, Durham | |
| 08.07.19 | East Midlands/East Anglia | Awaiting confirmation of room booking at Bury St Edmunds 7.05.19 | Rural Health and Wellbeing |
| 22 – 25 October | North West | Lancashire Emailed 05.12.18 Chased 28.02.19 Received email 1.04.19 to say chasing an answer NB rang 3.05.19 – left message with department and someone will contact week commencing 6 th May | Delivering Local Services |
| 09.12.19 | Yorkshire | North Yorkshire Emailed 05.12.18 Chased 28.02.19 NB was sent link to room bookings 3.05.19. Will ring them week commencing 6 th May | Barriers to Access – Connectivity and Rural Transport |

17. National Rural Conference Update

Providing a voice for rural communities and service providers

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18. Any Other Business

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Minutes of the Rural Services Network Executive held on

Monday 14th January 2019.

Venue— 63, Bayswater Road, London.

Present:-

Cllr Cecilia Motley, Chair – RSN
Cllr Robert Heseltine First Vice Chair – RSN
Revd Richard Kirlew - Sherborne Deanery Rural Chaplaincy
Cllr Trevor Thorne – Northumberland County Council
Cllr Peter Stevens – St Edmundsbury Borough Council
Cllr Jeremy Savage – South Norfolk Council
Cllr Roger Phillips - Herefordshire
Anna Price – Rural Business Group
John Birtwistle – UK Bus

Officers: - Graham Biggs (Chief Executive); David Inman (Director)

Apologies

Cllr Adam Paynter – Cornwall Council
Cllr Sue Sanderson- Cumbria County Council
Cllr Philip Sanders – West Devon Borough Council
Cllr Gill Heath – Staffordshire County Council
Cllr Kevin Beaty – District Council
Kerry Booth – RSN

A pre-meeting session involving phone conferencing took place. Superseding minute 3.3 of the last Executive meeting in this regard, it was decided it would be further tried at subsequent Executive meetings over the next year for those unable to attend.

- 1. Notes of the Previous Meeting** Held on 24th September 2018. Duly considered and approved.
- 2. Notes of the Main Meetings** of the AGM held on 12th November 2018 to consider any relevant items. Duly considered.
- 3. To consider any items arising from the Social Care and Health Group and AGM of 12th November 2018.** Duly considered. It was decided that Hampshire CC would be asked to give a presentation of their social care initiatives to the next Group meeting.

In the case of 2 and 3 above it was recognised that the attendance list used had been incorrectly minuted and the following attendance sheet would be substituted.)

Cecilia Motley – Chair RSN
 Graham Biggs – Chief Executive, RSN
 David Inman – Corporate Director, RSN
 Kerry Booth – Assistant Chief Executive, RSN
 Revd Richard Kirlew - Diocese of Sherborne
 Cllr Robert Heseltine – North Yorkshire County Council
 Cllr Roger Phillips – Herefordshire Council
 Cllr Trevor Thorne – Northumberland County Council
 Cllr Owen Bierley – West Lindsey District Council
 Cllr Rupert Reichhold – East Northamptonshire Council
 Cllr Peter Stevens – St Edmundsbury Borough Council
 Cllr Philip Sanders – West Devon Borough Council
 Cllr Les Kew – Bath & North East Somerset Council
 Cllr Jeremy Savage – South Norfolk Council
 John Birtwistle – Head of Policy, UK Bus
 Richard Quallington – Executive Director, ACRE
 Cllr Malcolm Leeding MBE - OALC (Oxfordshire Association of Local Councils)
 Cllr Mark Whittington – Lincolnshire County Council
 Cllr Cameron Clark – Sevenoaks District Council
 Cllr Yvonne Peacock – Richmondshire District Council
 Cllr Lee Chapman – Shropshire Council
 Odhran Jennings, Trusts Fundraiser – Bipolar UK
 Pam Howard, Housing Services Administrator – English Rural Housing Association

4. RSN Budget 2018/19, 2019/20 The 18/19 Budget was currently still awaiting charge payments from 4 members. They were being chased. The budget was therefore £5,000 to £6,000 away from its anticipated budgetary position at this time.

5. Report to the Executive on Advertisements in the Rural Bulletin.

The meeting considered the position in relation to use of the Bulletin for advertisements. It was decided as follows:-

1. The number of advertisements run would be kept at a ceiling of two per month, ensuring that at least two issues each month would remain advertisement free.
2. Advertisements would only be run where they had a particular relevance to rural areas.
3. Advertisements would only be taken from organisations who were or who became RSP members.
4. Contracts would only be negotiated where it was clear that total editorial freedom for the Bulletin remained.

The Executive discussed the position in relation to a current approach from BT/EE which would now proceed subject to contract.

6. A Call for Evidence through the Bulletin Service.

The meeting considered a report from the Corporate Director suggesting the canvassing of a system of Calls for Information, Evidence and Action. The system envisaged a free general service available to RSN members and to listed national organisations to allow rural contacts to have a greater input into consultation exercises. Additionally a University system may be

available for those undertaking research. Here a handling fee would be requested as part of any successful grant arrangement involved.

It was envisaged the service would be operated as follows:-

- (a) By a request contained within the weekly Bulletin.*
- (b) If it related to a specific Group of people by an email out to the members of RSN who were on our records and who engaged in that particular area of activity.*
- (c) If it is an issue affecting the wider group we would email out to all in that wider grouping i.e. the Community Group or it is such an important issue that it affects everyone we would, in addition to running it in the bulletin, send out a special email to everyone receiving our service. This however, is anticipated would only happen very occasionally. In cases of this importance we would probably make these an official RSN Call for Evidence.*

The report was agreed in principle.

(A member asked that the NFU, CLA, Countryside Alliance would be included and to be approached and this was confirmed as being the case)

The Executive agreed that those elements of the service deriving income would proceed at this stage and that a report back would be brought back to the Executive as likely demand was identified from those being approached where a free service was suggested.

7. Dates and Venues for Meetings in 2019

These were agreed as per the Agenda.

Arising from this item the Executive decided to reverse their previous decision about holding a meeting of the Executive at the Conference. It was decided instead to hold that meeting as in previous years towards the end of September in London. A date for that meeting will be canvassed.

8. Provisional Settlement – Verbal Report

The Chief Executive reported.

The settlement had been very much as had been anticipated. Given that main focus was on achieving material change in the way rural areas were considered in the change to a Business Rate funded system - in consultation with the Chair - it had been decided this year we would not ask to see the Local Government Minister at this time but instead document to him the position reached and the expectations of Government in the review process.

This had been done and the document was presented to the Executive together with the formal response RSN had made to the Draft Settlement.

The Executive formally agreed the action taken.

9. Future Arrangements with Pixel Financial Management

The Executive noted that Dan Bates had secured a position with a local authority. As a consequence, he would only be available to Pixel one day a week and would not be able to do specific work on resource distributional issues for SPARSE Rural. -

Pixel would continue to do that work and would support the RSN's own employee in the development of systems to capture and present figures like comparative resources, council tax levels, reliance on council tax urban v rural going forward.

The Executive wished Dan Bates well in his new post and thanked him for all his work on behalf of the RSN over many years

10. Draft response to both Business Rates Retention (BRR) and Needs and Resources Consultation

The BRR draft response from the RSN was not available to be considered by the Executive. Once finished, it would be sent to all SPARSE member authorities for comment and to inform their own response. The Executive approved the draft response to the Needs and Resources Consultation which would be sent to members with the BRR draft referred to

11. A Rural Strategy Campaign – Verbal Report

The Chief Executive introduced this item detailing the intention behind the initiative - approved at the AGM - which was to persuade Government of the need to prepare a formal strategy which documented the situation specifically facing rural areas and set out proposals which could strategically guide the way forward over the coming years. Small changes to the text considered by the AGM had been made on rural schools and including a reference to the Government's recently published NHS 10 Year Plan

All member authorities and organisations with a rural interest would be asked to sign up to the call.

Members considered the documentation which had been drafted to date, to back such a call and proposals set out by Lexington involving their possible involvement with the proposal to run a specific campaign seeking support.

The Executive were supportive of the initiative to run a campaign and the Lexington proposals. This would be referred to at the Rural Economy Group meeting on the 28th

It was recognised by the Executive that this was a particularly ambitious and important area of work. They stressed the importance of a rural overview being taken at a time when it was clear that important areas of work were being mapped out nationally.

Rural areas comprised almost 80% of the land area of England and it was vital that a comprehensive and strategic overview was taken that was of special relevance to the communities comprising the rural areas of the country. Members also stressed their view that the rural areas were of vital importance to the entire economy of the country as a whole requiring a strategic overview to be taken at this time.

12. Regional Meetings Update

| Region | Date | Subject | Venue |
|---------------|-------------|----------------|-----------------------|
| West Midlands | 18.02.19 | Rural Economy | Stafford BC confirmed |
| South West | 21.03.19 | Rural Housing | East Devon contacted |
| South East | 29.04.19 | Vulnerability | Sevenoaks confirmed |

| | | | |
|---------------|------------------|---|---------------------------------|
| North East | 15 – 17 May 2019 | Sustainable Communities | Durham contacted |
| East Midlands | 08.07.19 | Rural Health & Wellbeing | David contacting Cambridgeshire |
| North West | 07.10.19 | Delivering Local Services Differently | Lancashire contacted |
| Yorkshire | 09.12.19 | Barriers to Access – Connectivity & Rural Transport | North Yorkshire contacted |

These were agreed and noted.

13. Membership report update

Inevitably with the prolonged pressure on Council budgets some members were regarding involvement as a discretionary expenditure that should be reviewed and conversations were continuing with those authorities. The greatest difficulty was around Rural Assembly members where authorities with mainly urban populations but some rural areas were seeking to mainstream their activities. However the group as a whole remained at healthy numbers with around 135 authorities continuing to be involved.

14. SORS Report by Rural England

The Executive received a report on the Rural England SORS report. This report was produced every two years and covered a wide range of services. It was clear that many services in rural areas were being materially affected by the cut backs. The report would be launched at the Parliamentary Rural Vulnerability Day on the 11th of February.

15. Update on recruitment to RHCA

The joint initiative with the Centre for Rural Health and Social Care was progressing well.

Membership of the Rural Health and Care Alliance was free annually to Sparse Rural Members and to Rural Assembly members available as a £125 supplement.

Over the initial three months of recruitment 23 health orientated organisations had join the Alliance. The vast majority of these organisations would also become RSP members as a result of their membership package.

Jon Turner and Bethan Aldridge were thanked for their hard work in this area.

17. APPG Report on the Rural Context relating to meeting Adult Social Care Needs

The APPG's interim report had been sent to the Secretary of State. The APPG would meet again when the Government's Social Care Green Paper was published

18. Report on the Rural Conference 2019

Members received an update for the Rural Conference which would take place in Cheltenham on the 3rd and 4th of September.

The current working title for the conference is “Unlocking the Rural Economy: Creating Vibrant and Sustainable Rural Communities”

Note of last Rural Assembly Sub SIG Meeting

| | |
|---------------|--|
| Title: | Rural Assembly Sub SIG Meeting |
| Date: | Monday 8 April 2019 |
| Venue: | Beecham Room, 7th Floor, 18 Smith Square, London, SW1P 3HZ |

| Item | Decisions and actions |
|------|-----------------------|
|------|-----------------------|

1 Apologies for absence

Members noted apologies for this part of the meeting.

Mr David Inman (Rural Services Network) welcomed members to the meeting.
The Chair, Cllr Cecilia Motley (RSN), had sent apologies.
Cllr Robert Heseltine (North Yorkshire CC) substituted in her absence.

2 Minutes of the last Rural Assembly meeting and RSN AGM 12th November, 2018

The minutes of the last meetings of the Rural Assembly and the RSN AGM were both accepted.

3 Minutes of the last Executive meeting – 14th January 2019

The minutes of the last Executive meeting were noted.

4 Regional Meetings/Seminars

Mr Graham Biggs (Chief Executive, RSN) asked members to note upcoming regional meetings for information.

Members understood the benefits of trying to link in with the Rural Strategy Campaign as a means for greater discussion about regional variations in opportunities and examples of best practice. It was noted that the next one would be held - for the first time - in the South East and the agenda would include looking at vulnerability from a range of service providers. Members were encouraged to attend this event on 29 April 2019.

Despite poor attendance levels when held previously at the same venue, the next seminar would be held in Yorkshire in December. Members recognised difficulties around interest at that particular time of year.

5 The 'Time For a Rural Strategy' Campaign": Graham Biggs

Mr Biggs informed members of current work around engagement which included elected members.

The Rural Strategy campaign was launched in March and several individuals have

already signed up. Members noted significant dates regarding the launch of Lords Select Committee Reports and he informed them that he was confident that this will be positive. He has been invited to meet Lord Gove and John Gardiner on 30 April to discuss the strategy.

Members noted details of recent meetings and plans to hold regional roadshows working closely with ACRE to look at ways of identifying issues that need to be addressed within a rural template strategy and to gain support for one. It was agreed that this is a very important piece of work and members were encouraged to engage in the process.

Members noted individuals already signed up for engagement and acknowledged the challenge in raising the profile and publicity when Brexit is at the foreground of all.

They raised several points:

- Clarification of what a rural strategy will contain must be articulated;
- What stage do we try to influence the party conferences? Mr Graham stated that there is no financial capacity to do this – although an offer was made to possibly attend and present at the Conservative party conference. This will be taken forward.
- A request for direct email dialogue with councillors about this, once the May elections are over.
- Backing and support from constituency MPs will be vital – it is important that local authority leaders sign the strategy so that they are encouraged to engage.

They agreed that discussion should continue to be a feature on all forthcoming agendas.

6 Rural Vulnerability Day and Parliamentary Group

David Inman informed members that over 40 MPs have stated their interest at being involved – although obviously no progress has been made as yet because their own agendas are too hectic at the present moment in time.

Members noted the recent success of the rural vulnerability day. It was felt though that the agenda was slightly too ambitious, however it proved popular by all who attended and will continue to be a repeated event. Members were asked to note that it will likely be held each February.

The Group received a presentation from Mr Brian Wilson, highlighting details of the State of the Rural Services Report 2018 <https://ruralengland.org>. A key point found within the analysis was that rurality was rarely an explicit consideration in assessing cost and safety factors.

Several gaps were identified in the evidence base. Mr Wilson informed the group that the launch went well and there had been quite a lot of media interest in the report. More work would be done to ensure that contacts extend exposure to the report amongst their own networks.

See presentation [here](#).

Members referred to examples within their own areas where they had experienced reduced funding to services areas, including subsidised bus routes, youth clubs etc. Digital connectivity is still far behind in rural areas.

- Lack of Policing was becoming a real issue and members said that it should have been included within the report as a key issue. Members noted the national rural crime network – another organisation which is there to look at these specific kind of issues.
- There needs to be a balanced community to ensure that the needs of young and old are recognised.
- They referred to healthy communities of the past and the dangers in losing young families and young people if schools, pubs, shops go from certain areas. These affect the psyche of these particular areas and this self-destructive effect needs to be recognised by government. Members accepted that the context given the advancement of technology also needs to be looked at.
- Rural employment and affordability of homes are linked.
- Addressing rural decline is vital in order to keep communities alive.

The Chair thanked Mr Wilson for an interesting and informative discussion.

7 Rural Vulnerability and Disadvantage Position Statement

Mr Inman reminded members of the background to the issue of this statement.

Colleagues noted the report which highlighted how it is becoming more difficult for people in rural areas to access services. The number of those vulnerable in these areas is increasing and it is important that these services are brought together to devise systems to tackle this issue.

The statement will be issued annually.

8 Budget Report

The group noted the balance position at the present time - £12-15k carried forward to 2019/20.

Invoices for membership are in the process of being sent out. A key disappointment is that the new unitary authority of Dorset Council will not be renewing.

The report was received.

9 Sounding Board Survey Consideration of topic

Members noted that the subject of the next survey is *the economy* and is due to be sent out in approximately a month's time. Following that will be one on cuts to services and finally, there will be one on health and wellbeing.

All data collected will feed into the strategy process.

10 Rural Services Network Annual Rural Conference To note the draft programme for 2019

Members noted the draft programme for the conference. A Keynote speaker for the

first day will be Lord Gardiner, unless there are any unforeseen changes. Lord Foster will also be a keynote speaker.

It was suggested that Alison Farmer Associates, Cambridge, be invited to provide a presentation on Planning in sensitive landscapes. Cllr Peter Stevens agreed to correspond with Mr Biggs with further details.

The Group noted addition suggestions for future consideration.

The draft programme was agreed.

11 Report on the RSP Service Groups/ Network Bodies

Mr Biggs provided an update on the work of specific Service Groups and Network Bodies.

- Crime – no matters of major importance although lack of data and evidence of impact of organised crime in rural areas is an issue. Evidence is quite limited. Communities are losing confidence in the police leading to less reporting and lack of data.
- Fire – the conference was under represented by rural authorities albeit because of rail and weather problems on the day.
- Rural Services APPG – members noted planned meeting in May on rural youth issues to include partnership members which will bring along young people to debate with MPs. It is hoped that many of the members would regard this as an important issues and attend.
- Rural England CIC - Members received an update of the recent meeting of directors and their agreement to publish the state of the rural Services report in 2021, rather than next year. Mr Wilson will prepare some work for the stakeholders to look at in June.

Members acknowledged that all initiatives began with RSN and therefore engagement is key to progress.

12 Any other Business

There was no other business.

The Chair thanked everyone for their input and the meeting was closed.

Appendix A

| Name | Organisation |
|---|------------------------------------|
| Cllr Robert Heseltine, Chair | North Yorkshire County Council |
| Graham Biggs, Chief Executive | RSN |
| David Inman, Director | RSN |
| Cllr Owen Bierley | West Lindsey District Council |
| Cllr Cameron Clark | Sevenoaks District Council |
| Revd Richard Kirlew | Sherborne Deanery Rural Chaplaincy |
| Cllr Vic Pritchard | Bath & North East Somerset Council |
| Cllr Louise Richardson | Leicestershire County Council |
| Sean Johnson, Programme Manager | Lincolnshire County Council |
| Chris Stanton, Rural Economy Officer | Guildford Borough Council |
| Cllr Peter Stevens | West Suffolk District Council |
| Amy Thomas, Head of Operations and T.E.D Programme Manager | Community Lincs |
| Cllr Trevor Thorne | Northumberland County Council |
| Claire Walters, Chief Executive | Bus Users |
| | |
| Speaker | |
| Brian Wilson | Rural England |

Note of RSN Rural Special Interest Group meeting on Rural Social Care and Health

| | |
|---------------|--|
| Title: | Rural Services Network Special Interest Group <ul style="list-style-type: none">• Rural Social Care & Health Group Meeting |
| Date: | Monday 8 April 2019 |
| Venue: | LGA, Smith Square ,18 Smith Square, London, SW1P 3HZ |

Attendance

An attendance list can be found here (to follow)

Rural Social Care & Health Group Meeting 11am – 1pm

1 Apologies for Absence

Members noted apologies for the meeting.

2 Minutes of the last Rural Social Care and Health Group - 12th November 2018

The minutes of the previous meeting were accepted as a correct record.

3 Matters Arising

Minute 6 – Together with the APPG Chair and Vice Chair the RSN Chief Executive, Graham Biggs had met the Minister for Social Care last week. The Minister welcomed the APPG's Interim Report into the Rural Context into Adult Social Care had called for as much further research and evidence as possible.

She had not been able to be forthcoming on any timetable for the publishing of the long-awaited Green Paper.

. It was in draft form but needed approval from the Cabinet Office and the Treasury before publication. The Paper would not be dealing with issues relating to the formula for distributing Government funding to Local Government - that was for MHCLG.

4 Presentation by Mark Allen, Commissioning Hampshire County Council

- Presentation on RSN Health & Social Care Group
- He is the lead for Social Care in Hampshire.

Hampshire County had over 75,000 cases currently, 14,500 were bed-bound, and 3,500 people were in homes owned by Hampshire County Council.

He detailed the approach taken with some people.

Technology programmes had to be driven by providers of Social Care as opposed to IT techies. Recovering the charges involved for these often proved to be counter-productive as those costs were more expensive to recover than the sum being pursued.

There was no technological silver bullet – a range of things were required.

Some 12,000 people across the County were now assisted through this technological approach.

The evidence base was often missing from the provider's current approach. It was possible to detail the individual service but not across Hampshire as a package. Nor did that service necessarily dovetail to an individual's actual needs.

Mark felt that presentations he had heard by Ofcom and Openreach suggested change was afoot. It was important approaches kept well up with those changes.

The turn off of the telephone landline analogue systems was apparently anticipated by BT by 2026.

The measurements in terms of social interaction were the most important consideration gained through the approach in Hampshire. Based on those criteria the technological approach had undoubtedly been successful.

Overall the level of health for the clients involved in Hampshire had been improved.

5 Presentation by Jeremy Leggatt, ACRE

THE NHS TEN YEAR PLAN

- Presentation on the NHS 10 Year Plan and Adult Social Care Issues as ACRE see them

The emphasis of his presentation this time was on Health Care as opposed to Social Care.

There were at County level 39 charities previously named 'Community Councils' but now had many varied and different names. They served 11,000 rural communities. Their strapline was 'Nobody should be unreasonably disadvantaged by where they live'. The question posed therefore was 'do rural and urban people receive the same NHS?'

This question had clearly not been asked in the NHS 10 year – in his view this was a major omission in its approach, meaning it had had an urban bias but there was no evidence to suggest it had been posed.

It was also a current question for CCGs.

In Sussex it had been observed that the one CCG without a hospital was operating in a very different way to the other CCGs.

Blue light – targets were continually being missed. He asked if that was the case why were things not approached in a different way – why was there resistance from Ambulance Services to any sort of rural proofing?

The view was, therefore, more and more there was a centralised health service being driven by the bulk of population. This was leading to a two- tier Health Service as rural areas were not part of the equation. It begged the question why/who would people train at a hospital with a largely predominantly rural area that was likely to have to be ten years off the pace.

The trend towards the clustering of services was counterproductive to rural health facilities.

The ten - year overview should have included consideration of the special needs of rural but instead that had been avoided. There was, in his view, a need to move to more specialists driven by overall service and not simply by patient numbers - supported by local services. However, to fund that would need closures of some facilities to pay for that coverage.

Instead there was a threat closures would occur but without commensurate benefit at all.

The deprivation indices needed to be properly considered and rural proofed, as they always favoured, urban areas.

The vital paragraph 2.25 in the ten- year document had not been rurally proofed. Clearly, the will was to allocate to urban areas which were considered to be deprived. This seemed to be the sole target

He felt that rural services would suffer still further during the course of the 10 - year plan.

COMMUNITY ACTION

He begged Authorities to give more backing for community action and not impose 'statutory systems' on volunteers. They were there to be trusted. Whilst there would always be financial risk this had to be set against the overall situation. If not taken advantage of volunteers will become frustrated and schemes that could have gone forward will simply not proceed. That would be to the cost of communities.

6 Any other business

There was no other business and the meeting was closed.

Rural Services Partner Group Inaugural Meeting

Tuesday 9th April 2019

Venue – 63, Bayswater Rad, London.

Present:

Jane Mordue (Citizens Advice), Nik Harwood (Chief Executive, Young Somerset), Steven Bland (Regional Housing Manager, English Rural Housing Association), Digby Chackfield (Rural Enterprise East, East and Otley College), Harriot English (Head of Engagement, Plunkett Foundation), Revd Elizabeth Clark MA (National Rural Officer for the Methodist and United Reformed Churches, Germinate The Arthur Rank Centre), Amanda Fearn (Development Director, The National Youth Agency), Revd Richard Kirlaw (The Sherborne Deanery Rural Chaplaincy), Laura Cochran (Parkinson's UK), John Birtwistle (First Group), Emma Bould (Programme Partnerships Project Manager, Alzheimer's UK), Henry Lee (External Policy & Research Co-ordinator, Hastoe Housing), Tony Price (Trent and Dove Housing), David Rowe (Chief Executive, CSW Group), Mr Leeding (Oxfordshire Association of Parish & Town Councils)

RSN Officers Graham Biggs (GB) (Chief Executive RSN/RSP), David Inman (DI) (Corporate Director RSN/RSP) Jon Tuner (JT) (Policy Director RSN)

Apologies for Absence:

Rod Hammerton (Shropshire Fire & Rescue), Nigel Wilcock (Institute of Economic Development (IED)), Martin Roehorn (Director of Finance, Hereford & Worcester Fire), Darren Henley (Chief Executive, Arts Council England), Matthew Isom (Chief Executive, Dispensing Doctors' Association Ltd), Marcus Clinton (Reaseheath College), Cllr Roger Phillips (Hereford & Worcester Fire)

GB was asked by the Chairman Rev Kirlaw to provide a short explanation about the work of the Rural Services Network. (RSN). For more details please refer to the RSN website – link

<https://www.rsnonline.org.uk/>

Group Responded

A membership diagram was requested. It was agreed that this would be circulated with the meeting notes.

1. Election of Chair and Vice Chair of the Group

The Chairman explained that this item would form part of the next meeting to take place in November, which will take place as part of the formal Rural Services Partnership Ltd AGM on 19th November.

2. Rural Services Partnership

GB outlined the formal structure of the RSN and the role of the Rural Services Partnership Ltd which is a membership organisation. GB explained that the RSP Ltd is a Private Company limited by Guarantee, the legal and financial part of the organisation, and is the non-local government part of the RSN. It works predominately with both the private and third sector service providers/interest groups across rural England.

The Rural Services Network is a Special Interest Group of the Local Government Association. It comprises two sub Special Interest Groups, Sparse-Rural and the Rural Assembly, (both also membership organisations) which are local authority members of RSN.

Now that the RSP has increased its membership in the past 12 months, it was considered necessary to avoid confusion between the RSP Ltd and the RSP. As a result, a new sub group was proposed The Rural Services Partner Group (RSPG). This would avoid the group being constrained by Company rules and regulations in its deliberations. A formal decision regarding the setting up of the RSPG would need to be ratified at the RSP Ltd AGM on 19th November

3. Rual Services Partner Group Protocol

GB outlined the suggested purpose of the paper and asked for members to review the document and forward comments to JT in May. The Protocol will be considered in more detail, including feedback from members, at the RSP Ltd AGM

4. The Remit of the Rual Services Partner Group

JT outlined the suggested future remit and purpose of the RSPG and the 'tools' available for members to inform the RSN's policy work and representation and lobbying priorities. Members were asked to feedback their comments to JT about the sectors represented and whether others need to be approached and to suggest other organisations which RSN could approach to join the network.

The Group Responded

Members were keen to engage with colleagues and partners organisations and encourage them to join the RSPG.

5. Feedback from the RSN Health & Care Meeting and the Rural Assembly meeting held on the 8th April.

GB explained that there were two presentations at the Health & Care Meeting by Hampshire County Council and ACRE. The Hampshire CC presentation outlined the benefits of data technology in the delivery of adult social care services and ACRE's presentation considered aspects of rural health in the NHS's 10 Year Plan.

The Rural Assembly received a presentation on Rural England CIC's "State of the Rural Services Report 2018"

All three presentations slide will be available on the RSN website.

6. Feedback on the Rural Vulnerability Panel Meeting

DI reported on the morning's meeting and the purpose and role of the RSPG Vulnerability Panel. DI emphasised the need for rural areas to be given special consideration by Government and services providers, as the challenges experienced by rural people and communities were exacerbated by many factors which were different to those experienced in urban areas.

The Group Responded

Some members who were not present in the morning asked if they could attend the next panel meeting.

The next panel meeting will take place on 19th November.

7. The Call for a Rural Strategy.

GB explained that RSN had approached a number of other rural organisations to work collectively to call on the Government to consider rural communities in a post BREXIT world and not just think of rural as food/farming/environment. Unfortunately, a consensus could not be reached within the group about some of the terminology and so the RSN decided to proceed on its own to prepare a Template Rural Strategy. This was launched as a national campaign on 1st March, 2019

The RSN was carrying out work to add depth and texture to the Template Rural Strategy. To that end GB was also seeking input from members to engage in themes workshops to develop and strengthen the evidence base to put before Government. RSN were in the process of organising themed video conference workshops with members over the coming months.

GB also commented that the House of Lords Select Committee on the Rural Economy is due to publish their findings on the 2^{7th} April, in which there may be a recommendation for a Rural Strategy. Furthermore, following a meeting in Taunton on the 8th March led by Lord Cameron, the RSN, working with ACRE, The Plunket Foundation and the Rural Coalition were considering a series of 3 or 4 regional seminars which would provide the opportunity to consider rural issues at a regional level.

GB asked members to review the RSN website which outlined the purpose of the Call for a Rural Strategy, and if they had not done so already sign up and support the campaign. Please refer to the following link for details

<https://www.rsonline.org.uk/time-for-a-rural-strategy>

<https://www.surveymonkey.co.uk/r/time-for-a-rural-strategy>

GB also asked if members could provide 'real life' case studies where rural communities and residents were experiencing challenges as a consequence of living in rural areas. This would assist the media interest.

The group agreed to respond if they had not done so already.

A group member raised concern about the need for Parish Councils to be encouraged to be engaged in the process, especially small councils. GB replied that NALC were RSP members

Other group members raised concern about the digital economy in rural areas, where banks and other financial service providers withdraw services. Their commitment to upskill the community to use digital technology was very light touch.

8. Housing in Rural Areas – Presentation by Henry Lee, Hastoe Housing Group

Henry outlined the ground breaking work of Hastoe Housing and the Rural Housing Alliance and current national housing policy relevant to rural areas.

To review the presentation please refer to the following link: **RICH?**

9. **Alzheimer's work from a rural perspective.** – Presentation by Emma Bould, Alzheimer's UK.

Emma provided a very useful introduction to the work Alzheimer's UK has been undertaking in rural areas and a review of their Dementia-friendly rural communities guide.

To review a copy of the Dementia – friendly rural communities guide please visit www.alzheimers.org.uk/rural

10. **Public Transport in rural areas where do we go from here** – presentation by John Birtwistle, First Group.

John raised the following points during his presentation about the challenges that bus operators experience in today's market place.

- bus is the glue linking facilities services and people; politicians need educating about how buses work
- small local family businesses are giving up and closing
- local authority spending cuts lead to greatest reduction in discretionary spend – LTAs are only required to identify missing socially necessary services, not fund them
- there have been cuts but don't take the stats at face value
- Bus Services Act 2017 provides toolkit for urban areas – voluntary partnership remains the best approach
- Open data already available but will become greater in scope – fares, buses moving on maps
- Concessionary reimbursement is still falling
- Ideas put to Lords Rural Economy Select Committee – tax breaks for Total Transport successes; a new "rural bus grant" – capital assistance for buses used >50% in rural areas
- Local authorities need joined up thinking across functions and get the facts clear on what you can do legally – don't be led by procurement
- Industry needs a national bus policy, long term stability/funding commitments

11. **Rural England Community Interest Company**

GB outlined the purpose and background behind RE, for more details please refer to the following link: <https://ruralengland.org/>

GB outlined the recent publication of the State of the Services Report 2018, which presents the most recent evidence regarding the provision of services to residents and businesses in rural England. The report covers 8 service areas which are: Local buses and community transport, Broadband and mobile connectivity, Public library services, Hospitals, Public health services, Young people's services, Shops and online shopping and Personal advice services. To see a full version of the document, please refer to the following link:

<https://ruralengland.org/state-of-rural-services-report-2018/>

RE is also undertaking some work on Rural Fuel Poverty and access to post 16 education.

12. **The National Conference and Regional Seminars**

This year the Conference will take place on the 3rd and 4th September hosted by the University of Gloucestershire at their Cheltenham campus. The title for the 2-day event is 'Creating Vibrant Rural Communities'. Two key note speakers have already confirmed their attendance – Lord

Gardiner of Kimble, and the Chair of the House of Lords Select Committee into the Rural Economy, Lord Foster of Bath. The focus of the Conference will be the call on the government for a Rural Strategy. The 2 days will include workshops and plenary speakers from local authorities, voluntary and private sector.

7 Regional Seminars are being held this year, which include hot topics from Public Sector Funding to Health and Wellbeing for details please refer to the following link:
<https://www.rsnonline.org.uk/category/seminars>

GB explained that the seminars are free for RSP members, and encouraged non-local authority partners to attend and participate.

13. Any Other Business

There was no other business and the meeting was closed.

Date of next meeting **19th November, 2019**

Meeting Notes for the Rural Vulnerability Panel

Tuesday 9th April 2019

Venue – 63, Bayswater Rad, London.

Present:

Jane Mordue (Chair) (Citizens Advice), Nik Harwood (Chief Executive, Young Somerset), Digby Chackfield (Rural Enterprise East, East and Otley College), Harriot English (Head of Engagement, Plunkett Foundation), Revd Elizabeth Clark MA, (National Rural Officer for the Methodist and United Reformed Churches, Germinate The Arthur Rank Centre), Amanda Fearn (Development Director, The National Youth Agency), Revd Richard Kirew (The Sherborne Deanery Rural Chaplaincy), Laura Cochran (Parkinson's UK), John Birtwistle (First Group), Emma Bould (Alzheimers UK), Mr Leeding (Oxfordshire Association of Parish & Town Councils)

RSN Officers Graham Biggs (GB) (Chief Executive RSN & RSP), David Inman (DI) (Corporate Director RSN & RSP) Jon Turner (JT) (Policy Director RSN)

Apologies for Absence:

Rod Hammerton (Shropshire Fire & Rescue), Nigel Wilcock (Institute of Economic Development (IED)), Martin Roehorn (Director of Finance, Hereford & Worcester Fire), Darren Henley (Chief Executive, Arts Council England), Matthew Isom (Chief Executive, Dispensing Doctors' Association Ltd, Marcus Clinton (Reaseheath College)

1. General Introduction

The Chairman, Rev Richard Kirew, asked Graham Biggs (GB), CEO of RSN, to outline the relationship between the Rural Services Network (RSN) and the Rural Services Partnership (RSP).

The RSN includes both Sparse and Rural Assembly local authorities, there are currently some 140 members. The Sparse local authorities are members on whose behalf RSN lobby in Government in respect of local government funding both directly and through the Rural Fair Share Group (a cross-party group of rural MPs, who campaign for national resources within central government to be directed to support both local government funding and the funding of other essential public services in rural England). The Rural Assembly local authority members do not benefit from our financial lobbying services. They benefit from the RSN's rural policy and representational work.

The Rural Services Partnership Ltd (RSP) is the non-local authority network which was formed in about 2003. The interface its members have with the local authority members is at the bi-annual Rural Assembly meetings which take place in London and the two sub-groups – Rural Economy and Health & Social Care and at the Annual Rural Conference and the 7 Regional Seminars/Meetings.

The Group responded.

A member asked whether we are currently working with LEPs as they have access to funding sources. GB explained as they are governmental organisations and distribute public funding, LEPs, therefore, would have a direct conflict of interest if they were to join any rural (or urban) groups.

However, it was suggested that it might be a good idea to work with them where possible when they undertake research.

Other members were supportive of the work of the RSN and recognised its value in terms of supporting community groups, businesses, and the public sector.

2. The Foreseen Role and Purpose of the RSP Vulnerability Group (Appendix A)

GB introduced the paper and outlined the reason for the Panel, which was to provide RSP member organisations a forum to discuss the challenges that they experience in the delivery of services in rural England.

DI emphasised that vulnerability was not unique to rural areas, but the issues and impacts that rural residents and communities experience in rural England are very different to those in urban areas. For example, people in rural areas live longer as a percentage of the overall population, however, with an ageing profile and declining investment in social care and wellbeing the future implications for older people is potentially more severe than those experienced by older people in urban areas. DI explained that there was a need for organisations to work collaboratively to address vulnerability issues. DI asked for members to work in partnership with the RSP, through examples of best practice and information and research exchange, to address rural vulnerability.

The group responded

A member was keen to consider how we could look at data collection in a more comprehensive way. She explained that data sets sourced from local authorities were not always comparable and limited data was available.

A member suggested that the RSP draft document needed to be more focused. Perhaps there was a need to agree some themes in order that the Panel's work could be focused and prioritised.

A member said that one of the major challenges was the lack of knowledge about the transport sector within the local authority sector in particular. There was a need to explain both nationally and locally the impact that local authority funding decisions had on the transport network.

A member suggested that the Panel needed a strap line and the work of the Panel needed to be based on real fact and avoid any fiction. There was a need for positive solutions.

A member suggested that the Panel should consider not only the current challenges, but what the situation might be in 10-15 years' time, as many of the health and care and service issues discussed will become far more acute in the years to come.

A member said that young people would question what rural vulnerability was. Perhaps other terms should be considered when engaging young people.

All organisations present were supportive of the RSP Vulnerability Panel. Members were asked to consider what themes they would like as priorities for future Panel meetings. **Action: members to forward suggestions by the mid-May to Jon Turner.**

Members were also encouraged by GB to review the RSN website which outlined the purpose of the 'Call for a Rural Strategy', and if they had not done so already to sign up and support the campaign. Please refer to the following link for details

<https://www.rsnonline.org.uk/time-for-a-rural-strategy>

<https://www.surveymonkey.co.uk/r/time-for-a-rural-strategy>

3. Members Invited to Participate in the Panel

JT outlined why certain organisations had been approached. JT explained that the RSP can only work with member organisations that pay a membership subscription, as this was necessary to sustain the RSN which was dependent upon membership support.

Members were requested to review the circulated list and suggest other organisations that they might consider would be interested in joining the RSP and participating in the Panel

Other sectors to be considered in terms of representation were digital and health sectors.

4 RSN Vulnerability and Disadvantage Statement 2019

The document was introduced by DI. It was approved by the meeting, however, as a working document member were encouraged to forward comments, or additional themes, they consider could be included, plus any facts and stats they would like to include with a supporting reference source. Comments should be sent to JT.

5 The Parliamentary Vulnerability Group

GB outlined the purpose of the Group which has a membership of circa 40 active MPs. GB explained that this group was not an All-Party Parliamentary Group. The Vulnerability Group unlike the APPG can through its members lobby government as long as those parliamentarians have robust evidence to support their approach to government. GB suggested that members of the Panel would be able to engage with the Group and the work of the Panel could assist in forming future agendas and provide information and best practice for future Vulnerability Days.

6. General discussion about rural vulnerability

The Chairman concluded that this meeting had covered this and no further discussion was undertaken.

7. A.O.B

The Panel would meet twice a year in the Spring and in November. The proposed date for the November meeting would be the 19th November, venue to be confirmed.

REPORT TO THE EXECUTIVE OF THE RURAL SERVICES NETWORK ON THE POSSIBLE FORMATION OF A RURAL TOWNS GROUP AS A PART OF RSP AREA OF THE RURAL SERVICES NETWORK.

Introduction

This report gives consideration about whether Rural Town Councils/Rural Town Partnerships should be given a more defined role (as fee paying members as a sub-group within the Rural Services Network)

At the present time some of the Rural Towns are attached (free of charge) through the Community Group should their District/County or Unitary Council be in RSN membership, but there is no defined role for them in RSN – they simply receive our information and can participate in Sounding Board exercises at present.

More generally, Rural Towns seem to have little role in rural policy thinking/focus terms since the Market Town initiative ended some years ago.

Rural Towns – Background - and the Current Position

Working with Brian Wilson we have prepared a discussion document (copy attached as Appendix A which will assist the Executive in the consideration of this matter and which (if the Executive is supportive of such an initiative) could be used as a base for an offer to town organisations

The Nature of the RSN service offer.

A big question is what sort of RSN service offer could prove attractive, as well as being realistic and affordable to deliver? Preferably, quite distinct from what NALC and others are doing. A few suggestions are listed below. They are not intended to be comprehensive, but simply to spark discussion and other (doubtless better) ideas. Initial suggestions are:

- Formation of a dedicated RSP Rural Towns Sub-Group, offering some peer-to-peer networking and discussion opportunities (either face-to-face or online).

(the suggestion to use RSP is to avoid any possible dilution of the work of the RSN SIG work which involves principal councils)

- Development of a representational role, for example responding to selected public policy consultations or meeting with interested Parliamentarians. There appears to be no rural or market or small towns APPG.
- Development of good practice and learning material related to the key policy areas and delivery challenges or opportunities for rural/market towns.

- Provision of a dedicated (quarterly?) newsletter highlighting relevant latest policy developments, showcasing interesting member practice and flagging relevant initiatives or funding opportunities (perhaps drawn from the Rural Funding Digest).
- Possibly provision of some benchmark statistics about rural/market towns.
- Management of occasional online surveys of the member rural/market towns, to gather comparative information about topics of particular interest to this grouping.

RECOMMENDATION

It is recommended that we look to establish a Rural Town/Partnerships Sub-Group of the RSP along the lines set out in this report and its Appendices. This could help with the development of our work to add “depth and texture” to the RSN’s “Call for a Rural Strategy”.

The approach would be made to (a) Rural Hub Towns (10,000 to 30,000 population), (b) Market Towns (5,000 to 10,000 population) and to what might be detailed as (c) Smaller Market Towns (4,000 to 5000 population).

There are in total 616 Rural Towns across England which we could approach to establish whether they have interest in being involved (as set out in Appendix B to this report) which falls into that category range. These towns are in both member and non-member areas.

It is suggested that the annual membership fee requested is £150 for Hub Towns; £130 for Market Towns and £110 for the Smaller Market Towns.

We would ensure that there would be two specific meetings a year of this sub group with periodic opportunities for this Sub Group in RSN to present to the Rural Services APPG as relevant issues arise which MPs representing Rural Constituencies should be made aware of/asked to make representations to Ministers about.

Rural Services Network: Scope for Possible Offer to Rural/Market Towns

Background

The creation of a Market Towns Initiative (MTI) was a key announcement in the Rural White Paper 2000. MTI was developed and managed by the Countryside Agency, with grants being awarded to town partnerships by the RDAs. Over 150 market towns benefitted. MTI technically ceased in 2004, along with plans to wind-up the Countryside Agency, though some grants were still given by RDAs until they in-turn were wound-up in 2010.

Action for Market Towns was then set up as a charitable consultancy. It offered support packages, good practice and a revamped market towns health check. In later years it was renamed Towns Alive. However, in 2014, when Big Lottery grant funding ran out, it folded.

This does not, of course, mean there is no market town renewal or regeneration activity taking place. Local authorities¹, Local Enterprise Partnerships and Government funded initiatives like the Coastal Communities Fund all enable this to happen in some places. However, there does not appear to be a dedicated national support body for this agenda.

It is worth noting that NALC has a Larger Councils' Committee. Many members of this are market or rural towns and some appear to be Town Councils established (i.e. newly parished) following local government restructuring to shire unitary areas e.g. Salisbury. Its Committee Members represent Falmouth, Shildon, Bishop Auckland, Horden, Alton, Chippenham and Newport Pagnell. Those eligible to join must have at least 6,000 on their electoral roll and an annual income exceeding £250,000. NALC run an annual conference for Larger Councils and seem to offer them enhanced legal services.

NALC have also been exploring (and seemingly setting up) a Super Councils' Network, for the very largest of their members where either the annual precept exceeds £1 million or annual turnover exceeds £1.5 million. It is known that representatives include Sevenoaks and Chippenham (again), so arguably not rural places. No more is known about this.

Town Councils and other rural/market town groups will, of course, turn to various other sources for support services. In some cases this will be their ACRE Network member, where the offer available will vary from county to county. County based CALCs are another, though their offer is usually limited to training and compliance with Town/Parish Council duties. Others will receive services from national support bodies, such as Locality (especially on neighbourhood planning and community rights).

In short, the policy landscape and associated funding could be described as very patchy for market town support. NALC supports larger Town Councils among its membership, though this appears to focus on giving them a voice and raising their profile, whilst pursuing certain operational agendas such as local leadership and access to public funds.

¹ See, for example: <https://www.north-norfolk.gov.uk/news/2018/market-towns-initiative-nine-projects-to-improve-four-north-norfolk-market-towns-approved/>
Or, another example: <http://democracy.hants.gov.uk/ieDecisionDetails.aspx?Id=671>

Key issues for rural/market towns

Inevitably, rural/market towns experience differing issues depending on their geography, size, local economy, accessibility and so on. However, the following five seem likely to be issues for many:

- High street viability: the switch to online shopping, significant bank branch closures and the like have left some town centres struggling for trade and with vacant retail units. Some will be adapting much better than others;
- Large scale housing development pressure: especially across the southern half of shire England, rural/market towns are typically the location where Local Plans seek to deliver the bulk of their housing targets (frequently, in sizeable town extensions on greenfield sites). On top of this planned development, many face speculative applications. Aside from any environmental or landscape impacts, there is generally public concern how roads, schools, health centres and other infrastructure will cope;
- Loss of public service outlets: many have either lost or face threats to services such as public libraries, tourist information centres, leisure centres, youth centres and jobcentres. Local authority grants for facilities such as museums and arts centres have also shrunk. Many towns are seeking to retain some of these through local and voluntary action;
- Transport and traffic: traditional bus services are being lost, especially on lesser used routes from villages, but even on inter-town routes at off-peak times. Allied to this, to an extent, is concern about increasing car traffic and town centre congestion;
- Regeneration issues and opportunities: rural/market towns often have former employment sites, disused buildings or run-down quarters, which detract from the built environment, but may have regeneration, cultural or tourism potential. These can reflect an industrial heritage or a struggling seaside trade. Getting redevelopment to happen, and in a way that meets town needs, can be a real challenge.

It is notable that certain rural agendas are less relevant for rural/market towns. They are, for example, already likely to have reasonable digital connectivity. Affordable housing is still an issue, but towns typically do have social rented stock and the key to delivering new affordable housing may be achieving Local Plan targets on their development sites. Indeed, it could be said some of the above issues have more in common with urban policy concerns.

Without doubt many Town Councils, perhaps working with local partnerships, development trusts and the like, are seeking to expand their role. This is part opportunity, spurred on by initiatives such as neighbourhood planning, but may be more about challenges, faced with the austerity impacts and declining principal local authority services. Growing local capacity, leadership and access to resources are thus important for them. Moreover, it is worth noting that many Town Councils have a wider leadership role assisting nearby Parish Councils e.g. delivering environmental services, coordinating joint neighbourhood plans.

Some further considerations for any RSN offer

Finally, this note covers a few points which may prove worthwhile considering if this idea is to be progressed.

What are rural or market towns? Defra and ONS statisticians define 'rural' as all settlements with fewer than 10,000 residents. Their rural town definition is now a statistical construct (based on density at certain radii), though the former CRC always referred to settlements with 3,000 or more residents. When classifying 'rural' local authorities Defra also include so-called 'hub towns', which are selected places with a population between 10,000 and 30,000, where data shows they are key service and employment centres for a rural hinterland.

How many rural or market towns are there? Some academic analysis of the Defra and ONS data set indicates that there are almost 900 towns in England which have a population between 5,000 and 30,000. If the lower end threshold is reduced to include somewhat smaller places that number is likely to increase quite substantially.

What are Town Councils? There is no set definition. Legally they are Parish Councils, which have opted to call themselves Town Councils, doubtless to reflect the size or role of their community. It is interesting that NALC instead defines Larger Councils (and does so in financial terms). Of course, there is no reason for RSN to stick with either the ONS/Defra rural town definition or the Town Council nomenclature.

Who might receive RSN services? That said, Town Councils or Parish/Town Councils above a certain threshold may be the most obvious target group, given their formal status and likely activities. However, many of them will work with other organisations and area partnerships. As noted above, sometimes such partnerships will include adjoining Parish Councils. RSN services may be more attractive if sharable with key partners.

Retaining and replacing RSN members: It is noted that a key driver behind considering a RSN offer to rural/market towns is the loss of some principal local authority members. An option would be to offer at one price to rural/market towns where their principal authority is not in RSN and at a discounted price where their principal authority is in RSN. This would add a further membership incentive to principal authorities.

Nature of RSN service offer: A big question is what sort of RSN service offer could prove attractive, as well as being realistic and affordable to deliver? Preferably, quite distinct from what NALC and others are doing. A few suggestions are listed below. They are not intended to be comprehensive, but simply to spark discussion and other (doubtless better) ideas. Initial suggestions are:

- Formation of a dedicated RSP Rural Towns Sub-Group, offering some peer-to-peer networking and discussion opportunities (either face-to-face or online).
- Development of a representational role, for example responding to selected public policy consultations or meeting with interested Parliamentarians. There appears to be no rural or market or small towns APPG.

- Development of good practice and learning material related to the key policy areas and delivery challenges or opportunities for rural/market towns.
- Provision of a dedicated (quarterly?) newsletter highlighting relevant latest policy developments, showcasing interesting member practice and flagging relevant initiatives or funding opportunities (perhaps drawn from the Rural Funding Digest).
- Provision of some benchmark statistics about rural/market towns. The work of an independent group called the Centre for Towns² may be relevant and they could be worth contacting. It appears to be a group of academics, analysts and activists who launched in November 2018 and have already done some data work.
- Management of occasional online surveys of the member rural/market towns, to gather comparative information about topics of particular interest to this grouping.

BW

March 2019

² Centre for Towns website: <https://www.centrefortowns.org/> Their interest includes large / urban as well as small / rural towns.

Appendix G (b)

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|-----------------------|--|-------|----------|
| Allerdale | Keswick (Allerdale) BUA | 4821 | SPARSE |
| Allerdale | Cockermouth BUA | 9146 | SPARSE |
| Allerdale | Maryport BUA | 9555 | SPARSE |
| Allerdale | Wigton BUA | 5831 | SPARSE |
| Allerdale | Workington BUA | 27120 | SPARSE |
| Amber Valley | Heage/Crich BUA | 6629 | |
| Amber Valley | Kilburn BUA | 5552 | |
| Arun | Westergate BUA | 9783 | |
| Arun | Yapton BUA | 5459 | |
| Arun | Arundel BUA | 3285 | |
| Ashford | Tenterden BUA | 7118 | SPARSE |
| Ashford | Shalmsford Street BUA | 3928 | SPARSE |
| Aylesbury Vale | Aston Clinton BUA | 4216 | |
| Aylesbury Vale | Haddenham (Aylesbury Vale) BUA | 4391 | |
| Aylesbury Vale | Winslow BUA | 4407 | |
| Aylesbury Vale | Wendover BUA | 7702 | |
| Aylesbury Vale | Buckingham BUA | 12890 | |
| Aylesbury Vale | Eaton Bray BUA | 3912 | |
| Aylesbury Vale | Pitstone BUA | 3674 | |
| Babergh | Hadleigh BUA | 8150 | SPARSE |
| Babergh | Sudbury BUA | 22213 | SPARSE |
| Babergh | Glemsford BUA | 3382 | SPARSE |
| Barnsley | Grimethorpe BUA | 4672 | ASSEMBLY |
| Barrow-in-Furness | Dalton-in-Furness BUA | 7827 | |
| Barrow-in-Furness | North Walney BUA | 9952 | |
| Barrow-in-Furness | Askam in Furness BUA | 3274 | |
| Basingstoke and Deane | Bramley BUA | 4233 | |
| Basingstoke and Deane | Whitchurch (Basingstoke and Deane) BUA | 4676 | |
| Basingstoke and Deane | Hook (Hart) BUA | 7934 | |
| Basingstoke and Deane | Oakley (Basingstoke and Deane) BUA | 5086 | |
| Basingstoke and Deane | Tadley BUA | 15836 | |

| | | | |
|----------------------------------|-------------------------------------|-------|----------|
| Basingstoke and Deane | Kingsclere BUA | 3164 | |
| Basingstoke and Deane | Overton (Basingstoke and Deane) BUA | 3980 | |
| Bassetlaw | Bircotes BUA | 7948 | ASSEMBLY |
| Bassetlaw | Carlton in Lindrick BUA | 5456 | ASSEMBLY |
| Bassetlaw | Retford BUA | 22023 | ASSEMBLY |
| Bath and North East Somerset | Saltford BUA | 4073 | ASSEMBLY |
| Bath and North East Somerset | Peasedown St John BUA | 6269 | ASSEMBLY |
| Bath and North East Somerset & N | Midsomer Norton/Radstock BUA | 27136 | ASSEMBLY |
| Bedford | Bromham (Bedford) BUA | 4670 | |
| Bedford | Clapham (Bedford) BUA | 4560 | |
| Bedford | Wootton (Bedford) BUA | 4344 | |
| Blaby | Countesthorpe BUA | 6377 | ASSEMBLY |
| Blaby | Stoney Stanton BUA | 3793 | ASSEMBLY |
| Bolsover | Clowne BUA | 7590 | |
| Bolsover | Creswell BUA | 5417 | |
| Bolsover | Newton (Bolsover) BUA | 3164 | |
| Bolsover | Tibshelf BUA | 3787 | |
| Bolsover | Whitwell (Bolsover) BUA | 3716 | |
| Boston | Kirton (Boston) BUA | 4821 | SPARSE |
| Bradford | Silsden BUA | 7912 | |
| Bradford | Wilsden BUA | 5524 | |
| Bradford | Addingham BUA | 3730 | |
| Bradford & Harrogate | Ilkley BUA | 14809 | |
| Braintree | Coggeshall BUA | 4727 | SPARSE |
| Braintree | Kelvedon BUA | 5322 | SPARSE |
| Braintree | Halstead BUA | 11906 | SPARSE |
| Braintree | Witham BUA | 25353 | SPARSE |
| Braintree | Earls Colne BUA | 3862 | SPARSE |
| Braintree | Hatfield Peverel BUA | 3950 | SPARSE |
| Braintree | Sible Hedingham BUA | 3702 | SPARSE |
| Braintree | Silver End BUA | 3861 | SPARSE |
| Breckland | Swaffham BUA | 7258 | SPARSE |
| Breckland | Watton BUA | 9924 | SPARSE |

| | | | |
|---------------------------|-------------------------------------|-------|----------|
| Breckland | Attleborough BUA | 10549 | SPARSE |
| Breckland | Dereham BUA | 20651 | SPARSE |
| Breckland | Thetford BUA | 24833 | SPARSE |
| Brentwood | Doddinghurst BUA | 4435 | |
| Brentwood | Ingatestone BUA | 5620 | |
| Broadland | Horsford BUA | 4163 | |
| Broadland | Aylsham BUA | 6016 | |
| Broadland | Brundall BUA | 5927 | |
| Broadland | Hoveton BUA | 3089 | |
| Broadland | Spixworth BUA | 3598 | |
| Bromsgrove | Alvechurch BUA | 3534 | |
| Calderdale | Hebden Bridge BUA | 4235 | ASSEMBLY |
| Calderdale | Ripponden BUA | 4665 | ASSEMBLY |
| Calderdale | Todmorden BUA | 11690 | ASSEMBLY |
| Calderdale | Holywell Green BUA | 3178 | ASSEMBLY |
| Calderdale | Mytholmroyd BUA | 3949 | ASSEMBLY |
| Cannock Chase & Lichfield | Rugeley BUA | 24033 | |
| Cannock Chase | Norton Canes BUA | 7479 | |
| Canterbury | Sturry BUA | 7386 | |
| Canterbury | Shalmsford Street BUA | 3928 | |
| Carlisle | Brampton (Carlisle) BUA | 4229 | |
| Central Bedfordshire | Barton-le-Clay BUA | 4992 | |
| Central Bedfordshire | Potton BUA | 4870 | |
| Central Bedfordshire | Toddington BUA | 4585 | |
| Central Bedfordshire | Arlesey BUA | 5584 | |
| Central Bedfordshire | Cranfield BUA | 5369 | |
| Central Bedfordshire | Stotfold BUA | 6838 | |
| Central Bedfordshire | Amphill BUA | 20026 | |
| Central Bedfordshire | Biggleswade BUA | 16551 | |
| Central Bedfordshire | Sandy BUA | 11657 | |
| Central Bedfordshire | Caddington BUA | 3112 | |
| Central Bedfordshire | Eaton Bray BUA | 3912 | |
| Central Bedfordshire | Langford (Central Bedfordshire) BUA | 3091 | |

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| Central Bedfordshire | Lower Stondon BUA | 3857 | |
| Central Bedfordshire | Marston Moretaine BUA | 3850 | |
| Charnwood | Markfield BUA | 4993 | |
| Charnwood | Anstey BUA | 6528 | |
| Charnwood | East Goscote BUA | 3963 | |
| Chelmsford | Writtle BUA | 4840 | |
| Chelmsford | Danbury BUA | 6673 | |
| Chelmsford | Boreham BUA | 3244 | |
| Cherwell | Kidlington BUA | 15829 | SPARSE |
| Cherwell | Bloxham BUA | 3374 | SPARSE |
| Cheshire East | Haslington BUA | 4855 | SPARSE |
| Cheshire East | Holmes Chapel BUA | 5605 | SPARSE |
| Cheshire East | Congleton BUA | 26178 | SPARSE |
| Cheshire East | Knutsford BUA | 13191 | SPARSE |
| Cheshire East | Nantwich BUA | 17226 | SPARSE |
| Cheshire East | Sandbach BUA | 17976 | SPARSE |
| Cheshire West and Chester | Sandiway BUA | 4430 | |
| Cheshire West and Chester | Frodsham BUA | 9032 | |
| Cheshire West and Chester | Helsby BUA | 5166 | |
| Cheshire West and Chester | Weaverham BUA | 6087 | |
| Chichester | East Wittering BUA | 5647 | SPARSE |
| Chichester | Liss BUA | 6248 | SPARSE |
| Chichester | Midhurst BUA | 6514 | SPARSE |
| Chichester | Selsey BUA | 10550 | SPARSE |
| Chichester | Tangmere BUA | 3269 | SPARSE |
| Chiltern | Bovingdon BUA | 5295 | |
| Chiltern | Chalfont St Giles BUA | 7957 | |
| Chiltern | Prestwood BUA | 7501 | |
| Chorley | Eccleston BUA | 4646 | ASSEMBLY |
| Chorley | Coppull BUA | 9014 | ASSEMBLY |
| Colchester | Tiptree BUA | 9182 | |
| Colchester | West Mersea BUA | 7057 | |
| Colchester | Wivenhoe BUA | 9567 | |

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|---------------|--------------------------|-------|--------|
| Colchester | West Bergholt BUA | 3215 | |
| Copeland | Cleator Moor BUA | 6936 | SPARSE |
| Copeland | Egremont BUA | 6222 | SPARSE |
| Copeland | Millom BUA | 5980 | SPARSE |
| Copeland | Whitehaven BUA | 24900 | SPARSE |
| Cornwall | Gunnislake BUA | 4044 | SPARSE |
| Cornwall | Bude BUA | 7011 | SPARSE |
| Cornwall | Callington BUA | 5786 | SPARSE |
| Cornwall | Hayle BUA | 8210 | SPARSE |
| Cornwall | Launceston BUA | 8910 | SPARSE |
| Cornwall | Liskeard BUA | 9237 | SPARSE |
| Cornwall | Looe BUA | 5112 | SPARSE |
| Cornwall | St Blazey BUA | 9958 | SPARSE |
| Cornwall | St Ives (Cornwall) BUA | 9966 | SPARSE |
| Cornwall | Torpoint BUA | 7717 | SPARSE |
| Cornwall | Wadebridge BUA | 6599 | SPARSE |
| Cornwall | Bodmin BUA | 14614 | SPARSE |
| Cornwall | Helston BUA | 12184 | SPARSE |
| Cornwall | Newquay BUA | 20189 | SPARSE |
| Cornwall | Penzance BUA | 19872 | SPARSE |
| Cornwall | St Austell BUA | 25447 | SPARSE |
| Cornwall | Truro BUA | 23041 | SPARSE |
| Cornwall | Indian Queens BUA | 3893 | SPARSE |
| Cornwall | Perranporth BUA | 3210 | SPARSE |
| Cornwall | Porthleven BUA | 3059 | SPARSE |
| Cornwall | St Columb Major BUA | 3672 | SPARSE |
| Cornwall | St Day BUA | 3430 | SPARSE |
| Cotswold | Tetbury BUA | 5472 | SPARSE |
| Cotswold | Cirencester BUA | 17153 | SPARSE |
| Cotswold | Bourton-on-the-Water BUA | 3296 | SPARSE |
| Cotswold | Fairford BUA | 3236 | SPARSE |
| Cotswold | Moreton-in-Marsh BUA | 3493 | SPARSE |
| County Durham | Castleside BUA | 4881 | SPARSE |

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| County Durham | Langley Park BUA | 4545 | SPARSE |
| County Durham | Sedgefield BUA | 4456 | SPARSE |
| County Durham | Barnard Castle BUA | 7040 | SPARSE |
| County Durham | Brandon (County Durham) BUA | 9566 | SPARSE |
| County Durham | Crook BUA | 9498 | SPARSE |
| County Durham | Easington (County Durham) BUA | 7193 | SPARSE |
| County Durham | Ferryhill BUA | 9805 | SPARSE |
| County Durham | Murton (County Durham) BUA | 7413 | SPARSE |
| County Durham | Sacrison BUA | 7030 | SPARSE |
| County Durham | Shildon BUA | 9976 | SPARSE |
| County Durham | Ushaw Moor BUA | 7368 | SPARSE |
| County Durham | Willington (County Durham) BUA | 6633 | SPARSE |
| County Durham | Wingate BUA | 5134 | SPARSE |
| County Durham | Bishop Auckland BUA | 26050 | SPARSE |
| County Durham | Bowburn BUA | 3884 | SPARSE |
| County Durham | Burnopfield BUA | 3735 | SPARSE |
| County Durham | Chilton (County Durham) BUA | 3744 | SPARSE |
| County Durham | Coundon BUA | 3256 | SPARSE |
| County Durham | Coxhoe BUA | 3522 | SPARSE |
| County Durham | Esh Winning BUA | 3666 | SPARSE |
| County Durham | Great Lumley BUA | 3684 | SPARSE |
| County Durham | Lanchester BUA | 3543 | SPARSE |
| County Durham | Sherburn (County Durham) BUA | 3140 | SPARSE |
| County Durham | Wheatley Hill BUA | 3144 | SPARSE |
| County Durham & Darlington | Newton Aycliffe BUA | 25964 | SPARSE |
| County Durham & Northumberland | Consett BUA | 29137 | SPARSE |
| Craven | Skipton BUA | 14623 | SPARSE |
| Craven | Settle BUA | 3659 | SPARSE |
| Dacorum | Bovingdon BUA | 5295 | |
| Dacorum | Berkhamsted BUA | 21997 | |
| Dacorum | Tring BUA | 11929 | |
| Darlington | Middleton St George BUA | 3770 | |
| Dartford | South Darenth BUA | 4688 | |

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| Daventry | Brixworth BUA | 5228 | SPARSE |
| Daventry | Daventry BUA | 23879 | SPARSE |
| Daventry | Hinton BUA | 3493 | SPARSE |
| Daventry | Long Buckby BUA | 3759 | SPARSE |
| Derbyshire Dales | Ashbourne BUA | 8377 | SPARSE |
| Derbyshire Dales | Wirksworth BUA | 5038 | SPARSE |
| Derbyshire Dales | Matlock BUA | 14956 | SPARSE |
| Derbyshire Dales | Bakewell BUA | 3949 | SPARSE |
| Doncaster | Bawtry BUA | 4109 | |
| Doncaster | Tickhill BUA | 4992 | |
| Doncaster | Askern BUA | 5570 | |
| Doncaster | Thorne BUA | 17295 | |
| Doncaster | Finningley BUA | 3525 | |
| Dover | Sandwich BUA | 4599 | |
| Dover | Aylesham BUA | 3793 | |
| East Cambridgeshire | Burwell BUA | 6309 | SPARSE |
| East Cambridgeshire | Littleport BUA | 7935 | SPARSE |
| East Cambridgeshire | Soham BUA | 9834 | SPARSE |
| East Cambridgeshire | Ely BUA | 19090 | SPARSE |
| East Cambridgeshire | Sutton (East Cambridgeshire) BUA | 3816 | SPARSE |
| East Devon | Lyme Regis BUA | 4712 | SPARSE |
| East Devon | Ottery St Mary BUA | 4898 | SPARSE |
| East Devon | Axminster BUA | 5761 | SPARSE |
| East Devon | Budleigh Salterton BUA | 5185 | SPARSE |
| East Devon | Seaton (East Devon) BUA | 8413 | SPARSE |
| East Devon | Honiton BUA | 11483 | SPARSE |
| East Devon | Sidmouth BUA | 12569 | SPARSE |
| East Dorset | St Leonards BUA | 5984 | |
| East Dorset | Verwood BUA | 13360 | |
| East Hampshire | Four Marks BUA | 5674 | |
| East Hampshire | Grayshott BUA | 7641 | |
| East Hampshire | Liphook BUA | 6480 | |
| East Hampshire | Liss BUA | 6248 | |

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|--------------------------|---------------------------------------|-------|--------|
| East Hampshire | Alton (East Hampshire) BUA | 18261 | |
| East Hampshire | Bordon BUA | 20978 | |
| East Hampshire | Petersfield BUA | 14974 | |
| East Hertfordshire | Buntingford BUA | 4948 | SPARSE |
| East Hertfordshire | Puckeridge BUA | 3561 | SPARSE |
| East Lindsey | Woodhall Spa BUA | 4331 | SPARSE |
| East Lindsey | Coningsby Airfield BUA | 5021 | SPARSE |
| East Lindsey | Horncastle BUA | 6815 | SPARSE |
| East Lindsey | Louth BUA | 16419 | SPARSE |
| East Lindsey | Mablethorpe BUA | 12531 | SPARSE |
| East Lindsey | Skegness BUA | 24876 | SPARSE |
| East Lindsey | Alford BUA | 3459 | SPARSE |
| East Lindsey | Holton le Clay BUA | 3691 | SPARSE |
| East Lindsey | Spilsby BUA | 3440 | SPARSE |
| East Northamptonshire | Irthlingborough BUA | 7502 | SPARSE |
| East Northamptonshire | Oundle BUA | 5735 | SPARSE |
| East Northamptonshire | Raunds BUA | 8641 | SPARSE |
| East Northamptonshire | Thrapston BUA | 7068 | SPARSE |
| East Riding of Yorkshire | Howden BUA | 4142 | SPARSE |
| East Riding of Yorkshire | Hornsea BUA | 8432 | SPARSE |
| East Riding of Yorkshire | Market Weighton BUA | 6429 | SPARSE |
| East Riding of Yorkshire | Pocklington BUA | 8337 | SPARSE |
| East Riding of Yorkshire | Withernsea BUA | 6159 | SPARSE |
| East Riding of Yorkshire | Brough (East Riding of Yorkshire) BUA | 19904 | SPARSE |
| East Riding of Yorkshire | Driffield BUA | 13080 | SPARSE |
| East Riding of Yorkshire | Goole BUA | 20810 | SPARSE |
| East Riding of Yorkshire | Gilberdyke BUA | 3430 | SPARSE |
| East Riding of Yorkshire | Snaith BUA | 3305 | SPARSE |
| East Riding of Yorkshire | South Cave BUA | 3879 | SPARSE |
| East Riding of Yorkshire | Stamford Bridge BUA | 3528 | SPARSE |
| East Staffordshire | Tutbury/Hatton BUA | 5639 | |
| East Staffordshire | Uttoxeter BUA | 13089 | |
| East Staffordshire | Barton-under-Needwood BUA | 3796 | |

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|------------------------------|-------------------------------|-------|----------|
| East Suffolk | Framlingham BUA | 3086 | SPARSE |
| East Suffolk | Rendlesham BUA | 3013 | SPARSE |
| East Suffolk | Southwold BUA | 3680 | SPARSE |
| East Suffolk | Saxmundham BUA | 4225 | SPARSE |
| East Suffolk | Leiston BUA | 6495 | SPARSE |
| East Suffolk | Felixstowe BUA | 29171 | SPARSE |
| East Suffolk | Kessingland BUA | 4327 | SPARSE |
| East Suffolk | Bungay BUA | 5127 | SPARSE |
| East Suffolk | Halesworth BUA | 5558 | SPARSE |
| East Suffolk & South Norfolk | Beccles BUA | 13868 | SPARSE |
| Eastleigh | Hamble-le-Rice BUA | 4695 | |
| Eastleigh | Netley BUA | 6338 | |
| Eden | Penrith BUA | 15181 | SPARSE |
| Eden | Appleby-in-Westmorland BUA | 3048 | SPARSE |
| Epping Forest | North Weald Bassett BUA | 4477 | |
| Epping Forest | Chipping Ongar BUA | 6093 | |
| Epping Forest | Theydon Bois BUA | 3829 | |
| Fenland | Wimblington BUA | 4239 | |
| Fenland | Chatteris BUA | 10298 | |
| Fenland | March BUA | 21051 | |
| Fenland | Whittlesey BUA | 12745 | |
| Folkestone and Hythe | Hawkinge BUA | 8002 | SPARSE |
| Folkestone and Hythe | New Romney BUA | 9674 | SPARSE |
| Folkestone and Hythe | Dymchurch BUA | 3263 | SPARSE |
| Folkestone and Hythe | Lydd BUA | 3889 | SPARSE |
| Folkestone and Hythe | St Mary's Bay BUA | 3028 | SPARSE |
| Forest of Dean | Newent BUA | 4322 | SPARSE |
| Forest of Dean | Lydney BUA | 8776 | SPARSE |
| Forest of Dean | Cinderford BUA | 12942 | SPARSE |
| Forest of Dean | Coleford (Forest of Dean) BUA | 10397 | SPARSE |
| Forest of Dean | Bream BUA | 3047 | SPARSE |
| Fylde | Freckleton BUA | 8049 | |
| Gateshead | Rowlands Gill BUA | 6096 | ASSEMBLY |

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| Gateshead | Chopwell BUA | 3096 | ASSEMBLY |
| Gedling | Calverton BUA | 6868 | ASSEMBLY |
| Gedling | Ravenshead BUA | 5759 | ASSEMBLY |
| Gedling | Burton Joyce BUA | 3752 | ASSEMBLY |
| Gravesham | Culverstone Green BUA | 4001 | |
| Gravesham | Istead Rise BUA | 3437 | |
| Gravesham | Meopham (North) BUA | 3112 | |
| Gravesham | Shorne Ridgeway BUA | 3656 | |
| Great Yarmouth | Belton (Great Yarmouth) BUA | 4520 | |
| Great Yarmouth | Caister-on-Sea BUA | 8901 | |
| Great Yarmouth | Hemsby BUA | 5522 | |
| Great Yarmouth | Martham BUA | 3405 | |
| Guildford | East Horsley BUA | 5866 | ASSEMBLY |
| Guildford | West Clandon BUA | 5422 | ASSEMBLY |
| Hambleton | Bedale BUA | 4601 | SPARSE |
| Hambleton | Easingwold BUA | 4358 | SPARSE |
| Hambleton | Great Ayton BUA | 4518 | SPARSE |
| Hambleton | Stokesley BUA | 4757 | SPARSE |
| Hambleton | Thirsk BUA | 9953 | SPARSE |
| Hambleton | Northallerton BUA | 16832 | SPARSE |
| Hambleton | Leeming BUA | 3427 | SPARSE |
| Harborough | Fleckney BUA | 4894 | SPARSE |
| Harborough | Broughton Astley BUA | 8940 | SPARSE |
| Harborough | Kibworth Harcourt BUA | 5790 | SPARSE |
| Harborough | Lutterworth BUA | 9907 | SPARSE |
| Harborough | Market Harborough BUA | 22911 | SPARSE |
| Harrogate | Boroughbridge BUA | 4163 | SPARSE |
| Harrogate | Ripon BUA | 16363 | SPARSE |
| Hart | Hartley Wintney BUA | 4488 | |
| Hart | Hook (Hart) BUA | 7934 | |
| Hart | Odiham BUA | 3165 | |
| Herefordshire, County of | Bromyard BUA | 4117 | SPARSE |
| Herefordshire, County of | Ledbury BUA | 8862 | SPARSE |

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| Herefordshire, County of | Leominster BUA | 10938 | SPARSE |
| Herefordshire, County of | Ross-on-Wye BUA | 10582 | SPARSE |
| Hertsmere | Shenley BUA | 4306 | |
| Hertsmere | Radlett BUA | 8163 | |
| High Peak | Chapel-en-le-Frith BUA | 6598 | |
| High Peak | Whaley Bridge BUA | 5140 | |
| High Peak | Buxton (High Peak) BUA | 22115 | |
| Hillingdon | Harefield BUA | 6573 | |
| Hinckley and Bosworth | Markfield BUA | 4993 | ASSEMBLY |
| Hinckley and Bosworth | Ratby BUA | 4468 | ASSEMBLY |
| Hinckley and Bosworth | Desford BUA | 3179 | ASSEMBLY |
| Hinckley and Bosworth & Blaby | Earl Shilton BUA | 19578 | ASSEMBLY |
| Horsham | Henfield BUA | 4799 | |
| Horsham | Billingshurst BUA | 6911 | |
| Horsham | Southwater BUA | 8692 | |
| Horsham | Steyning BUA | 9627 | |
| Horsham | Storrington BUA | 8618 | |
| Horsham | West Chiltington Common BUA | 7474 | |
| Huntingdonshire | Brampton (Huntingdonshire) BUA | 4862 | SPARSE |
| Huntingdonshire | Godmanchester BUA | 6506 | SPARSE |
| Huntingdonshire | Ramsey (Huntingdonshire) BUA | 7829 | SPARSE |
| Huntingdonshire | Sawtry BUA | 5252 | SPARSE |
| Huntingdonshire | Yaxley BUA | 9174 | SPARSE |
| Huntingdonshire | Huntingdon BUA | 23937 | SPARSE |
| Huntingdonshire | St Ives (Huntingdonshire) BUA | 19519 | SPARSE |
| Huntingdonshire | Little Paxton BUA | 3244 | SPARSE |
| Huntingdonshire | Somersham (Huntingdonshire) BUA | 3524 | SPARSE |
| Huntingdonshire | Warboys BUA | 3825 | SPARSE |
| Hyndburn | Rishton BUA | 6625 | |
| Isle of Wight | Wootton (Isle of Wight) BUA | 4231 | SPARSE |
| Isle of Wight | Freshwater BUA | 7829 | SPARSE |
| Isle of Wight | Ventnor BUA | 5976 | SPARSE |
| Isle of Wight | Cowes BUA | 21226 | SPARSE |

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| Isle of Wight | Newport (Isle of Wight) BUA | 24884 | SPARSE |
| Isle of Wight | Ryde BUA | 26082 | SPARSE |
| Isle of Wight | Sandown/Shanklin BUA | 21374 | SPARSE |
| Isle of Wight | Bembridge BUA | 3688 | SPARSE |
| Kettering | Rothwell BUA | 7694 | |
| King's Lynn and West Norfolk | Dersingham BUA | 4640 | SPARSE |
| King's Lynn and West Norfolk | Upwell BUA | 4278 | SPARSE |
| King's Lynn and West Norfolk | Hunstanton BUA | 9332 | SPARSE |
| King's Lynn and West Norfolk | Downham Market BUA | 10884 | SPARSE |
| King's Lynn and West Norfolk | Terrington St Clement BUA | 3301 | SPARSE |
| Kirklees | Meltham BUA | 7836 | |
| Kirklees | Shepley BUA | 5444 | |
| Kirklees | Skelmanthorpe/Clayton West BUA | 8580 | |
| Kirklees | Denby Dale BUA | 3043 | |
| Kirklees | Marsden BUA | 3889 | |
| Lancaster | Bolton-le-Sands BUA | 6995 | ASSEMBLY |
| Lancaster | Carnforth BUA | 7920 | ASSEMBLY |
| Lancaster | University of Lancaster BUA | 5110 | ASSEMBLY |
| Leeds | Boston Spa BUA | 6052 | |
| Leeds | Wetherby BUA | 13572 | |
| Leeds | Bramhope BUA | 3382 | |
| Leeds | Swillington BUA | 3088 | |
| Lewes | Lewes BUA | 17297 | SPARSE |
| Lewes | Newick BUA | 3726 | SPARSE |
| Lewes | Ringmer BUA | 3165 | SPARSE |
| Lichfield | Armitage BUA | 4650 | SPARSE |
| Maidstone | Coxheath BUA | 4082 | |
| Maidstone | Staplehurst BUA | 5051 | |
| Maldon | Southminster BUA | 4025 | |
| Maldon | Burnham-on-Crouch BUA | 7561 | |
| Maldon | Maldon BUA | 21462 | |
| Maldon | Mayland BUA | 3724 | |
| Maldon | Wickham Bishops BUA | 3788 | |

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| Malvern Hills | Tenbury Wells BUA | 3849 | SPARSE |
| Mansfield | Market Warsop BUA | 9018 | |
| Mansfield | Rainworth BUA | 7693 | |
| Medway | Cuxton BUA | 4438 | |
| Medway | Hoo St Werburgh BUA | 6113 | |
| Melton | Melton Mowbray BUA | 27158 | SPARSE |
| Melton | Bottesford BUA | 3348 | SPARSE |
| Mendip | Glastonbury BUA | 8471 | SPARSE |
| Mendip | Frome BUA | 26203 | SPARSE |
| Mendip | Shepton Mallet BUA | 10369 | SPARSE |
| Mendip | Street BUA | 12911 | SPARSE |
| Mendip | Wells BUA | 11343 | SPARSE |
| Mid Devon | Crediton BUA | 7835 | SPARSE |
| Mid Devon | Cullompton BUA | 7800 | SPARSE |
| Mid Devon | Tiverton BUA | 19544 | SPARSE |
| Mid Devon | Willand BUA | 3360 | SPARSE |
| Mid Suffolk | Claydon BUA | 4488 | SPARSE |
| Mid Suffolk | Needham Market BUA | 4528 | SPARSE |
| Mid Suffolk | Stowmarket BUA | 21028 | SPARSE |
| Mid Suffolk | Elmswell BUA | 3950 | SPARSE |
| Mid Sussex | Cuckfield BUA | 3500 | SPARSE |
| Milton Keynes | Olney BUA | 6477 | |
| Mole Valley | Dorking BUA | 17747 | |
| New Forest | Milford on Sea BUA | 4348 | SPARSE |
| New Forest | Fordingbridge BUA | 6066 | SPARSE |
| New Forest | Marchwood BUA | 6141 | SPARSE |
| New Forest | Lymington BUA | 16446 | SPARSE |
| New Forest | Ringwood BUA | 14084 | SPARSE |
| New Forest | Bransgore BUA | 3719 | SPARSE |
| New Forest | Brockenhurst BUA | 3552 | SPARSE |
| New Forest | Morgan's Vale BUA | 3040 | SPARSE |
| Newark and Sherwood | Blidworth BUA | 4457 | SPARSE |
| Newark and Sherwood | Edwinstowe BUA | 5188 | SPARSE |

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| Newark and Sherwood | New Ollerton BUA | 9840 | SPARSE |
| Newark and Sherwood | Rainworth BUA | 7693 | SPARSE |
| Newark and Sherwood | Southwell BUA | 6757 | SPARSE |
| Newark and Sherwood | Bilsthorpe BUA | 3514 | SPARSE |
| Newark and Sherwood | Burton Joyce BUA | 3752 | SPARSE |
| Newcastle upon Tyne | Wideopen BUA | 8976 | |
| Newcastle-under-Lyme | Bignall End/Audley BUA | 7609 | |
| Newcastle-under-Lyme | Keele BUA | 3953 | |
| Newcastle-under-Lyme | Loggerheads BUA | 3623 | |
| Newcastle-under-Lyme | Madeley BUA | 3893 | |
| North Devon | Fremington BUA | 4310 | SPARSE |
| North Devon | Braunton BUA | 9525 | SPARSE |
| North Devon | South Molton BUA | 5108 | SPARSE |
| North Devon | Ilfracombe BUA | 11184 | SPARSE |
| North Dorset | Shaftesbury BUA | 7314 | |
| North Dorset | Blandford Forum BUA | 11694 | |
| North Dorset | Gillingham (North Dorset) BUA | 11278 | |
| North Dorset | Sturminster Newton BUA | 3501 | |
| North East Derbyshire | Stonebroom BUA | 5435 | |
| North East Lincolnshire | New Waltham BUA | 5613 | |
| North East Lincolnshire | Laceby BUA | 3259 | |
| North East Lincolnshire & North Lincolnshire | Immingham BUA | 10750 | |
| North Hertfordshire | Knebworth BUA | 4155 | |
| North Hertfordshire | Royston BUA | 15781 | |
| North Kesteven | Bracebridge Heath BUA | 5656 | SPARSE |
| North Kesteven | Ruskington BUA | 5637 | SPARSE |
| North Kesteven | Washingborough BUA | 6463 | SPARSE |
| North Kesteven | Sleaford BUA | 17359 | SPARSE |
| North Kesteven | Branston BUA | 3852 | SPARSE |
| North Kesteven | Heckington BUA | 3823 | SPARSE |
| North Kesteven | Metheringham BUA | 3605 | SPARSE |
| North Kesteven | Skellingthorpe BUA | 3359 | SPARSE |
| North Lincolnshire | Broughton (North Lincolnshire) BUA | 4677 | SPARSE |

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| North Lincolnshire | Epworth BUA | 4279 | SPARSE |
| North Lincolnshire | Winterton BUA | 4899 | SPARSE |
| North Lincolnshire | Brigg BUA | 6787 | SPARSE |
| North Lincolnshire | Crowle (North Lincolnshire) BUA | 3928 | SPARSE |
| North Lincolnshire | Messingham BUA | 3496 | SPARSE |
| North Norfolk | Cromer BUA | 8801 | SPARSE |
| North Norfolk | Fakenham BUA | 8285 | SPARSE |
| North Norfolk | Sheringham BUA | 8090 | SPARSE |
| North Norfolk | North Walsham BUA | 12463 | SPARSE |
| North Norfolk | Briston BUA | 3057 | SPARSE |
| North Norfolk | Holt (North Norfolk) BUA | 3810 | SPARSE |
| North Norfolk | Hoveton BUA | 3089 | SPARSE |
| North Norfolk | Stalham BUA | 3971 | SPARSE |
| North Somerset | Winscombe BUA | 4546 | SPARSE |
| North Somerset | Long Ashton BUA | 5254 | SPARSE |
| North Somerset | Clevedon BUA | 21002 | SPARSE |
| North Somerset | Nailsea BUA | 20543 | SPARSE |
| North Tyneside | Wideopen BUA | 8976 | |
| North Warwickshire | Coleshill (North Warwickshire) BUA | 6341 | SPARSE |
| North Warwickshire | Polesworth BUA | 9645 | SPARSE |
| North Warwickshire | Baddesley Ensor BUA | 3318 | SPARSE |
| North Warwickshire | Kingsbury BUA | 3730 | SPARSE |
| North Warwickshire | Water Orton BUA | 3444 | SPARSE |
| North Warwickshire & Hinckley an | Atherstone BUA | 11237 | SPARSE |
| North West Leicestershire | Castle Donington BUA | 6416 | SPARSE |
| North West Leicestershire | Ibstock BUA | 5650 | SPARSE |
| North West Leicestershire | Measham BUA | 5209 | SPARSE |
| North West Leicestershire | Ashby-de-la-Zouch BUA | 12370 | SPARSE |
| North West Leicestershire | Kegworth BUA | 3601 | SPARSE |
| Northumberland | Ellington/Lynemouth BUA | 4284 | SPARSE |
| Northumberland | Alnwick BUA | 8116 | SPARSE |
| Northumberland | Amble BUA | 6025 | SPARSE |
| Northumberland | Newbiggin-by-the-Sea BUA | 6308 | SPARSE |

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|----------------------|------------------------------------|-------|--------|
| Northumberland | Seaton Delaval BUA | 9350 | SPARSE |
| Northumberland | Stakeford BUA | 9636 | SPARSE |
| Northumberland | Ashington (Northumberland) BUA | 27670 | SPARSE |
| Northumberland | Berwick-upon-Tweed BUA | 13265 | SPARSE |
| Northumberland | Hexham BUA | 11388 | SPARSE |
| Northumberland | Morpeth BUA | 14403 | SPARSE |
| Northumberland | Prudhoe BUA | 12075 | SPARSE |
| Northumberland | Hadston BUA | 3570 | SPARSE |
| Northumberland | Haltwhistle BUA | 3791 | SPARSE |
| Northumberland | Pegswood BUA | 3280 | SPARSE |
| Northumberland | Seaton Sluice BUA | 3082 | SPARSE |
| Pendle | Earby BUA | 4538 | |
| Pendle | Barnoldswick BUA | 10435 | |
| Peterborough | Eye (City of Peterborough) BUA | 4340 | |
| Peterborough | Wittering Airfield BUA | 3099 | |
| Preston | Longridge BUA | 7526 | |
| Purbeck | Wareham BUA | 7592 | |
| Purbeck | Swanage BUA | 10454 | |
| Purbeck | Lytchett Matravers BUA | 3315 | |
| Redcar and Cleveland | Loftus BUA | 4824 | |
| Redcar and Cleveland | Brotton BUA | 5394 | |
| Redcar and Cleveland | Marske-by-the-Sea BUA | 8282 | |
| Redcar and Cleveland | Saltburn-by-the-Sea BUA | 5958 | |
| Redcar and Cleveland | Skelton (Redcar and Cleveland) BUA | 6535 | |
| Redcar and Cleveland | New Marske BUA | 3271 | |
| Ribble Valley | Whalley BUA | 4754 | SPARSE |
| Ribble Valley | Longridge BUA | 7526 | SPARSE |
| Ribble Valley | Clitheroe BUA | 14765 | SPARSE |
| Richmondshire | Richmond BUA | 8413 | SPARSE |
| Richmondshire | Catterick Garrison BUA | 11804 | SPARSE |
| Richmondshire | Catterick BUA | 3155 | SPARSE |
| Richmondshire | Colburn BUA | 3686 | SPARSE |
| Rochford | Great Wakering BUA | 5400 | |

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|-------------|------------------------------|-------|----------|
| Rother | Rye BUA | 4773 | SPARSE |
| Rother | Battle BUA | 6054 | SPARSE |
| Rotherham | Kiveton Park BUA | 8703 | ASSEMBLY |
| Rotherham | Thurcroft BUA | 5115 | ASSEMBLY |
| Rotherham | Treeton BUA | 3189 | ASSEMBLY |
| Rugby | Long Lawford BUA | 3007 | SPARSE |
| Rushcliffe | Bingham BUA | 9131 | |
| Rushcliffe | Cotgrave BUA | 7203 | |
| Rushcliffe | East Leake BUA | 6337 | |
| Rushcliffe | Keyworth BUA | 6733 | |
| Rushcliffe | Radcliffe on Trent BUA | 7510 | |
| Rutland | Uppingham BUA | 4745 | SPARSE |
| Rutland | Oakham BUA | 10922 | SPARSE |
| Ryedale | Pickering BUA | 6936 | SPARSE |
| Ryedale | Norton-on-Derwent/Malton BUA | 11937 | SPARSE |
| Scarborough | Filey BUA | 6530 | SPARSE |
| Scarborough | Whitby BUA | 13213 | SPARSE |
| Scarborough | Hunmanby BUA | 3132 | SPARSE |
| Sedgemoor | Cheddar BUA | 5199 | SPARSE |
| Sedgemoor | Burnham-on-Sea BUA | 23325 | SPARSE |
| Sedgemoor | North Petherton BUA | 3142 | SPARSE |
| Selby | Sherburn in Elmet BUA | 6657 | SPARSE |
| Selby | Tadcaster BUA | 6480 | SPARSE |
| Selby | Selby BUA | 24859 | SPARSE |
| Sevenoaks | South Darenth BUA | 4688 | SPARSE |
| Sevenoaks | Edenbridge BUA | 8172 | SPARSE |
| Sevenoaks | Otford BUA | 7155 | SPARSE |
| Sevenoaks | West Kingsdown BUA | 5484 | SPARSE |
| Sevenoaks | Sevenoaks BUA | 29506 | SPARSE |
| Sevenoaks | Westerham BUA | 3303 | SPARSE |
| Sheffield | Oughtibridge BUA | 4939 | |
| Sheffield | Stocksbridge BUA | 13069 | |
| Shropshire | Albrighton BUA | 4829 | SPARSE |

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|---------------------------|--|-------|----------|
| Shropshire | Bayston Hill BUA | 5079 | SPARSE |
| Shropshire | Shifnal BUA | 6240 | SPARSE |
| Shropshire | Wem BUA | 5870 | SPARSE |
| Shropshire | Whitchurch (Shropshire) BUA | 9710 | SPARSE |
| Shropshire | Bridgnorth BUA | 12657 | SPARSE |
| Shropshire | Croesowallt BUA | 18743 | SPARSE |
| Shropshire | Ludlow BUA | 10515 | SPARSE |
| Shropshire | Market Drayton BUA | 11773 | SPARSE |
| Shropshire | Church Stretton BUA | 3698 | SPARSE |
| Shropshire | Ellesmere BUA | 3686 | SPARSE |
| Shropshire | Gobowen BUA | 3270 | SPARSE |
| Shropshire | Highley BUA | 3133 | SPARSE |
| Shropshire | Tenbury Wells BUA | 3849 | SPARSE |
| Solihull | Balsall Common BUA | 7039 | ASSEMBLY |
| Solihull | Dickens Heath BUA | 3992 | ASSEMBLY |
| Somerset West and Taunton | Watchet BUA | 3581 | SPARSE |
| Somerset West and Taunton | Wellington (Somerset West and Taunton) BUA | 13822 | SPARSE |
| Somerset West and Taunton | Minehead BUA | 11981 | SPARSE |
| South Bucks | Iver Heath BUA | 8065 | |
| South Cambridgeshire | Bar Hill BUA | 4032 | SPARSE |
| South Cambridgeshire | Linton BUA | 4525 | SPARSE |
| South Cambridgeshire | Melbourn BUA | 4689 | SPARSE |
| South Cambridgeshire | Willingham BUA | 4015 | SPARSE |
| South Cambridgeshire | Cambourne BUA | 8186 | SPARSE |
| South Cambridgeshire | Cottenham BUA | 5903 | SPARSE |
| South Cambridgeshire | Sawston BUA | 7275 | SPARSE |
| South Cambridgeshire | Waterbeach BUA | 5795 | SPARSE |
| South Cambridgeshire | Gamlingay BUA | 3247 | SPARSE |
| South Derbyshire | Melbourne (South Derbyshire) BUA | 4843 | SPARSE |
| South Derbyshire | Hilton (South Derbyshire) BUA | 7714 | SPARSE |
| South Derbyshire | Tutbury/Hatton BUA | 5639 | SPARSE |
| South Gloucestershire | Thornbury BUA | 11687 | |
| South Hams | Dartmouth BUA | 5610 | SPARSE |

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| South Hams | Kingsbridge BUA | 6116 | SPARSE |
| South Hams | Totnes BUA | 8076 | SPARSE |
| South Hams | Ivybridge BUA | 11851 | SPARSE |
| South Holland | Crowland BUA | 4211 | SPARSE |
| South Holland | Holbeach BUA | 7914 | SPARSE |
| South Holland | Long Sutton (South Holland) BUA | 5161 | SPARSE |
| South Holland | Sutton Bridge BUA | 3882 | SPARSE |
| South Kesteven | Bourne BUA | 13961 | SPARSE |
| South Kesteven & Peterborough | Market Deeping BUA | 13574 | SPARSE |
| South Kesteven & Peterborough | & Stamford BUA | 20592 | SPARSE |
| South Lakeland | Grange-over-Sands BUA | 4788 | SPARSE |
| South Lakeland | Windermere BUA | 7765 | SPARSE |
| South Lakeland | Kendal BUA | 29147 | SPARSE |
| South Lakeland | Ulverston BUA | 11356 | SPARSE |
| South Norfolk | Harleston BUA | 4458 | SPARSE |
| South Norfolk | Long Stratton BUA | 4434 | SPARSE |
| South Norfolk | Hethersett BUA | 5520 | SPARSE |
| South Norfolk | Poringland BUA | 5132 | SPARSE |
| South Norfolk | Wymondham (South Norfolk) BUA | 13587 | SPARSE |
| South Norfolk | Loddon BUA | 3552 | SPARSE |
| South Norfolk | Mulbarton BUA | 3315 | SPARSE |
| South Norfolk & Mid Suffolk | Diss BUA | 10734 | SPARSE |
| South Northamptonshire | Northampton (South Northamptonshire) BUA | 4404 | SPARSE |
| South Northamptonshire | Towcester BUA | 9057 | SPARSE |
| South Northamptonshire | Brackley BUA | 13018 | SPARSE |
| South Northamptonshire | Deanshanger BUA | 3817 | SPARSE |
| South Northamptonshire | Middleton Cheney BUA | 3597 | SPARSE |
| South Oxfordshire | Goring BUA | 4079 | SPARSE |
| South Oxfordshire | Sonning Common BUA | 4821 | SPARSE |
| South Oxfordshire | Wargrave BUA | 4209 | SPARSE |
| South Oxfordshire | Benson BUA | 5802 | SPARSE |
| South Oxfordshire | Chinnor BUA | 5473 | SPARSE |
| South Oxfordshire | Thame BUA | 11329 | SPARSE |

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|-----------------------------------|--|-------|--------|
| South Oxfordshire | Wallingford BUA | 10348 | SPARSE |
| South Oxfordshire | Cholsey BUA | 3081 | SPARSE |
| South Oxfordshire | Pangbourne BUA | 3802 | SPARSE |
| South Oxfordshire & Vale of White | Didcot BUA | 29341 | SPARSE |
| South Oxfordshire & Wokingham | Henley-on-Thames BUA | 11494 | SPARSE |
| South Somerset | Martock BUA | 4522 | SPARSE |
| South Somerset | Somerton (South Somerset) BUA | 4339 | SPARSE |
| South Somerset | Crewkerne BUA | 7826 | SPARSE |
| South Somerset | Ilminster BUA | 5808 | SPARSE |
| South Somerset | Wincanton BUA | 5435 | SPARSE |
| South Somerset | Chard BUA | 13074 | SPARSE |
| South Somerset | Castle Cary BUA | 3232 | SPARSE |
| South Somerset | Langport BUA | 3063 | SPARSE |
| South Somerset | South Petherton BUA | 3064 | SPARSE |
| South Staffordshire | Kinver BUA | 4723 | SPARSE |
| South Staffordshire | Penkridge BUA | 7791 | SPARSE |
| South Staffordshire | Featherstone (South Staffordshire) BUA | 3846 | SPARSE |
| St Albans | Wheathampstead BUA | 4326 | |
| St Albans | Redbourn BUA | 5113 | |
| St Edmundsbury & Braintree | Haverhill BUA | 27041 | SPARSE |
| St. Helens | Billinge BUA | 5896 | |
| Stafford | Stone (Stafford) BUA | 16385 | SPARSE |
| Stafford | Gnosall BUA | 3869 | SPARSE |
| Staffordshire Moorlands | Cheadle BUA | 11404 | |
| Staffordshire Moorlands | Leek BUA | 19903 | |
| Staffordshire Moorlands | Upper Tean BUA | 3345 | |
| Stratford-on-Avon | Alcester BUA | 6939 | SPARSE |
| Stratford-on-Avon | Bidford-on-Avon BUA | 5047 | SPARSE |
| Stratford-on-Avon | Shipston-on-Stour BUA | 5038 | SPARSE |
| Stratford-on-Avon | Southam BUA | 6567 | SPARSE |
| Stratford-on-Avon | Studley BUA | 6203 | SPARSE |
| Stratford-on-Avon | Wellesbourne BUA | 5849 | SPARSE |
| Stratford-on-Avon | Stratford-upon-Avon BUA | 27830 | SPARSE |

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| Stroud | Wotton-under-Edge BUA | 5627 | SPARSE |
| Stroud | Dursley BUA | 14992 | SPARSE |
| Surrey Heath | Bagshot BUA | 5430 | |
| Surrey Heath | Lightwater BUA | 6791 | |
| Swale | Faversham BUA | 19829 | |
| Swale | Minster (Swale) BUA | 22167 | |
| Swale | Sheerness BUA | 11938 | |
| Swale | Iwade BUA | 3087 | |
| Swale | Leysdown-on-Sea BUA | 3019 | |
| Swindon | Highworth BUA | 7886 | |
| Swindon | Wroughton BUA | 6474 | |
| Tandridge | Lingfield BUA | 3920 | SPARSE |
| Tandridge | Smallfield BUA | 3769 | SPARSE |
| Teignbridge | Bovey Tracey BUA | 4729 | SPARSE |
| Teignbridge | Chudleigh BUA | 4011 | SPARSE |
| Teignbridge | Kingskerswell BUA | 4703 | SPARSE |
| Teignbridge | Dawlish BUA | 11312 | SPARSE |
| Teignbridge | Teignmouth BUA | 17463 | SPARSE |
| Teignbridge | Ashburton BUA | 3346 | SPARSE |
| Teignbridge | Buckfastleigh BUA | 3631 | SPARSE |
| Teignbridge | Exminster BUA | 3368 | SPARSE |
| Telford and Wrekin | Newport (Telford and Wrekin) BUA | 12741 | ASSEMBLY |
| Tendring | Jaywick BUA | 4799 | |
| Tendring | Little Clacton BUA | 4590 | |
| Tendring | Brightlingsea BUA | 8076 | |
| Tendring | Manningtree BUA | 5696 | |
| Tendring | Harwich BUA | 20723 | |
| Tendring | Walton-on-the-Naze BUA | 17458 | |
| Test Valley | North Baddesley BUA | 6823 | |
| Tewkesbury | Winchcombe BUA | 4538 | SPARSE |
| Tewkesbury & Wychavon | Tewkesbury BUA | 19778 | SPARSE |
| Thanet | Minster (Thanet) BUA | 3668 | |
| Thurrock | Aveley BUA | 7986 | |

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|----------------------------------|--------------------------------|-------|--------|
| Thurrock | East Tilbury BUA | 5471 | |
| Tonbridge and Malling | Ightham BUA | 6638 | |
| Tonbridge and Malling | King's Hill BUA | 7459 | |
| Torbay | Brixham BUA | 16693 | |
| Torridge | Great Torrington BUA | 5714 | SPARSE |
| Torridge | Bideford BUA | 28672 | SPARSE |
| Tunbridge Wells | Cranbrook BUA | 4368 | SPARSE |
| Tunbridge Wells | Paddock Wood BUA | 7840 | SPARSE |
| Tunbridge Wells | Pembury BUA | 6128 | SPARSE |
| Tunbridge Wells | Hawkhurst BUA | 3963 | SPARSE |
| Uttlesford | Great Dunmow BUA | 7749 | SPARSE |
| Uttlesford | Stansted Mountfitchet BUA | 6669 | SPARSE |
| Uttlesford | Saffron Walden BUA | 15210 | SPARSE |
| Uttlesford | Takeley BUA | 3387 | SPARSE |
| Vale of White Horse | Shrivenham/Watchfield BUA | 4049 | SPARSE |
| Vale of White Horse | Faringdon BUA | 7121 | SPARSE |
| Vale of White Horse | Wantage BUA | 18505 | SPARSE |
| Wakefield | Kinsley BUA | 4287 | |
| Wakefield | Sharlston BUA | 4028 | |
| Wakefield | Ackworth Moor Top BUA | 6902 | |
| Wakefield | Crofton BUA | 5258 | |
| Wakefield | Hemsworth BUA | 9246 | |
| Wakefield | Ryhill BUA | 5150 | |
| Wakefield | Upton (Wakefield) BUA | 5874 | |
| Wakefield | South Elmsall/South Kirkby BUA | 18899 | |
| Warrington | Culcheth BUA | 6708 | |
| Warrington | Burtonwood BUA | 3361 | |
| Waverley | Grayshott BUA | 7641 | |
| Waverley | Witley BUA | 6437 | |
| Waverley | Cranleigh BUA | 11082 | |
| Waverley & Chichester & East Ham | Haslemere BUA | 13651 | |
| Waverley & Guildford | Godalming BUA | 22689 | |
| Wealden | Wadhurst BUA | 4051 | SPARSE |

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|-----------------|------------------------------|-------|--------|
| Wealden | Heathfield (Wealden) BUA | 8457 | SPARSE |
| Wealden | Crowborough BUA | 20607 | SPARSE |
| Wealden | Hailsham BUA | 19977 | SPARSE |
| Wealden | Uckfield BUA | 18452 | SPARSE |
| Wellingborough | Finedon BUA | 4309 | |
| Wellingborough | Irchester BUA | 4419 | |
| Wellingborough | Earls Barton BUA | 5387 | |
| Wellingborough | Wollaston BUA | 3491 | |
| Welwyn Hatfield | Cuffley BUA | 4282 | |
| Welwyn Hatfield | Brookmans Park BUA | 3561 | |
| West Berkshire | Goring BUA | 4079 | |
| West Berkshire | Burghfield Common BUA | 5932 | |
| West Berkshire | Hungerford BUA | 5100 | |
| West Berkshire | Lambourn BUA | 3071 | |
| West Berkshire | Mortimer BUA | 3698 | |
| West Berkshire | Pangbourne BUA | 3802 | |
| West Devon | Okehampton BUA | 7647 | SPARSE |
| West Devon | Tavistock BUA | 12280 | SPARSE |
| West Devon | Yelverton BUA | 3627 | SPARSE |
| West Dorset | Lyme Regis BUA | 4712 | |
| West Dorset | Sherborne BUA | 9523 | |
| West Dorset | Bridport BUA | 13737 | |
| West Dorset | Dorchester (West Dorset) BUA | 19060 | |
| West Lancashire | Burscough BUA | 8799 | |
| West Lancashire | Tarleton BUA | 8582 | |
| West Lancashire | Banks BUA | 3572 | |
| West Lancashire | Parbold BUA | 3904 | |
| West Lindsey | Market Rasen BUA | 4773 | SPARSE |
| West Lindsey | Welton (West Lindsey) BUA | 6381 | SPARSE |
| West Lindsey | Gainsborough BUA | 20842 | SPARSE |
| West Lindsey | Cherry Willingham BUA | 3972 | SPARSE |
| West Lindsey | Nettleham BUA | 3437 | SPARSE |
| West Lindsey | Saxilby BUA | 3992 | SPARSE |

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|-----------------------------------|------------------------------------|-------|--------|
| West Oxfordshire | Eynsham BUA | 4648 | SPARSE |
| West Oxfordshire | Chipping Norton BUA | 5719 | SPARSE |
| West Oxfordshire | Carterton BUA | 16364 | SPARSE |
| West Oxfordshire | Witney BUA | 29103 | SPARSE |
| West Suffolk | Lakenheath BUA | 4369 | SPARSE |
| West Suffolk | Brandon (West Suffolk) BUA | 9145 | SPARSE |
| West Suffolk | Mildenhall BUA | 14382 | SPARSE |
| West Suffolk | Red Lodge BUA | 3834 | SPARSE |
| West Suffolk & East Cambridgeshir | Newmarket BUA | 20384 | SPARSE |
| Weymouth and Portland | Weston (Weymouth and Portland) BUA | 8831 | |
| Weymouth and Portland | Fortuneswell BUA | 3381 | |
| Wigan | Aspull BUA | 4899 | |
| Wiltshire | Cricklade BUA | 4030 | |
| Wiltshire | Ludgershall (Wiltshire) BUA | 4427 | |
| Wiltshire | Lyneham Airfield BUA | 4767 | |
| Wiltshire | Bradford on Avon BUA | 9149 | |
| Wiltshire | Bulford Camp BUA | 8556 | |
| Wiltshire | Malmesbury BUA | 6318 | |
| Wiltshire | Marlborough BUA | 8395 | |
| Wiltshire | Tidworth BUA | 9174 | |
| Wiltshire | Amesbury BUA | 10116 | |
| Wiltshire | Calne BUA | 17274 | |
| Wiltshire | Devizes BUA | 18064 | |
| Wiltshire | Melksham BUA | 19357 | |
| Wiltshire | Warminster BUA | 17490 | |
| Wiltshire | Wootton Bassett BUA | 11265 | |
| Wiltshire | Morgan's Vale BUA | 3040 | |
| Wiltshire | Pewsey BUA | 3634 | |
| Wiltshire | Purton BUA | 3554 | |
| Wiltshire | Wilton (Wiltshire) BUA | 3579 | |
| Winchester | Springvale BUA | 4901 | |
| Winchester | Bishop's Waltham BUA | 6275 | |
| Winchester | Denmead BUA | 6107 | |

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| Winchester | New Alresford BUA | 5431 | |
| Winchester | Colden Common BUA | 3419 | |
| Winchester | Waltham Chase BUA | 3942 | |
| Windsor and Maidenhead | Datchet BUA | 4913 | |
| Wokingham | Spencers Wood BUA | 4019 | |
| Wokingham | Wargrave BUA | 4209 | |
| Wokingham | Twyford (Wokingham) BUA | 7533 | |
| Wokingham | Charvil BUA | 3042 | |
| Wychavon | Pershore BUA | 7626 | SPARSE |
| Wychavon | Droitwich BUA | 23834 | SPARSE |
| Wychavon | Evesham BUA | 23576 | SPARSE |
| Wychavon | Fernhill Heath BUA | 3256 | SPARSE |
| Wychavon | Offenham/South Littleton BUA | 3154 | SPARSE |
| Wycombe | Stokenchurch BUA | 4056 | ASSEMBLY |
| Wycombe | Princes Risborough BUA | 8231 | ASSEMBLY |
| Wycombe | Lane End BUA | 3200 | ASSEMBLY |
| Wycombe & Windsor and Maidenhead | Marlow BUA | 18261 | ASSEMBLY |
| Wyre | Garstang BUA | 9530 | |
| Wyre | Preesall BUA | 5367 | |
| Wyre | Fleetwood BUA | 25359 | |
| Wyre Forest | Bewdley BUA | 8571 | |
| Wyre Forest & Wychavon | Stourport-on-Severn BUA | 20586 | |
| York | Strensall BUA | 6047 | |
| York | Bishopthorpe BUA | 3237 | |
| York | Copmanthorpe BUA | 3674 | |
| York | Dunnington BUA | 3230 | |
| York | Upper Poppleton BUA | 3451 | |

| | A | B | C | D | E | F | G | H | I | J |
|----|---|---|---|---|---|---|-------------------------|-----------------|-----------------|---------------------------|
| 1 | | | | | | | | | | Appendix H |
| 2 | | | | | | | | | | |
| 3 | | RSN (INCOME & EXPENDITURE) 2019/20 AND | | | | | | | | |
| 4 | | ACTUAL TO END APRIL 2019 | | | | | | | | |
| 5 | | INCLUDES 2018/19 ACTUAL AND REVISED ESTIMATE | | | | | | | | |
| 6 | | | | | | | ACTUAL TO | ESTIMATE | ESTIMATE | ACTUAL |
| 7 | | | | | | | END MARCH 19 | 18/19 | 2019/20 | END APRIL 2019 |
| 8 | | INCOME | | | | | £ | £ | £ | £ |
| 9 | | | | | | | | | | |
| 10 | | DEBTORS FROM PREVIOUS YEAR (NET OF VAT) | | | | | | | | |
| 11 | | SPARSE/Rural Assembly held by NKDC at year end | | | | | 3000 | 3990 | 3450 | 3450 |
| 12 | | SPARSE Rural Assembly Outstanding NK) | | | | | | 0 | | |
| 13 | | RHA - Website Contribs. | | | | | 300 | 300 | | |
| 14 | | RSP Subscriptions | | | | | | 0 | 990 | 990 |
| 15 | | Coastal Communities Alliance (Gross) | | | | | | | 1090 | 1090 |
| 16 | | CCN re Bexit Roundtable | | | | | 381 | 381 | | |
| 17 | | SPARSE Rural/Rural Assembly | | | | | 300636 | 303786 | 306672 | 39327 |
| 18 | | Ditto Held by NKDC at Month End | | | | | | | | |
| 19 | | RSN Extra £350Levy | | | | | 35350 | 35700 | | |
| 20 | | Extra Levy held by NKDC at month end | | | | | | | | |
| 21 | | RSP Existing Member Fees (NET RHCA) | | | | | 14195 | 14195 | 14350 | 6529 |
| 22 | | RSP Assumed New Member Fees | | | | | | | 4000 | |
| 23 | | Commercial Partner First Group Buses | | | | | 10000 | 10000 | 10000 | |
| 24 | | Income from Rural Housing Group | | | | | 7417 | 7417 | 7540 | 4245 |
| 25 | | Income from Fire & Rescue Group | | | | | 4260 | 4260 | 3841 | 2020 |
| 26 | | FIRE GROUP LEVY RE SPARSITY EVIDENCE | | | | | 6000 | 6000 | | |
| 27 | | OTHER INCOME | | | | | | | | |

| | A | B | C | D | E | F | G | H | I | J |
|----|---|--|---|---|---|---|---------------|---------------|---------------|--------------|
| 28 | | Rural Conference Income | | | | | 14918 | | | |
| 29 | | Rural Conference Surplus | | | | | | 7709 | 8000 | |
| 30 | | CCN re Joint Needs Group Project | | | | | | | 8500 | |
| 31 | | Recharges to Rural England Back Office Support | | | | | 1400 | 1400 | 1428 | |
| 32 | | RE recharge re Elec NW Commission | | | | | 1100 | 1100 | 1100 | |
| 33 | | RE recharge re Southern Water Commission | | | | | 1000 | 1000 | 1000 | |
| 34 | | EE/Other Sponsorship | | | | | 5000 | 5000 | 5000 | |
| 35 | | Coastal Communities Alliance Gross) | | | | | 3268 | 4358 | 4358 | |
| 36 | | RHCA - Fee Income | | | | | 8642 | 11260 | 6000 | 2898 |
| 37 | | RNCA Expenditure Reimbursement | | | | | 5000 | 5000 | 17766 | |
| 38 | | RE Website Maintenance | | | | | 2040 | 2040 | 2286 | |
| 39 | | Miscellaneous (BT) | | | | | 979 | 979 | | |
| 40 | | Contras - Rural England | | | | | 3002 | 3035 | | 1500 |
| 41 | | VAT | | | | | | | | |
| 42 | | VAT Refund | | | | | 3144 | | | |
| 43 | | VAT Received | | | | | 17181 | | | 3836 |
| 44 | | TOTAL INCOME | | | | | 448213 | 428910 | 407371 | 65885 |
| 45 | | | | | | | | | | |
| 46 | | | | | | | | | | |

| | A | B | C | D | E | F | G | H | I | J |
|----|---|--|---|---|-----------------------------------|---|-------------------------|----------------|----------------|---------------------|
| 47 | | | | | | | ACTUAL TO | EST | EST | ACTUAL |
| 48 | | | | | | | END MARCH 19 | 2018/19 | 2019/20 | END APRIL 19 |
| 49 | | EXPENDITURE | | | | | £ | £ | £ | £ |
| 50 | | VAT Paid on Goods & Services | | | | | 17293 | | | 5096 |
| 51 | | VAT Paid to HMRC | | | | | 160 | | | |
| 52 | | General Provision for Inflation | | | | | | | | |
| 53 | | NET WAGES & CONTRACTS FOR SERVICES | | | | | | | | |
| 54 | | Corporate Management | | | DI,GB,AD, 1 JT, 100% KB 80% | | 132470 | 132170 | 125845 | 7976 |
| 55 | | Finance/Performance and Data Analysis | | | , DW, 100%, | | 23844 | 23844 | 23875 | 1990 |
| 56 | | Financial Support - Consultants | | | | | | | 10000 | |
| 57 | | Communications (incl Seminars) | | | RoseR,RCM | | 35371 | 37121 | 38371 | 750 |
| 58 | | Administrative and Technical Support | | | AD3, RI, WI,WC,BA, MB 100% | | 43123 | 43106 | 33598 | 3291 |
| 59 | | Research and Monitoring | | | BW, 100% | | 7025 | 7025 | 9000 | |
| 60 | | Economic Development Service | | | AD5 100% | | 5202 | 5201 | 5196 | 433 |
| 61 | | Coastal Communities Contract | | | | | 3696 | 3696 | 3700 | |
| 62 | | Rural Communities Housing Group | | | AD2 100% | | 6763 | 6763 | 6768 | 564 |
| 63 | | Employee Deductions | | | | | 27723 | 27813 | 31900 | 451 |
| 64 | | | | | | | | | | |
| 65 | | Provision for Inflation on Contracts (2% p.a.) | | | | | | | | |
| 66 | | PAYE - Employers NIC (11 mths) | | | | | 10374 | 10373 | 8500 | |
| 67 | | PENSIONS Employer contrib | | | | | 2362 | 2438 | 4045 | 337 |
| 68 | | OTHER EXPENDITURE | | | | | | | | |
| 69 | | RSN/CCN Joint Needs Group Project | | | | | | | 17000 | |

| | A | B | C | D | E | F | G | H | I | J |
|----|---|---|---|---|---|---|-------|-------|-------|------|
| 70 | | Rural Strategy Campaign | | | | | 775 | 775 | 10000 | 5000 |
| 71 | | SPEND FROM 2018/19 VOL CONTRIBUTIONS | | | | | | | | |
| 72 | | Conferences/Seminars | | | | | | | | |
| 73 | | Rural Conference 2018 | | | | | 7209 | | | |
| 74 | | Rural Conference Drinks Reception | | | | | 962 | 962 | 1000 | |
| 75 | | Rural Conference 2019 - IN ADVANCE | | | | | 250 | 250 | | |
| 76 | | Regional Meetings/Seminars | | | | | 1946 | 2145 | 2200 | |
| 77 | | RSP Meetings | | | | | | | | 579 |
| 78 | | | | | | | | | | |
| 79 | | | | | | | | | | |
| 80 | | Service Level Agreements | | | | | | | | |
| 81 | | Rural Housing Group (RHG) | | | | | 782 | 782 | 1000 | |
| 82 | | RHG Website Maint | | | | | 1224 | 1224 | 1224 | 104 |
| 83 | | RE Website Maint | | | | | 2040 | 2040 | 2040 | 173 |
| 84 | | Rural England CIC to re-charge) @ | | | | | 1661 | 1661 | | |
| 85 | | Rural England CIC transfer of part of First Group Support | | | | | 7000 | 7000 | 7000 | |
| 86 | | Parliamentary Groups | | | | | 905 | 905 | 1500 | 228 |
| 87 | | RHCA Direct | | | | | 4530 | 4530 | | |
| 88 | | RHCA Share of Subscription Income | | | | | | | 5000 | |
| 89 | | Fire Group Expenses | | | | | 562 | 712 | | |
| 90 | | Business Expenses | | | | | | | | |
| 91 | | Website Upgrade | | | | | 650 | 650 | | |
| 92 | | Travel and Subsistence | | | | | 23685 | 24000 | 22000 | 2449 |
| 93 | | Print, Stat,e mail, phone & Broadband@ | | | | | 4037 | 4000 | 4000 | 285 |
| 94 | | Meeting Room Hire | | | | | 1972 | 1972 | 2000 | |
| 95 | | Website and Data Base software etc | | | | | 4965 | 4700 | 4700 | 540 |
| 96 | | Rent of Office & Associated Costs | | | | | 4827 | 5061 | 8800 | 422 |
| 97 | | Accountancy Fees | | | | | 972 | 972 | 1507 | 283 |
| 98 | | Companies House Fees | | | | | 13 | 13 | 13 | |

| | A | B | C | D | E | F | G | H | I | J |
|-----|---|---|---|---|---|---|---------------|---------------|---------------|--------------|
| 99 | | Bank Charges | | | | | 92 | 92 | 90 | 7 |
| 100 | | IT Support | | | | | 280 | 1250 | 700 | |
| 101 | | Insurance | | | | | 744 | 744 | 800 | |
| 102 | | Corporation Tax | | | | | | | 300 | |
| 103 | | Membership of Rural Coalition | | | | | 250 | 250 | 250 | |
| 104 | | CAPITAL 3x Laptops | | | | | 876 | | | |
| 105 | | CONTRAS | | | | | | | | |
| 106 | | Rural England @ | | | | | | | | 1569 |
| 107 | | | | | | | | | | |
| 108 | | ARREARS - PREVIOUS FINANCIAL YEAR | | | | | | | | |
| 109 | | Employee Deductions | | | | | | | 2393 | 2393 |
| 110 | | Employer NIC | | | | | | | 1024 | 1024 |
| 111 | | Regional Meetings/Seminars | | | | | 450 | 450 | 81 | 81 |
| 112 | | Contact for Service Corporate Management | | | | | | | 2217 | 1917 |
| 113 | | Contract for Service (ADMIN) | | | | | 1660 | 1660 | 109 | 409 |
| 114 | | Communications | | | | | 500 | 500 | | |
| 115 | | Extra Media by RCM | | | | | 963 | 963 | | |
| 116 | | Rose Regeneration | | | | | 2000 | 2000 | 1750 | 1750 |
| 117 | | Lexington Communications Contract | | | | | | | 3482 | 3482 |
| 118 | | PIXELL | | | | | 21958 | 21958 | 10692 | 10692 |
| 119 | | Research Costs | | | | | 11420 | 11420 | 2100 | 2100 |
| 120 | | RSN Online arrears | | | | | 4523 | 4523 | | |
| 121 | | RHA website Maint | | | | | 300 | 300 | | |
| 122 | | Travel and Subsistence arrears | | | | | 823 | 823 | 609 | 609 |
| 123 | | Printing, Phone and Stationery (arrears) | | | | | 9 | 9 | 153 | 153 |
| 124 | | Office Costs | | | | | 286 | 286 | 9000 | |
| 125 | | Data base etc (arrears) | | | | | 433 | 433 | | |
| 126 | | TOTAL EXPENDITURE | | | | | 433940 | 411565 | 427532 | 57137 |
| 127 | | | | | | | | | | |

| | A | B | C | D | E | F | G | H | I | J |
|-----|---|---|---|---|---|---|---------------|---------------|---------------|---|
| 128 | | | | | | | | | | |
| 129 | | TOTAL INCOME | | | | | 448213 | 428910 | 407371 | |
| 130 | | LESS TOTAL EXP | | | | | -440818 | -418443 | -427532 | |
| 131 | | DIFFERENCE BETWEEN IN YEAR INC & EXP | | | | | 7395 | 10467 | -20161 | |
| 132 | | ADD GEN BALANCE BROUGHT FORWARD | | | | | 25875 | 25875 | 33270 | |
| 133 | | BALANCE CARRIED FORWARD | | | | | 33270 | 36342 | 13109 | |
| 134 | | | | | | | | | | |
| 135 | | | | | | | | | | |
| 136 | | | | | | | | | | |



The Rt Hon Elizabeth Truss MP
Chief Secretary to the Treasury
HM Treasury
1 Horse Guards Road
London SW1A 2HQ

9th May 2019

Dear Chief Secretary

Rural group's submission to CSR

We are writing in response to your welcome invitation to us, as representatives of rural groups, to contribute to the Comprehensive Spending Review. Following our meeting in November, we have met three times to present our ideas, which we are pleased to enclose in the attached submission.

Our objective has been to assess how the government can unlock the potential of rural areas. We believe this collaborative submission to be unprecedented in securing an agreed position with all the undersigned representative bodies. Each organisation may also make their own separate submission to cover specific issues relevant to each.

While we represent a diverse range of rural interests, we are single minded in the view that the economic potential of rural areas can be realised through investment and a holistic approach to policy development that takes into account both the specific challenges faced by rural areas and their considerable assets.

These changes would enhance economic opportunity, rural quality of life, the resilience of rural communities and help to address the emerging policy challenges of the future, especially those identified as part of the UK Industrial Strategy. We have presented our ideas in the attachment through the themes of the Industrial Strategy and the Grand Challenges.

Our five key priorities are: -

1) Embedding Rural into decision making and delivery

Rural areas face unique cost pressures and service delivery challenges, but successive governments have not put in place funding models which address these issues. This government has the opportunity to correct historic underfunding and unlock the potential of rural areas – becoming the first to rural proof a Comprehensive Spending Review.

It is clear that rural proofing requires a holistic approach across departments, gauging financial and service delivery impacts. We believe HM Treasury should satisfy itself that all government departments have addressed the implications of rurality as part of the CSR, with a small amount of departmental resource ringfenced to ensure this is a priority.

It is well recognised that historic funding formulae have not reflected the additional cost pressures on rural areas. The government should look to correct this urgently, redefining need based on relevant or emerging data sets, suitable for each department serving rural communities.

Failing to correct these imbalances will only exacerbate funding inequality over time. For example in social care, an increasingly elderly rural population places greater demand on local authorities with fewer providers able to offer genuinely competitive services, without sufficient resource either from central or local government to meet the challenge.



2) Connectivity

Improving connectivity in rural areas, and in particular those hardest to reach areas not covered by commercial rollout, is vital to unlocking the full potential of rural areas to contribute to the economy, as well as providing social benefits and enabling improved service delivery to all.

Our proposals build on the government's existing ambition of extending mobile coverage to 95 per cent of the UK's landmass by 2022, by looking to extend rural connectivity to 100% of the UK. We also call for improved quality broadband provision to rural areas.

3) Long term support for the rural economy and productivity

Given significant funding streams that have been provided through EU mechanisms in the past, in certain areas, notably agriculture, R&D and business support, post-Brexit Britain will need to ensure rural areas are specifically recognised in the Shared Prosperity Fund. Ringfencing funding, to ensure non-agricultural funding for rural areas does not become conflated with the replacement agricultural support scheme, into one funding settlement through the SPF, will help deliver funding to those areas most in need.

The Spending Review must include a commitment to long-term total funding for agriculture, forestry and environmental delivery by farmers and land managers of at least the same overall funding as current levels. This is required to ensure the increased productivity and skills of farming and the land-based economy, helping to deliver a key part of a thriving rural economy for the future.

4) Affordable Housing

Ensuring future generations have the opportunity to own or rent their own home in rural areas will require increasing the amount of affordable housing to buy and rent. Our proposals suggest ways in which land owners and developers can be encouraged to increase the number of both affordable and social houses, and to meet specific local needs.

5) Low Carbon, Natural and Cultural Capital

Targeted funding will also allow rural areas to play their full part in helping the UK transition to meet its carbon emission goals, as suggested by the Committee on Climate Change, and in delivering integrated rural development post-Brexit.

We would be pleased to offer technical expertise to work with HM Treasury officials to expand upon or develop ideas to be presented in further detail as appropriate for the Comprehensive Spending Review. We look forward to meeting you at 9.30am at your office at HM Treasury on Wednesday 15th May 2019.

Yours sincerely

Rt Hon Philip Dunne MP, Chair, APPG for Rural Services

David Emerson CBE, Chair, Action with Communities in Rural England

Tim Breitmeyer, President, Country Land & Business Association

Tim Bonner, Chief Executive, Countryside Alliance

Guy Smith, Deputy President, National Farmers Union

Paul Hamblin, Executive Director, National Parks England

Margaret Clark CBE, Chair, Rural Coalition

Graham Biggs, Chief Executive, Rural Services Network

James Gray, National Chairman, Tenant Farmers Association

Rural economic, community and environmental initiatives for consideration in the CSR 2019

1. A full contribution from rural areas to the UK Industrial Strategy and Grand Challenges

| | Grand Challenges | Additional IS areas | Subject | Goal | Solution | Supporting information |
|--|------------------|---------------------|---------|------|----------|------------------------|
|--|------------------|---------------------|---------|------|----------|------------------------|

UK Industrial Strategy: Ideas, the world's most innovative rural economy

| | | | | | | |
|----|---|--|--|---|--|--|
| 1. | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> AI and data | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Business Environment | Encouraging research, development and innovation | Increase the amount of on-farm innovation | The tax relief for research, development and innovation should be extended to unincorporated businesses. | <p>On-farm research can deliver benefits that lead to the adoption of new techniques that improve productivity and/or environmental outcomes. There is also a great deal of development and innovation to develop new agri-tech solutions and products on farms.</p> <p>However, the majority of farm businesses are unincorporated and as such cannot benefit from any relief for their investment.</p> |
|----|---|--|--|---|--|--|

UK Industrial Strategy: People, good jobs and greater earning power for all rural people

| | | | | | | |
|----|---|--|--|---|--|--|
| 2. | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Future Mobility | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Ideas | Post-16 education | Enabling genuine choice in post-16 education for rural young people | Create a Rural Educational Access Allowance and make this available to all young people who are not entitled to receive the Mayor of London's (or similar, in other conurbations where large scale), planned public transport provision available at no or low cost. This could be used by young people in a flexible way depending on local circumstances. Cost to HM Treasury estimated from an assumption of £900 pa per 16-18 year old living in an area classified as rural. | <p>Cost to HM Treasury, estimate £300m</p> <p>Young people in post-16 education in rural areas receive no help in accessing choice in post-16 education. Their peers in London have free transport enabling them to attend a wide range of colleges and courses. When it existed, the Education Maintenance Allowance was widely used by rural young people for this purpose.</p> <p>Similar, but geographically universal, 'student premium' proposed by the Social Mobility Commission.</p> |
| 3. | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Ideas | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Business Environment | Increasing skills in agriculture and the rural economy | Highly skilled and proficient management and | Early and significant funding to support business adaptation and productivity growth. This should include investment and | Agri-skills forum https://nlbc.uk/industry/agriskills-forum/ |

| | Grand Challenges | Additional IS areas | Subject | Goal | Solution | Supporting information |
|--|------------------|---------------------|---------|---|--|---|
| | | | | workforce fit for the challenges of the future. | <p>incentives for business, technical and environmental skills through Continuing Professional Development programmes.</p> <p>Support training qualifications in agriculture and environmental land management (e.g. LANTRA-type skills training).</p> | Funding to support drive for long term CPD in the sector. |

UK Industrial Strategy: Infrastructure, a major upgrade to the UK's rural infrastructure

| | | | | | | |
|----|--|---|--|--|---|---|
| 4. | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> AI and Data Clean Growth | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Business Env. Place Ideas | Broadband and mobile connectivity | <p>High quality broadband and mobile connectivity to 100% of rural areas and rural people</p> | <p>Significant public funding (as indicated in the Future Telecoms Infrastructure Review), on top of the £500m already committed, is needed to deliver a rural first (or outside-in) approach and the £200 million in the 2018 budget.</p> <p>Existing and future investment in the emergency services network, especially in the most rural areas, and negotiation / funding for intra-UK roaming must contribute to meeting the goal of 100% access to high quality connectivity for individuals and businesses.</p> <p>Placing 100% mobile coverage in rural areas ahead of income maximisation to the Treasury in future auctions of mobile spectrum.</p> | <p>To combat market failure</p> <p>Calling on planned expenditure to be front-end loaded. Will support business and business growth, better public services (often at reduced costs), accessibility and isolation.</p> <p>Savings will be facilitated in 'government digital by default' and increased productivity in the rural economy</p> |
| 5. | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Clean growth; AI and data | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Business Environment | Driving low carbon solutions for farming and environmental enhancement | Work towards the ambition of the carbon footprint of agriculture to a target of Net Zero by 2040, with a | Maintain catchment sensitive farming partnerships with farmers, Defra, the Environment Agency and Natural England. | Given the long term impact of climate change on the land use sector, it is essential that the sector contributes to the reduction in emissions and is at the forefront on mitigation and adaptation measures. |

| | Grand Challenges | Additional IS areas | Subject | Goal | Solution | Supporting information |
|--|------------------|---------------------|--|--|--|--|
| | | | delivery in agriculture Drive agriculture productivity through adoption of new technology and data driven solutions | significant proportion of this improvement resulting from improved farm productivity | Increased funding for Countryside Stewardship and through Environmental Land Management Schemes trials. Maintain UK Innovation Fund aimed at tackling air pollution and climate change. Investment in R&D and innovation to support translation into practice through knowledge exchange and incentives for adoption. Allow a tax deduction against trading profits in the year of acquisition for buildings, structures, plant and machinery with lower emission levels. Effectively in a similar but less prescriptive way to Enhanced Capital Allowances. | It is envisaged that carbon reduction will be included in Defra's definition of public good in any future support system, in light of recent developments, including the Committee on Climate Change most recent report and recommendations, rural areas and the land based sector have a major contribution to make to meeting society's overall carbon reduction challenges. |

UK industrial Strategy: Rural business environment, the best places to start and grow a business

| | | | | | | |
|----|--|---|---|---|---|---|
| 6. | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Clean Growth | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Place People | National Industrial Strategy and use of the UKSPF | Ensure the rural economy is central to the Industrial Strategy and to growing the national economy. | In addition to resources for national CAP transition, food security and environmental goods a national target should be set to ensure that between 17% and 20% of the Shared Prosperity Fund is allocated to supporting rural communities and the non-land based rural economy. | <p>No additional cost to HM Treasury</p> <p>This would reflect the share of the population living in rural areas and put resource behind both the rural element of local industrial strategies and the economic element of a national Rural Strategy. Civil society organisations stand ready to work with the LEP network to ensure that this enables community led solutions to meet the needs of rural people, especially when these are beyond the reach of market initiatives.</p> |
| 7. | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> AI and data; Clean growth | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Infrastructure | Improving farm productivity and business resilience | Provide the farming industry with the support it needs to move away from direct payments and become self- | The Spending Review must include a commitment to long-term total funding for agriculture, forestry and the environmental delivery by farmers and land managers of at least the same overall funding as current levels. The Agriculture Bill clearly lays out | No additional cost to HM Treasury, but with an increased focus on early and significant funding on productivity measures. |

| | Grand Challenges | Additional IS areas | Subject | Goal | Solution | Supporting information |
|--|------------------|---------------------|---------|--|---|--|
| | | | | <p>sustaining; Continue to deliver home grown food and products alongside a wide range of environmental and public benefits.</p> | <p>provision for farm productivity and resilience, which must be significant and early in the move away from direct payments. Funding levels for Scotland, Northern Ireland and Wales must be reached in agreement with the devolved administrations.</p> <p>Continued investment in research, development and innovation focused at all levels including near market and translational research and demonstration.</p> <p>Maintain the ability of farmers to access on farm productivity grant funding (e.g. Countryside Productivity Scheme large and small grants). This needs to be Defra led, rather than part of the UK Shared Prosperity Fund.</p> <p>Agri-tech funding to continue to be available to help businesses and researchers develop innovative solutions within agriculture using technology to become a world leader in agri-tech.</p> <p>The Spending Review must also include a commitment to a favourable fiscal environment that supports businesses of all sizes to improve their productivity. Specifically, the capital allowances regime should allow the full cost of depreciation to be set against trading profits for all buildings, structures, plant and machinery over the lifespan of the asset. The draft legislation for the new Structures and Buildings Allowance is fundamentally</p> | <p>As an example, the Countryside Productivity Scheme (<u>large</u> and <u>small</u> grants; total RDPE 2014-20 budget of £120m) has been very successful and has been in very high demand.</p> <p><u>Agri-tech catalyst fund</u> has supported collaborative ways of using technology to improve farming practice (UK and worldwide fund).</p> <p>2% capital allowance is inappropriate for agricultural buildings with a life span of much less than 50 years.</p> |

| | Grand Challenges | Additional IS areas | Subject | Goal | Solution | Supporting information |
|-----|--|--|--|--|---|--|
| | | | | | flawed in relation to buildings and structures with a limited economic lifespan such as specialist agricultural buildings only effectively allowing partial relief. | |
| 8. | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Clean Growth | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Place Ideas | Integrated rural development | Realise the economic and social potential of rural areas through an integrated development model that draws on the natural and cultural capital of our rural places. | Deliver bespoke model of integrated rural development based on the unique place-based opportunities in National Parks and other deep rural areas. | <p>No additional cost to HM Treasury</p> <p>This reinforces the Industrial Strategy's aim to make most of the distinctive advantages of different rural areas; draws on their natural and cultural capital; and provides efficiencies of outcomes through adopting a place-based approach.</p> <p>This funding from the Shared Prosperity Fund would help develop clusters, support supply-chain integration, skills training, knowledge transfer based on the natural capital of these places. This is about embedding a new approach for deep rural areas that delivers against a triple bottom line of economic, social and environment benefit.</p> |
| 9. | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Clean Growth | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Business Env. | Local Industrial Strategies and LEPs | All LEPs whose geography includes rural places to be required to have a rural strategy that has been properly consulted over with all parts of the rural community | <p>Targeting an appropriate level of resources to their rural strategy, in proportion to their rural population, which is monitored and subject to annual scrutiny</p> <p>To include an accessible training offer to suit home-based, micro- and small rural business.</p> | <p>No additional cost to HM Treasury if provided within LEP budgetary envelope.</p> <p>A fair and proportionate share of resources to rural areas - in proportion to the population residing in the rural part of the LEP's area but also reflecting the costs of meeting delivery.</p> <p>A well designed and delivered service will support business growth and regulatory compliance.</p> |
| 10. | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Clean Growth | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Place People Ideas | Dedicated Rural Business Support Programme | Provide all rural businesses with support to help achieve growth, diversification and innovation | <p>Require LEP's to introduce a specific rural business support programme for their rural areas. Funded from Shared Prosperity Fund.</p> <p>Locally delivered in ways tailored to locally decided priorities especially the local 'foundation economy' and market failures in very rural areas.</p> | <p>No additional cost to HM Treasury.</p> <p>Programmes to be flexible in scope and less constrained by current procurement rules. Potentially beneficial to all business sectors – including social and community run/owned enterprises. Support innovation in the rural context.</p> |

| | Grand Challenges | Additional IS areas | Subject | Goal | Solution | Supporting information |
|-----|--|--|--|------|--|---|
| 11. | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Clean growth | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Business Environment | Simplifying running a rural or diversified farming business in a dynamic and diversified rural economy | | Allowing diversified farm businesses to elect to have all their trading activities treated as a single trade. This would be a simplification measure reducing cost and unnecessary administrative burdens. | <p>Limited cost to HM Treasury.</p> <p>Under current tax rules a diversified farm business must report each trading activity separately. For example, farming, renewable energy generation, green composting, campsite, livery, etc.</p> <p>Under future quarterly Making Tax Digital for Income Tax obligations a quarterly analysis of overhead costs would become necessary as would multiple updates for each deemed trade. This measure could also make it simpler to bring forward Making Tax Digital income reporting obligations as they would more closely resemble VAT reporting where multiple trades are reported together under the same VAT registration.</p> |

UK Industrial Strategy: Places, prosperous rural communities across the UK

| | | | | | | |
|-----|--|--|--------------------|--|---|--|
| 12. | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Clean Growth | | Affordable housing | More genuinely affordable housing available for people living and working in the rural economy | <p>Government to explore exempting the sale of land for rural exception sites (or similar) for affordable or social housing from Capital Gains Tax.</p> <p>Ensure delivery of more housing in small rural communities by enabling developer contributions to affordable housing on sites of less than 10 dwellings, exceptions should only be self-build and single dwellings.</p> <p>Ring fence a specified rural affordable housing programme within funds managed by Homes England for affordable housing. Grant rates to reflect rural costs. Define "Affordability" relative to local income in the local area.</p> | <p>Minimal cost to HM Treasury whilst bringing forward more sites for new affordable housing</p> <p>Developer contributions on small sites will save money on subsidies for affordable housing.</p> <p>Programme designed to boost delivery by Housing Associations in small rural settlements. Run at a scale which meets the shortfall in delivery identified by the 2014 Rural Housing Policy Review.</p> |
|-----|--|--|--------------------|--|---|--|

| | Grand Challenges | Additional IS areas | Subject | Goal | Solution | Supporting information |
|-----|--|---------------------|----------------------------|--|--|--|
| | | | | | <p>Extend for a further 3 years the Community Housing Fund and ensure a Fair Share of the Fund is allocated to rural projects.</p> <p>Bolster landowner and community support by putting into law the retention of local needs housing in perpetuity where below market land has been provided. Also consider affordable housing let by land provider in rural settlements available for Business Property Relief.</p> | Fund was slow to get off the ground in the first instance. This warrants an extension. |
| 14. | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Future of Mobility • Ageing Society | • Ideas | Rural transport and access | Ensure transport and access for rural people are fully within the scope of innovative thinking about future mobility and the ageing society. | <p>Resource a specific strand of activity in the Centre for Connected and Autonomous Vehicles to enable rural communities and rural transport authorities to work with them and develop solutions for rural areas.</p> <p>Government to explore rural transport needs as part of its Future of Mobility work and recommend rural applications: ensure any subsequent technological trials include rural pilots.</p> <p>Tax breaks for transport operators based on rural mileage should be considered.</p> | <p>Modest increase in funding from HM Treasury</p> <p>Achieving equity of access for people living in rural areas and better long-term use of sustainable community transport may require some increased funding but much could also be achieved through innovation in transport technology.</p> |
| 15. | • Ageing Society | • Ideas | Rural Community Action | Ensure that local voluntary activity, community organisations and | Further support for physical assets by enabling 100% of fundraised capital to be used to enhance locally / community owned | The Treasury has recently funded an initiative to provide £3m from which Trustees of rural community buildings can be re-funded through grants for the equivalent of VAT paid on essential improvement work. The initiative requires |

| | Grand Challenges | Additional IS areas | Subject | Goal | Solution | Supporting information |
|--|--|---------------------|---------|---|--|---|
| | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Future of Mobility | | | local community assets grow and thrive through access to a strong network of support. | <p>facilities by removing the disincentive of VAT being levied on improvements</p> <p>Long term and sustained resources directed at re-enforcing the social infrastructure e.g. volunteers, local voluntary organisations and bodies that provide support to them.</p> | <p>information to be gathered about the extent of need for this support following the UK's exit from the EU. Provision needs to be made in the 2019 CSR for requirements once they are known over the following years.</p> <p>A similar fund to facilitate community volunteer action should be established.</p> |

2. Rural areas at the heart of government

| <i>Subject</i> | <i>Goal</i> | <i>Solution</i> | <i>Supporting information</i> |
|--|--|--|---|
| Governance and efficiency in rural public service delivery | | | |
| Procurement by central and local government | Take advantage of the ending of Official Journal of the European Union procurement regime to improve procurement of public services in rural areas. | The Treasury or Office of Government Commerce should be asked to develop new guidance for all Whitehall Departments and local Government in relation to procurement in extensive rural areas. This should have the twin objectives of: <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. a more flexible commissioning of services in rural areas where there is a limited response from the market and innovation combined with local solutions may provide better value for money and, 2. create more opportunities to build the capacity of local communities by engaging them in the co-design of services in a way that adds value. | The preferred approach might, in these circumstances be voluntary, community or social enterprise planned and co-designed provision. Examples might include community transport, adult social care, employment support etc. |
| The Green Book, Whitehall and Local Government | Ensure that access costs for rural users and the additional value of joint commissioning of services in rural areas is fully included in its assessment of business cases. | The Treasury should carry out a review of the Green Book (used for appraising the business case for all Government expenditure) with a view to ensuring that transport access costs for rural users and the additional value of joint commissioning of services in rural areas is fully included in its assessment of business cases. Every Whitehall Department and rural unitary and county council should be required annually to report how rural access has been included in unit costing of their main services and how these costs have been minimised through joint commissioning and co-design with local communities. | Both internal and open markets operate differently in areas of dispersed population where there are fewer customers and consequently less competitive pressure between suppliers of public services. Assessment of business cases should reflect this. This initiative will require monitoring at national government level either by DEFRA, Treasury or the Cabinet Office as part of Government's commitment to rural proofing. |
| Efficiency savings through joint commissioning | Incentivise local, co-designed services to achieve non-cashable savings through improved quality and accessibility. | Every department that is charged with delivering person centred services i.e. Health and Care, Education, MHCLG, Transport, Justice (probation and courts), Home Office (PCCs/Community safety), DCMS (Civil Society), DWP (Benefits advice/job centres) should be required to allocate a modest proportion of their budget to a rural joint commissioning fund and initiative. | Service enhancements supported though the initiative would be required to evidence both co-design with local communities and added value through engagement with local communities and community owned assets / enterprises. This will add further to savings generated through efficiency and joint commissioning. |
| Defining rural need | Improve the collection, use and granularity of government data to drive improvements to services for rural people. | The Treasury provide guidance to all Whitehall departments on how to use: 1. a 'rural share of disadvantage' methodology , 2. the access to services domain of the Index of Multiple Deprivation (IMD) and 3. the Social Mobility Index to overcome the urban bias of the IMD and Joint Strategic Needs Assessments (JSNA). | May require additional investment from HM Treasury One of the reasons for some rural areas appearing to feel 'left behind' is because the collection and use of data about social needs tends to have an in-built prejudice towards urban manifestations of disadvantage. Overcoming this is a precursor to making changes that will enable these people and areas to feel their needs are being taken seriously. |

DRAFT STILL SUBJECT TO COMMENT AND AGREEMENT BY CCRI

Housing and Employment: A Survey of Rural Residents' Experiences and Opinions

A summary of findings from a 2018 online survey managed by the Countryside & Community Research Institute (University of Gloucestershire), with support from Rural England CIC.

Survey response

The survey achieved 714 complete responses from residents living in rural areas of England. This sought to obtain responses from a broad cross-section of rural residents, though there was an over-representation of those aged 55 to 74 and, to a lesser extent, of females.

Length of residency: 33% of respondents were long-established in their area and had lived at their current address for more than 20 years. 27% of respondents fell into a group that included recent arrivals, having lived at their current address no more than 5 years.

Housing tenure: 83% of respondents lived in a home that they or their family own, either outright or with a mortgage. 12% of respondents lived in a home that was rented. The remaining 5% were mainly respondents who shared someone else's accommodation.

Household structure: just over half (53%) of respondents were individuals who lived alone or with a spouse/partner, but who had no children living there. Almost a quarter (24%) of respondents had children living with them, including a sizeable minority with adult children.

Employment status: 56% of respondents were employed (18% being self-employed and 38% employees). 40% of respondents were retired, reflecting the over-representation of older age groups. Half of the self-employed respondents worked mainly from home.

Financial security: just over half (52%) of respondents described their financial position as either 'fine' or 'good' (with enough for some extras and savings). 10% of all respondents described their financial position as either 'not managing' or 'just about managing'. This figure rose to 20% among those aged 16 to 34 and to 38% among those in rented housing.

Key survey findings

House building: respondents' perspective on new housing developments taking place in their local areas can broadly be split into two groups. 42% took a positive perspective, either viewing some development as needed or actively welcoming it as beneficial. 46% had a more negative perspective, either viewing it as threatening the area's rural character or just seeing it as inevitable.

This pattern of responses held broadly true across different age groups. However, length of residence affected responses, with those who had lived longer at their current address being

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more positive about new housing development. Tenure was also important, with those living in rented housing more likely to be positive about new housing development.

Housing priorities: respondents were also asked about their preference for new housing in their area. There was a strong first preference for housing that is either affordable (38%) or is for local people (35%). The preference for new housing to be affordable housing was particularly strong among the 16 to 34 age group and among the 'other' tenure category (which mainly consists of people who share someone else's accommodation).

"Rural property is not affordable even when allocated as such and local jobs don't keep up with rents either. No local kids I grew up with can afford to stay. The whole town I grew up in is now rich, retired and it's killing communities." (Quote from survey respondent)

Housing solutions: when asked about the best solution, respondents again particularly favoured developing housing for local people (32%). Other fairly popular solutions were encouraging local house builders (17%), building more houses (11%), setting rent controls for private landlords (11%) and charging second home owners higher council tax (10%). Many of the younger group, aged 16 to 34, favoured provision of a lump sum towards a mortgage deposit (24%).

A generation gap: asked their view about there being a 'generation gap' between younger and older people, the majority of respondents (57%) felt this was an unhelpful way to talk about issues. This view was most strongly held among older age groups.

Overall, just 22% instead took the view that there was a generation gap with older people having more opportunities. However, this was the most popular response (46%) for those in the 16 to 34 age group.

"There have been three major developments in my village. Each was required to make provision for affordable housing. One development has not (to my knowledge) provided affordable housing and another has built fewer affordable homes than was initially proposed." (Quote from survey respondent)

Although the survey found some differing opinions according to age, it also showed that older respondents had a great of sympathy for the situation faced by younger people. An analysis of comments on the survey forms indicated that older respondents tend to hold the state (at both national and local levels) largely responsible for housing concerns and look to it for action. Younger people were more likely to blame those who make money from the housing market (though many also see local authority responses as deficient).

The comments received indicate considerable dissatisfaction with the current model for rural development and they could be interpreted as indicating support for the state to restrain or steer more strongly the housing market.

Rural residents survey panel

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The Countryside and Community Research Institute, who are partners of Rural England CIC, ran this online survey on housing and employment during summer 2018. They largely went back to people who had agreed to join a Rural Panel the year before. However, further panel members were recruited in 2018 to improve its age balance. Nonetheless, it should be noted that, compared with England's rural population as a whole, the panel contains a disproportionate number who are aged 55 to 74 and who are female. There also appears to be some skew towards the financially better off.

That said, as a tool offering a snapshot of views from a cross-section of rural residents in England it is useful. The summer 2018 survey attracted 887 responses, of which 714 were complete and from rural residents. It is these which are reported on by this summary note.

Context for the 2018 survey

The particular focus of the 2018 survey reflects the high profile of housing as a topic within the rural policy debate. House purchase prices are high in most rural areas and local wages are often low. Figures show that house prices are more than eight times annual average wages. The situation for low income households may be made harder still as a result of there being limited social rented housing in rural areas (especially in villages).

In some places, with high quality or protected landscapes, the scope for new house building is constrained. Nonetheless, data shows that a considerable share of new house building has recently taken place in predominantly rural areas. Housing development on green field sites can be a controversial and emotive issue, especially if it is seen as going to 'incomers' or to second-home owners. In addition to landscape or environmental impacts resulting from development, there are often concerns about added pressures on local infrastructure e.g. roads, health services.

Rural England CIC summary note
Published May 2019

HOUSE OF LORDS

Select Committee on the Rural Economy

Report of Session 2017–19

Time for a strategy for the rural economy

**CONTENTS LIST: SUMMARY AND SUMMARY OF
CONCLUSIONS AND RECOMMENDATIONS**

HL Paper 330

CONTENTS

| | <i>Page</i> |
|--|-------------|
| Summary | 5 |
| Chapter 1: The importance of the rural economy | 21 |
| Introduction | 21 |
| The work of the Committee | 22 |
| Box 1: Rural economic potential and the Industrial Strategy | 23 |
| Understanding the rural economy | 25 |
| Box 2: Key aspects of the rural economy in England | 26 |
| Rural policy in England | 28 |
| Previous scrutiny of the rural economy | 28 |
| Chapter 2: The rural economy and public policy | 30 |
| Introduction | 30 |
| The case for a rural strategy | 30 |
| Box 3: Lord Cameron of Dillington's 2015 independent review of rural proofing | 37 |
| Box 4: Rural proofing by public bodies | 42 |
| Chapter 3: Rural delivery and place-based approaches | 44 |
| Introduction | 44 |
| Understanding place-based approaches in the rural economy | 44 |
| Post-Brexit and the replacement of EU funding streams | 47 |
| Box 5: Place-based delivery: LEADER success stories | 49 |
| Place-based delivery of a rural strategy: the role of Local Enterprise Partnerships | 53 |
| Box 6: What are Local Enterprise Partnerships? | 53 |
| Box 7: The Work of the South West Rural Productivity Commission | 55 |
| The role of local authorities | 58 |
| Box 8: Partnership working: local-level rural strategy | 63 |
| Community participation and capacity building | 64 |
| Box 9: Community ownership: the Meltham Carlile Institute | 65 |
| Box 10: Community Initiatives: examples from ACRE | 66 |
| Chapter 4: Digital connectivity | 73 |
| Opportunities and challenges facing the rural digital economy | 73 |
| Box 11: Digital villages | 74 |
| Recent policy and funding announcements | 75 |
| Box 12: Key Government initiatives and funding announcements for improving digital connectivity in rural areas | 75 |
| Table 1: Premises unable to receive decent broadband from a fixed line | 77 |
| The Universal Service Obligation (USO) | 81 |
| Mobile phone coverage | 83 |
| Digital skills and the rural digital economy | 87 |
| Box 13: Local initiatives to improve digital skills | 87 |
| Chapter 5: Housing, planning and rural working spaces | 90 |
| Introduction | 90 |
| Housing in rural areas | 92 |
| Box 14: What do we mean by 'affordable housing'? | 95 |
| Box 15: Designated rural areas | 96 |

| | |
|--|------------|
| Box 16: Cornwall: good practice in affordable housing delivery | 98 |
| | |
| Planning in rural areas | 104 |
| Box 17: Neighbourhood Plans and support for the rural economy: Lewes District | 111 |
| Rural workspaces | 112 |
| Chapter 6: Access to skills and rural business support | 114 |
| Introduction | 114 |
| Characteristics of rural businesses and challenges | 114 |
| The Industrial Strategy | 115 |
| Access to skills | 118 |
| Box 18: Wheels to Work and Training | 119 |
| Box 19: UK Research and Innovation support for apprenticeships | 122 |
| Box 20: Increasing apprenticeships in National Parks | 124 |
| Rural business support | 128 |
| Box 21: Diversification case studies: Bolesworth Estate and Caplor | 133 |
| Case studies for effective business support | 137 |
| Box 22: Rural Creative Industries: Barrington Court, Somerset | 140 |
| Box 23: Rural arts: The Rural Diversity Network | 141 |
| Chapter 7: Delivering essential services at the local level | 143 |
| Introduction | 143 |
| Rural transport | 143 |
| Rural Crime | 148 |
| Box 24: Farm Watch in Lincolnshire | 150 |
| Box 25: Scotland Partnership Against Rural Crime (SPARC) | 150 |
| Rural health services | 152 |
| Box 26: Forest of Dean Community Hospital | 153 |
| Box 27: The Rural Coffee Caravan | 156 |
| Summary of conclusions and recommendations | 159 |

SUMMARY

For many, rural England is a great place in which to live and work or to visit, with the countryside rightly regarded as one of our greatest assets. With a vast range of rural businesses and initiatives, and new sectors growing fast, rural economies are increasingly diverse, dynamic and vibrant. But successive governments have underrated the contribution rural economies can make to the nation's prosperity and wellbeing. They have applied policies which were largely devised for urban and suburban economies, and which are often inappropriate for rural England. **This must change.** With rural England at a point of major transition, a different approach is urgently needed.

Rural England faces new challenges arising from, among others, Brexit, declining farm profitability, an ageing population, climate change and the pressure from often piecemeal and inappropriate development. But there are also new opportunities. In particular, the digital revolution has the ability, properly managed, to transform the rural economy, reverse years of underperformance and improve the quality of life not just for those living in rural areas, but for the nation as a whole.

The urgent challenge is to encourage the new opportunities, release unfulfilled potential and enhance the contribution which rural England can make to the nation while retaining its distinct character.

Figure 1: A thriving rural economy can be achieved by an effective rural strategy underpinned by better rural proofing and delivered through a place-based approach



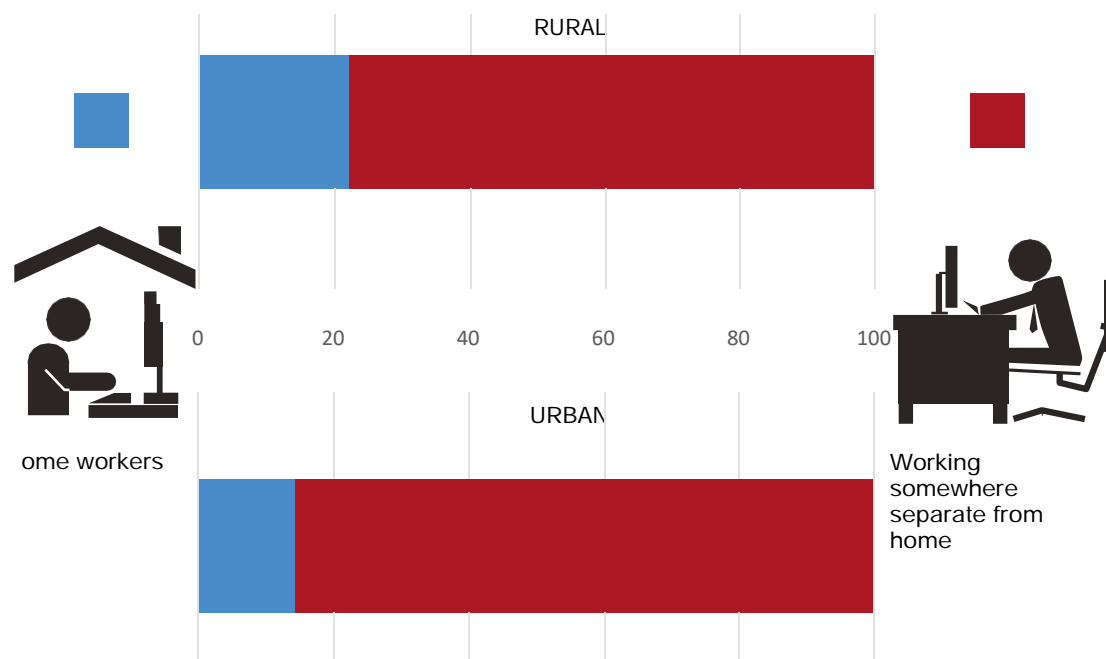
Our proposals to meet the challenge have three inextricably linked and mutually supportive key elements: a coherent rural strategy, re-energised rural proofing, and a “place-based” approach which reflects the diversity of our countryside and the capabilities and knowledge of those who live and work there.

The need for these reforms is apparent from the evidence we have received about key issues facing people in our countryside. notable among these are **81**

digital connectivity, the unaffordability of housing, economic development and business support, training and skills, the loss of basic services such as banks, buses and shops, and issues of health and social isolation. Our report makes detailed recommendations across this very broad range of issues, reflecting the breadth of evidence we received. A comprehensive and place-based rural strategy, accompanied by re-energised rural proofing, can help ensure that each of these policy challenges is addressed in a way that reflects the diversity of rural economies and rural communities across England.

While the Department for Environment, Food and Rural Affairs (Defra) has an overarching responsibility for “rural affairs”, it is clear that many government departments have responsibility for issues that impact rural economies. Because of this, our report is addressed to government as a whole and not to any one department alone.

Figure 2: Rural areas host a significantly higher number of home workers (22%) than urban areas (13%)



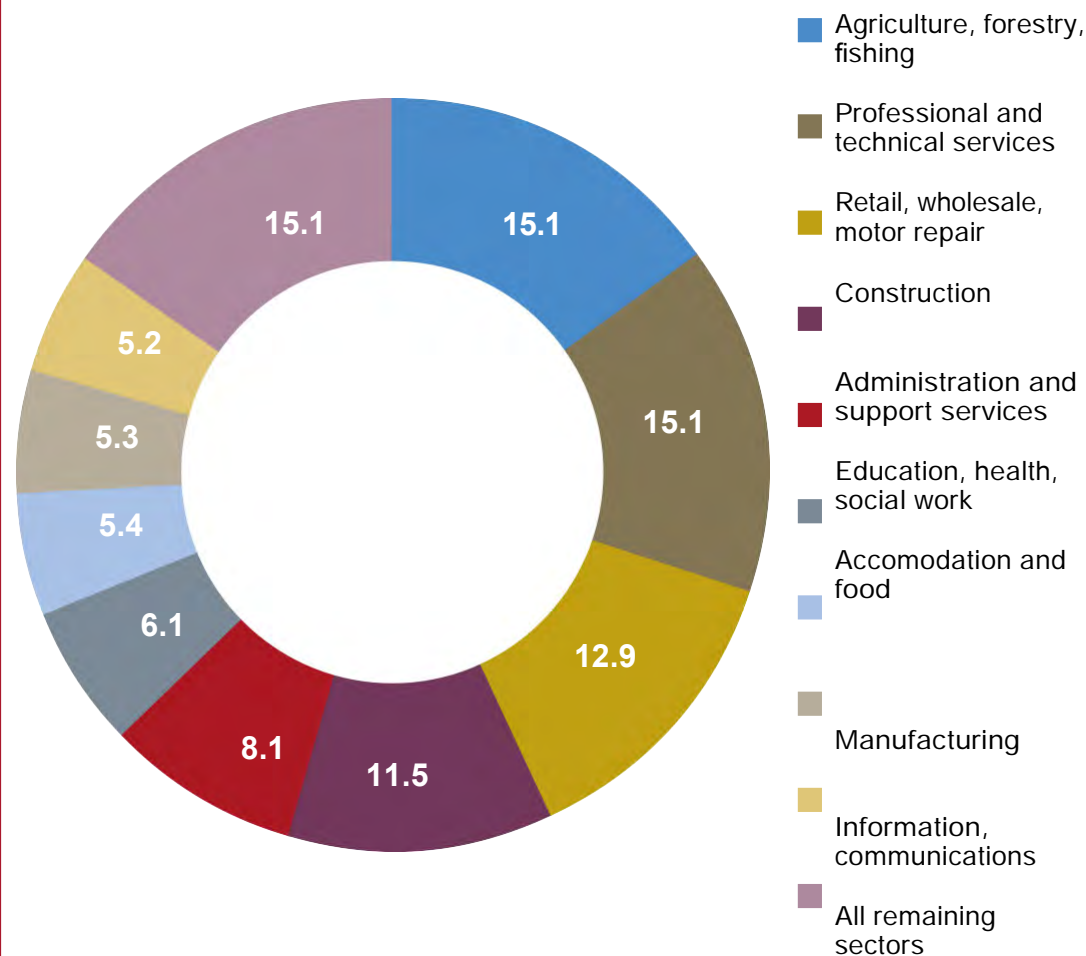
Source: Department for Environment, Food and Rural Affairs, *Statistical Digest of Rural England*, March 2019 Edition: https://assets.publishing.service.gov.uk/government/uploads/system/uploads/attachment_data/file/787699/03_Statistical_Digest_of_Rural_England_2019_March_edition.pdf [accessed 15 April 2019]

Unfulfilled potential; emerging challenges

The rural areas of England cover 90 per cent of its land and house 17 per cent of its people. They may look unchanging, but in reality England’s rural economies have already changed markedly and further change is inevitable. Once dominated by agriculture, they are now as economically diverse as urban economies, contributing a significant amount to the national economy with the potential to flourish and contribute even more to our wellbeing and prosperity. The Secretary of State for Business, Energy and Industrial Strategy has noted that “some of the biggest economic opportunities are in the rural parts of the United Kingdom”.¹

¹ HC Deb, 12 September 2017, [col 631](#)

Figure 3: Percentage of registered business units in rural England, by sector



Source: Rural Services Network, *It's Time for a Rural Strategy*, March 2019: https://rsnonline.org.uk/images/publications/rural-strategy-2019/rsn_rural_strategy_online.pdf [accessed 15 April 2019]

However, realising this potential requires the adoption of the proposals we recommend, coupled with a better understanding by governments of the challenges and constraints that many rural areas face in providing services and infrastructure. The failure to understand and address these challenges is illustrated by problems such as:

- Unaffordability of housing by comparison with towns and cities;
- Slower broadband and patchy mobile coverage;
- Recent declining service provision, for example public transport and banking facilities;
- Businesses facing skills shortages and difficulty accessing finance.

If rural economies and communities are to flourish, such challenges must be addressed. No resident or business should be disadvantaged unreasonably by their rural location.

In adapting to change it is also vital to retain those things which we value most about our countryside, striving for an appropriate balance between continuity and change. The special character of our landscapes and habitats, as well as the cultural heritage and social inclusivity, are of immense value to rural and urban

residents alike. Ensuring that change is managed in a way which protects these characteristics of our countryside is another part of the challenge.

These opportunities and challenges are of such a scale that urgent action is needed. Without a coherent rural strategy from government opportunities will be missed, potential unrealised, wellbeing diminished and cherished countryside lost. It is clear to us that, if rural economies are to meet their full potential, doing nothing is not an option.

The rural economy and public policy

We believe a new architecture is needed urgently to transform the way national and local governments and public bodies think about rural policy-making. In the same way that the government has recently introduced an Industrial Strategy, we propose the development of a new rural strategy outlining a long-term, overarching vision for the countryside. We recommend that all policies which have an impact on rural areas should seek to achieve the vision outlined in the rural strategy, supported by a more robust and positive rural proofing framework delivered by local bodies as well as national government.

The essential elements of a comprehensive, overarching, long-term rural strategy for the rural economy would include:

- A clear statement of the government's aims and objectives for the rural economy;
- The contribution of rural economies to the wellbeing of rural communities;
- The importance of the rural economy to the nation;
- The need to assess and respond to emerging and likely trends in rural economies;
- A clear relationship between national policy and local delivery, incorporating both an enabling framework and specific responsibilities for local bodies, to ensure that policy can respond to rural diversity;
- A comprehensive and publicly accountable approach to rural proofing such that policies across government are consistent with the rural strategy;
- A clearer approach to implementation and monitoring of rural policies; and
- A clear and responsive funding framework.

To enable effective scrutiny of performance, there should be an annual report to Parliament, coordinated by Defra and drawn from all government departments, setting out the government's performance against the rural strategy.

Through the "rural proofing" policy, government is required to ensure that all domestic policies take account of rural circumstances and needs. Although we heard of some positive examples of rural proofing, such as in the development of the Industrial Strategy, we also heard of major and continuing problems including late timing, poor consultation, inconsistency of application and lack of transparency and accountability. There is clearly significant room for improvement in how rural proofing is carried out.

Rural Proofing Process

An effective rural strategy would, we believe, help to improve the consistency and quality of rural proofing by ensuring that government takes a more deliberate and systematic interest in rural needs and objectives across the policy spectrum. We recommend that, as part of a rural strategy, the government comprehensively rethinks and reforms the rural proofing process across government, and at the local level. In particular, these reforms should address issues of timing, stakeholder involvement, transparency, accountability and comprehensive coverage and so remove the appearance of urban bias in public policy. We propose that the annual report to Parliament on the rural strategy should include an update on how departments have fulfilled their rural proofing obligations.

Rural delivery and place-based approaches

The rural areas of England vary enormously, as do the economies within them. Any rural strategy and the policies that flow from it must take these variations into account, and ensure that local communities are fully engaged. We recommend that the national rural strategy enables, and is realised through, a “place-based approach”, meaning one that is connected to local needs and interests, and with the participation of as wide a range as possible of public and private bodies, community groups, businesses and individuals.

Rural economic development will inevitably go through major changes following the departure of the UK from the European Union. EU rural development funding is scheduled to be replaced by the new domestic Shared Prosperity Fund. The lack of detail about the Shared Prosperity Fund has severely hampered the ability of rural businesses and communities to plan for the long term and secure and promote investment. We urge the government to provide more information as quickly as possible. We also recommend that the Shared Prosperity Fund must incorporate a dedicated, ring-fenced rural funding stream for supporting rural economies and communities, taking into account social as well as economic priorities. Performance in this area should be a key part of the annual report to Parliament on the rural strategy.

Local Enterprise Partnerships (LEPs) were introduced in 2010 to facilitate local economic development. Although there are examples of good practice in the rural economy, in many cases LEPs have failed to take local economic interests or priorities into account. We conclude that overall LEP performance with regard to rural interests is far too variable to give us confidence that they will use their expanded responsibilities to take rural interests seriously, and we recommend a range of measures to strengthen their engagement with rural economies.

The cost of rural service delivery is not well understood by government, with urban authorities receiving considerably more money per head of population and the additional costs associated with sparsity not reflected in funding settlements. The Fair Funding Review must ensure that rural local authorities are adequately compensated for the additional costs of service provision and that rural local areas are fairly treated in future settlements.

The government’s plan to allow local authorities to retain a greater proportion of Business Rates has the potential to cause problems, not least for those rural local authorities that have fewer opportunities to generate additional

revenue through it. We believe that government must ensure that the planned implementation of Business Rate Retention is properly rural proofed, so that it does not disadvantage rural local authorities and hence the citizens of rural England. The pilots of 75 per cent Business Rate Retention must take account of this.

notwithstanding financial constraints, a range of innovative initiatives are being undertaken by some local authorities to help support business growth and economic development in their areas. Examples of good practice—some of which are included in our report—should be shared more widely in the hope that other councils will follow suit. Additionally, all rural-facing local authorities should adopt local rural strategies as good practice where these are not already in place.

Although currently relatively few in number, community-owned organisations, businesses and amenities (such as sports centres, pubs and shops) are playing an increasingly important role in rural economies. They need more support, especially in relation to grant finance and bidding for service delivery contracts. national and local government should review their procurement policies to support community-owned organisations seeking to win contracts. The government should use the existing Dormant Assets Scheme to establish a central Community Ownership Fund offering development, revenue and capital funding.

Community-owned organisations, businesses and amenities have often benefitted from “community rights” established in the Localism Act 2011. However, we have concluded that the Community Right to Bid should be replaced with a ‘Community Right to First Refusal’ in relation to “Assets of Community Value” (ACVs) and that such initiatives should be supported by the establishment of a Community Ownership Fund.

Volunteers and voluntary organisations often play a critical role in rural communities, not only in the provision of services such as health and social care, but also in driving forward initiatives to develop local economies, whether through a “neighbourhood Plan” or the setting up of a community-owned shop. Evidence suggests that, in some rural areas, willingness to volunteer or take up a role as a “community leader” is declining, and it is apparent that the adoption of neighbourhood plans has been greater in more prosperous rural areas. government must pursue initiatives for developing and maintaining community capacity, participation and leadership in the rural economy, including in those areas where civic engagement may be lower. The Shared Prosperity Fund should incorporate a Community Capacity Fund, which should be used to build capabilities and support community leaders in promoting engagement.

Because they are based within rural communities, Parish and Town Councils can play an important role as economic and community enablers. not all do. Town and Parish Councils should be encouraged to use their discretionary powers to promote local growth and the government should provide funding for one of the national organisations which support rural economies to produce a ‘Best Practice guide’ on the use of such discretionary powers. The government should not pursue any suggestion of imposing referendum thresholds for Town and Parish Council precepts.

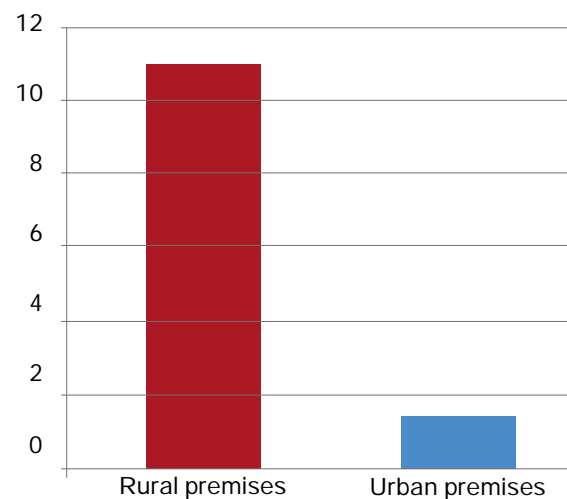
Confronting current challenges

The Committee heard evidence on a number of specific challenges holding back the potential of rural economies and affecting the wellbeing of its citizens in rural areas. These should be addressed more effectively following the preparation of a rural strategy, the introduction of more effective (and positive) rural proofing and the adoption of a place-based approach, as proposed above. In the meantime, we highlight the following issues in particular.

Digital connectivity

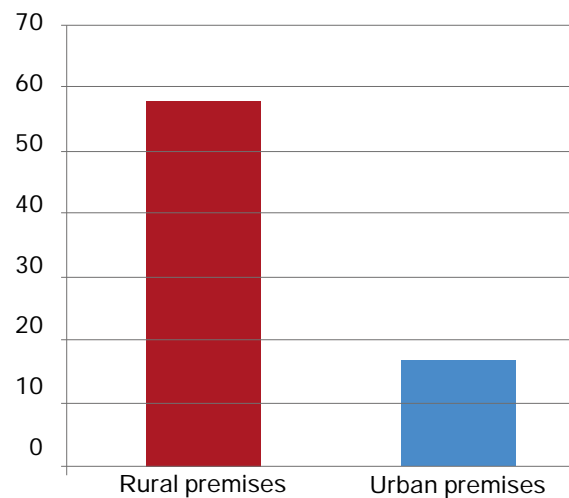
Poor digital connectivity has had far-reaching consequences for rural communities and economies. Better broadband and mobile infrastructure has the potential to transform the rural economy with greater potential for home working and small business growth, and fewer constraints on operating from remote locations. While the record of successive governments on rural connectivity has been poor, recent policy and funding announcements are encouraging and the government appears to be giving greater focus to rural areas with regard to future connectivity.

Figure 4: Per cent of premises unable to access 10 Mbps broadband



Source: Rural Services Network, *It's Time for a Rural Strategy*, March 2019: https://rsnonline.org.uk/images/publications/rural-strategy-2019/rsn_rural_strategy_online.pdf [accessed 15 April 2019]

Figure 5: Per cent of premises unable to access all 4G mobile networks



Source: Rural Services Network, *It's Time for a Rural Strategy*, March 2019: https://rsnonline.org.uk/images/publications/rural-strategy-2019/rsn_rural_strategy_online.pdf [accessed 15 April 2019]

In relation to broadband, we welcome the government's intention that all new build properties should have "full fibre" (FTTP) and to provide nationwide full fibre connectivity by 2033, although we remain concerned that homes in smaller developments may still suffer from digital disadvantage without stronger action. We also welcome the principle of the Broadband Universal Service Obligation (USO) which will give people in the UK the right to request a decent broadband connection even earlier. Under the USO, eligible homes and businesses will be able to request a connection at no extra cost to themselves, unless the cost of building it exceeds £3,400. However, we believe the upload and download speeds in the USO commitment are too modest and should be reviewed along with the £3,400 payment threshold. government should direct Ofcom to conduct an urgent review of the USO, focusing on what minimum commitment would be needed to sustain and support rural businesses and communities.

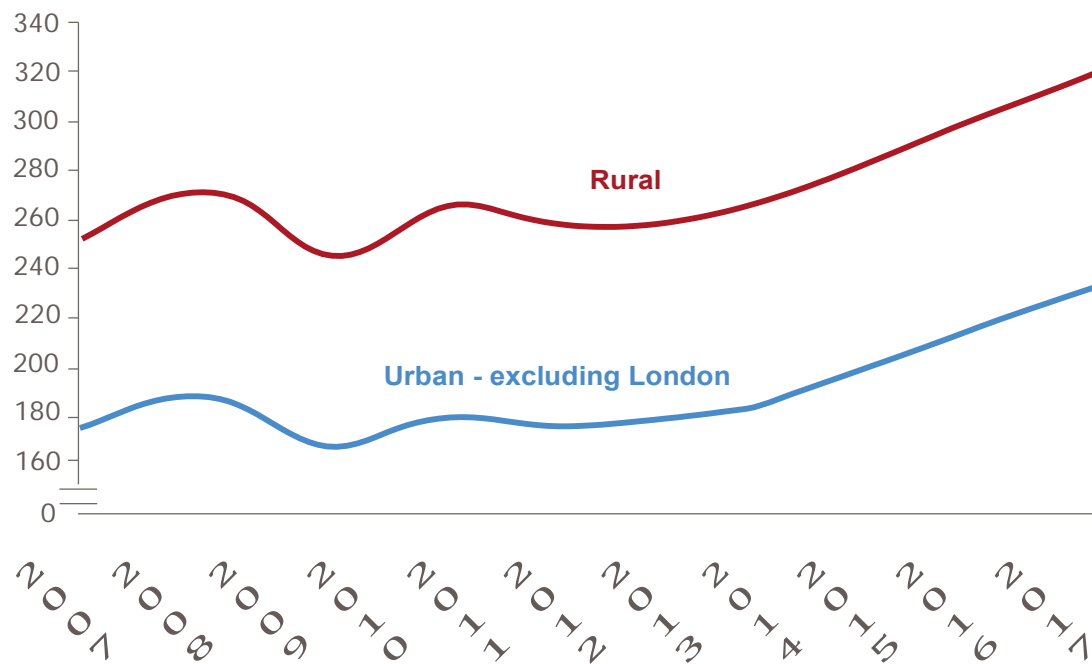
It is important that rural areas, and the businesses within them, are not disadvantaged during the roll-out of the next (5g) generation of mobile connectivity. We were pleased that in 2018 the government seemed keen to ensure that those mobile operators who plan to bid in the auction for the 700MHz spectrum would be required to ensure rural areas were prioritised, but were disappointed to see that those obligations were watered down in the most recent Ofcom consultation document. We welcome the proposal for Ofcom to review the possibility of introducing roaming in rural areas and would urge Ofcom to begin this review urgently. government and Ofcom should also encourage operators to share transmission masts more often where this would improve rural connectivity.

Potential new businesses in, and those wishing to relocate to, rural areas need accurate information about existing and planned levels of connectivity, and Ofcom should develop an accurate evidence base for consumers about coverage in specific locations. Moreover, rural businesses often struggle to recruit and retain staff with the digital skills needed to help their business thrive and grow. This "digital skills gap" can put many rural businesses at a disadvantage. Local and national governments must do more to realise the potential of improving digital skills in rural areas.

Housing, planning and rural working spaces

Without an adequate supply of affordable housing and work spaces it is difficult for rural businesses to flourish. However, housing affordability remains a major concern and there is also a shortage of rural workspaces. These present challenges which must be addressed.

Figure 6: Annual average sale prices of houses (£000s), year ending 2007 Q1 to year ending 2017 Q3



Source: Institute for Public Policy Research, *A new rural settlement: fixing the affordable housing crisis in rural England*, June 2018: https://www.ippr.org/files/2018-06/1530194000_a-new-rural-settlement-june18.pdf [accessed 15 April 2019]

New affordable housing

There is a shortage of housing of the right types and tenures, particularly for the working age population, and more support is needed for sensitive, well-designed development on small sites in village locations. At present housing provision in settlements of fewer than 3,000 people is not even recorded by government collected statistics. government should remedy this deficiency and work with local authorities and housebuilders to identify opportunities to develop new, well-designed homes, including affordable housing, in village locations.

Small housing schemes make a vital contribution to meeting housing needs in rural areas and fit more sensitively into the landscape. However, at present in most cases, local authorities are not permitted to require affordable housing from developments of fewer than 10 homes, except in designated areas. This rule, introduced in the national Planning Policy Framework (nPPF) in spite of the requirement for rural proofing, has severely limited the provision of new rural affordable housing. The government must provide a comprehensive exemption to this policy for rural areas.

There needs to be a greater focus on delivery of affordable housing in rural areas more generally. Homes England should restore its rural housing target, which should reflect the rural population share, and its grant rates should reflect the higher cost of development on small sites in rural England.

Cost and availability of land

Another key challenge for rural affordable housing is the cost and availability of land. In particular, sites with the potential to have private housing built on them often command a very high price which can rule out the possibility of affordable housing. There needs to be fundamental action either to reduce the jump in land values caused by development permission or to capture and apportion that gain. government should urgently establish an inquiry into this question.

The policy of “rural exception sites”—housing sites outside local plans which are brought forward specifically for affordable housing—can help address the problem. However, this policy is not currently reaching its full potential and the delivery of “rural exception sites” is largely concentrated in a small number of local authority areas. government should publish best practice guidance for the incentivisation and delivery of housing on rural exception sites, and should consider taxation reforms to incentivise landowners to make such sites available for affordable housing.

Community Land Trusts (CLTs)—locally-led charities supporting small-scale new development—play an important role encouraging local participation in meeting rural housing needs, and have the potential to play an even bigger role in the future. We urge the government to maintain the funding provided through the Community Housing Fund, and to explore further means of providing development finance for CLTs.

The Right to Buy

The ‘Right to Buy’ policy has created challenges for rural affordable housing providers and there are concerns that the (currently voluntary) extension of the policy to Housing Associations may increase these challenges. Since 2012, of every eight homes sold, only one is replaced in a rural community. The government should consider suspending the local authority Right to Buy or making it voluntary in rural areas. The Housing Association Right to Buy must likewise not be implemented until clarity is available on how replacement homes will be provided.

Housing design

We heard that housing design in England is “shockingly poor” and that there should be a statutory obligation for beauty in new housing. A new Commission entitled “Building Better, Building Beautiful” has been established by government to consider aesthetics in new development. This body must fully rural proof its proposals and ensure that distinctive rural vernacular is considered in full.

General planning issues

We heard evidence that, despite positive intentions, the planning system more generally is not working as it should in many rural areas. The new national Planning Policy Framework has been welcomed for its new references to rural housing and the rural economy, and for introducing greater transparency to the “viability assessment” process. It still, however, received some criticism for failing to highlight the importance that should be given to the development of new homes in smaller outlying settlements. Sensitive development should be supported in rural villages, to ensure their survival and sustainability. Other policies such as on viability assessments and entry level exception sites should

be monitored to ensure they are operating as intended and helping increase the supply and maintenance of rural affordable housing.

Towards the end of our inquiry, the Raynsford Review of the planning system in England (commissioned by the Town and Country Planning Association) was published. We believe some of the proposed reforms have great potential to strengthen the planning system, including in rural areas, and to give local authorities and communities the tools they need to secure better outcomes for rural development. Furthermore, we believe government should revisit the merits of a national spatial plan to ensure that planning policy operates in a framework where land use priorities are properly considered above the local level.

neighbourhood Planning is a particularly positive example of place-based and participatory support for rural economies through planning for new development. There remain challenges, however, including uneven uptake, lack of community capacity, and the risk of neighbourhood plans being overridden in planning approval decisions where there is a wider shortage of local housing sites. government should proactively encourage uptake of neighbourhood planning. Successful local authorities should be encouraged to share good practice, and greater protections should be put in place for ‘made’ neighbourhood plans to prevent them being overridden in planning decision making.

The availability of rural working spaces is a key concern in rural economies, particularly among small businesses looking to grow. government must review incentives and planning rules in relation to smaller floorspace developments and undertake an urgent review of the impact of permitted development rights on rural employment space. Local Enterprise Partnerships should be tasked with ensuring economic development is not constrained by the lack of available work places.

Access to skills and rural business support

An overwhelming number of businesses in rural areas are SMEs, often sole traders. In addition to the housing, connectivity, transport and other challenges faced by rural communities, such businesses frequently face difficulties in recruiting and retaining skilled staff and accessing advice and support.

Several recent developments, such as the national Industrial Strategy, the planned Local Industrial Strategies and the Sector Deals, have the potential to address these issues and help improve the productivity of rural economies. To this end, it is vital that Local Industrial Strategies are fully rural proofed, along the lines set out above. The Business Productivity Review must also make rural considerations paramount.

The longer distances to travel and inadequate public transport often hamper attendance at full or part-time training courses at Colleges. LEPs and local authorities should work together to explore public transport solutions and to reinvigorate schemes such as “Wheels to Work and Training” where mopeds (or scooters) are available to students for loan.

Apprenticeships and skills development

The Apprenticeship Scheme ought to provide another route to addressing skills shortages in rural economies. However, the current criteria often favour large firms, making it difficult for rural SMEs to host apprentices, and there are too few land-based apprenticeships. government should review the funding

arrangements of the Apprenticeship Levy to make it easier for small businesses to engage.

We welcome the planned establishment, by each LEP, of Skills Advisory Panels which will build an evidence base of local skills requirements and, in turn, inform the development of Local Industrial Strategies. Once the skills needs are identified there should be better co-ordination of local education and training opportunities to ensure the availability of provision to meet rural skills needs. The Industrial Strategy also provides an opportunity for better co-ordination of funds to support this provision.

Additionally, Skills Advisory Panels should be required to:

- address the issue of careers guidance;
- provide guidance on pathways of available courses and funding streams;
- identify ways in which rural businesses can be linked more closely to schools, colleges and universities; and
- work with colleges in particular to improve “remote access” to FE courses.

Even with the improvement in skills training, there are concerns regarding the impact on rural businesses of the ending of free movement of workers from the EU. The government’s post-Brexit immigration proposals should be monitored to ensure that rural businesses’ employment needs, in particular for seasonal work, do not suffer.

Rural business challenges

Rural businesses, like any other, benefit from a range of support, from advice to access to finance. However, many business support measures fail to take into account the small size and dispersed distribution of rural businesses. Lessons could be learned from the Rural growth network (Rgn) pilot projects which ran from 2012 to 2015, and consideration given to extending Rgns in local authorities’ growth Deals when these are negotiated with central government.

We are concerned that the design of business rates does not always reflect the challenges of rural businesses. While rural rate relief and small business rate relief can be helpful, we believe more could be done in this regard. government should review the impact that business rates revaluation and current multiplier levels are having on rural businesses, and there is an urgent need to review the impact of small business and rural rate relief provisions on local pubs, shops and other businesses that may be providing essential services and amenities.

Existing tax arrangements are complicated for farmers and small businesses to navigate, and can also act as a disincentive to diversification. The situation is even more difficult for tenant farmers, who may also be prevented from diversifying by their tenancy agreements. The government should investigate whether the current tax system is putting off farmers and rural small businesses from investing in diversification. The government should also address restrictions on tenant farmers that may prevent diversification.

Access to finance

The closure of rural bank branches presents challenges for businesses that wish to grow and invest. Although banking services are available in rural post office branches, these do not always meet business needs, not least access to loan finance, and more could be done to support rural banking needs for business.

The closure of rural bank branches has also reduced the number of ATMs, while rural shopkeepers are insufficiently rewarded to provide ATMs instead. government should review the availability and hosting costs of ATMs and deposit mechanisms in rural areas to ensure that rural businesses' needs will continue to be met. Banks should also agree a realistic increase to the fees they pay for cash withdrawal and deposit transactions carried out on their behalf through the Post Office network.

The planned Shared Prosperity Fund should provide a source of financial support for rural businesses looking to grow and invest. This must be a priority for the government when it consults on the shape of the Shared Prosperity Fund. LEPs and local authorities should also work together to provide "portals" where sources of finance for rural enterprise may be listed.

Business growth sectors

Tourism and the arts and creative industries are two sectors in rural economies with real potential for growth if these issues of skills and business support are addressed.

To be successful, rural tourism needs promotion. Once established, rural-facing Tourism Zones will need to address the issue of attracting funding for this. We welcome plans for the development of a Tourism Sector Deal. It is important that this deal be rural proofed and its implementation monitored in rural areas. LEPs covering areas with notable rural tourist sectors should have a particular focus on the importance and potential of the sector.

Rural arts and creative industries have also been identified as a significant contributor and important source of growth to rural economies. We believe that the time has come for greater focus on the role the arts and creative industries can play in rural regeneration. Arts Council England and other funders should ensure rural communities receive a fair share of future investments. This should include a strategic investment programme for the creative rural economy.

Delivering essential services at the local level

We also covered a number of other key policy areas during our inquiry including transport, crime and rural health services. It is clear across these areas that while many positive initiatives are taking place, the absence of strategic thinking by successive governments has often led to policy failure and to rural businesses and communities being disadvantaged by comparison with their urban counterparts. In each case there is a need for fair funding from central government that reflects the costs of rural provision and demographic challenges.

Rural transport

Inadequate public transport can deter people from living and working in a rural area, can make accessing markets or training courses difficult, and can prevent potential customers accessing rural suppliers. It is time to consider a new approach, built on existing examples of good practice. Currently there are several "pots" of money in a range of government departments. government should consider consolidating all these funding streams into a single public transport support "pot". This would enable local authorities to make a single bid and enable better planning for future service provision.

Similarly, there could be better co-ordination of existing services such as school buses, community transport and minibuses, and a

consolidated support fund should draw upon the successful example of “Total Transport” pilots which sought to maximise benefits from existing transport resources including community transport. government should also support targeted investment in rural road maintenance.

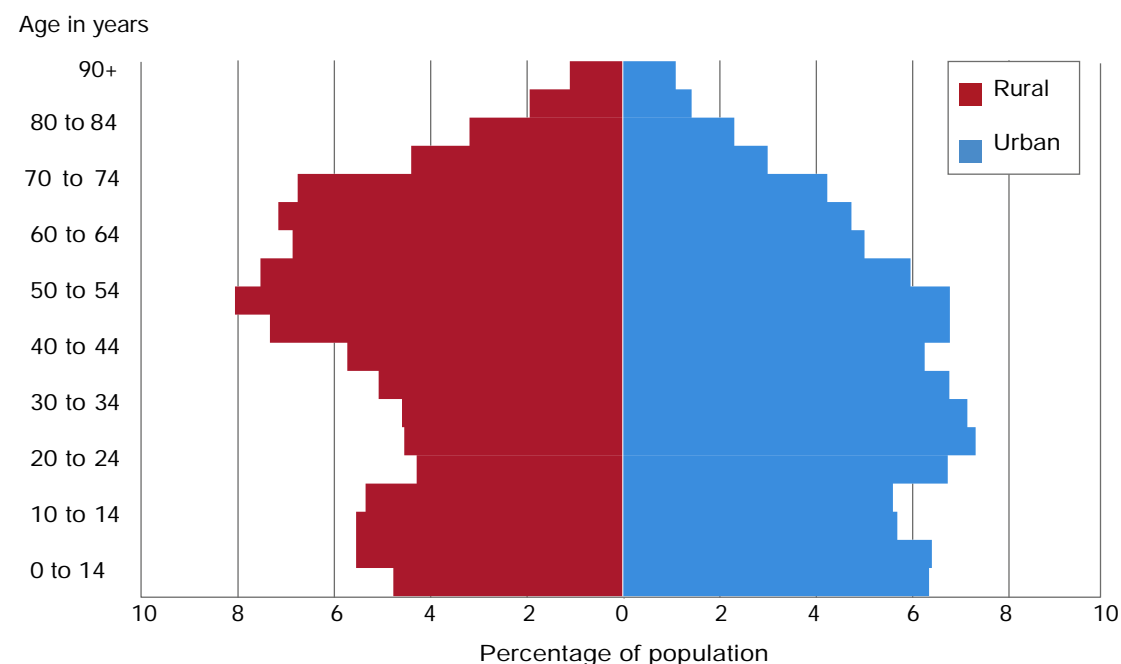
Rural crime

The monetary impact of crime on rural businesses has increased in recent years and surveys have found a negative perception of rural police forces. This situation has not been helped by what some believe is a poor understanding by the Courts Service and the Crown Prosecution Service of the impact of crime on rural communities and businesses and the consequentially low penalties. However, despite rural areas receiving less policing funding per head of the population than urban areas, there are some examples of excellent initiatives, such as “Farm Watch”, to monitor and tackle rural crime. Such initiatives should be shared and adopted more widely among rural police forces. Magistrates, Courts and the Crown Prosecution Service should also be trained to better understand the scale and impact of rural crime.

The ageing population and rural health services

The average age of rural dwellers is higher than in urban areas, and is increasing. This should be reflected in policy and funding allocations for services in rural areas, particularly in respect of the additional costs associated with providing healthcare in rural areas. We view initiatives such as multi-use health centres and hubs as positive means of improving access to services in rural locations. They should be encouraged and promoted.

Figure 7: Percentage of population within age bands by rural-urban classification in England, 2017



Source: Department for Environment, Food and Rural Affairs, *Statistical Digest of Rural England*, March 2019 Edition: https://assets.publishing.service.gov.uk/government/uploads/system/uploads/attachment_data/file/787699/03_Statistical_Digest_of_Rural_England_2019_March_edition.pdf [accessed 15 April 2019]

The government's investment in digital health, which offers the potential to improve access to health services in rural areas, is welcome. However, given the continued unreliability of digital connectivity in some rural areas, the success of a "digital health" approach will depend on the urgency with which government addresses the rural/urban digital connectivity divide.

The challenges of rural loneliness and isolation are also apparent, and their health and mental health impacts in rural areas are a particular concern for us. government must ensure that as it implements its loneliness strategy it pays close attention to the distinctive challenges of combatting isolation and loneliness in rural contexts. We were very concerned to hear that there is no adjustment for the additional cost of providing rural mental health services in England. This must be corrected and we call on government to take more steps to support rural mental health more widely.

Conclusion

Successful rural economies depend on a wide range of services and support to help individual businesses establish and grow and to attract people to work and prosper in our countryside. We have referred to the challenges created by poor digital connectivity, an inadequate supply of affordable housing, skills shortages and declining business advice and support. These pressing concerns regarding public transport, crime prevention and health, including tackling loneliness and social isolation in rural areas, reflect the weight of evidence which the Committee received. Each requires its own specific response. But beyond this, a comprehensive and place-based rural strategy, accompanied by re-energised rural proofing, can help ensure each of these policy challenges is more likely to be addressed in a way that reflects the diversity of rural economies and communities across England.

A full list of conclusions and recommendations can be found at the end of the report.

114 TIME FOR A STRATEgY FOR THE RURAL ECOhOMY

SUMMARY OF CONCLUSIONS AND RECOMMENDATIONS

Chapter 2: The rural economy and public policy

1. Rural economies are facing significant opportunities and challenges. The UK's impending departure from the EU, cuts to local authorities' budgets, new policies being rolled out to improve digital connectivity and boost housing supplies, an ageing population in rural areas, the growth of long-distance commuting, and suburbanisation all make this an ideal moment for the government to set out its vision for rural areas and to give the nation a clear steer for confronting the challenges and seizing the opportunities facing rural communities and economies. This can be achieved by a comprehensive rural strategy. (Paragraph 56)
2. We reject the view that a rural strategy would create a dichotomy between rural and urban, or sideline rural need from mainstream policy development. The success of a rural strategy in boosting rural areas will depend on the ambition and objectives it sets and its implementation. We would support the need for both a high-level framework document being developed at central government level as well as local rural strategies being developed by local authorities and LEPs. Local rural strategies would act along similar lines as City Deals in providing local authorities and LEPs with funding and decision-making powers to ensure that the goals set in the strategy can be achieved. (Paragraph 57)
3. We are in no doubt that there is a critical need for government to develop a comprehensive rural strategy which sets out the government's ambition for rural areas, as outlined above. Development of the document must involve all relevant government departments and bodies who must then be responsible and accountable for its implementation. To enable scrutiny of performance, there should be an annual report to Parliament, coordinated by Defra and drawn from all government departments, which would set out the government's performance against the strategy and include an update on how departments have fulfilled their rural proofing obligations. (Paragraph 58)
4. Local government—together with Local Enterprise Partnerships—and public bodies should develop their own local rural strategies consistent with the government framework, and be responsible and accountable for their implementation. (Paragraph 59)
5. There is room for improvement in terms of how much attention is being paid to rural affairs by Defra and other government departments. Although they are closely interlinked, Defra needs to be wary of presuming that what is good for the environment or for agriculture is also beneficial for the wider rural economy. Although the role of the rural champion is a good idea, we are concerned that any junior minister in that position would lack clout to raise the profile of rural affairs enough to ensure that rural issues are being mainstreamed into policy development across government. The role of the post-holder is not helped by the lack of a rural strategy. (Paragraph 66)
6. We do not propose the creation of a body like the Commission for Rural Communities. However, we are concerned that the government's understanding of rural affairs has declined since the abolition of the CRC and we support calls for all government departments to be more proactive in seeking a diversity of rural voices when developing policy. (Paragraph 75)

7. There is significant room for improvement when it comes to rural proofing. There are considerable weaknesses in terms of timing, consultation, transparency, accountability, urban bias and lack of coverage, but none of these are insurmountable. The examples of good rural proofing show that it can aid policy coordination across government departments and is more likely to lead to better outcomes for rural areas. A rural strategy would add further weight to the push for government departments to get rural proofing right. (Paragraph 103)
8. The government needs comprehensively to rethink and reform the rural proofing process across government, and at the local level, to ensure that relevant policies and legislation are attuned to the needs of rural communities and rural economies. A reformed approach to rural proofing should take into account the following:
 - A rural assessment should take place at the start of the policy process, including engagement with rural stakeholders, and be treated as integral, rather than as an adjunct to urban-focused policy. no legislation should be brought forward without an accompanying rural assessment statement;
 - The impact of new policies on rural areas should be systematically and consistently monitored as they are implemented. This would include an update on the performance of rural proofing across government in the government's annual report on the implementation of the rural strategy (see paragraph 58);
 - All relevant public bodies should be required to rural proof, monitor and report annually on the rural impacts of relevant policies. This should include non-departmental public bodies, local authorities and other spending bodies such as Local Enterprise Partnerships; and
 - The government should put in place the appropriate structures to facilitate this more robust rural proofing regime. (Paragraph 104)

Chapter 3: Rural delivery and place-based approaches

9. For a national rural strategy and its underlying rural policies to be effective, it is crucial that they are delivered locally using a place-based approach. This must include effective partnership working from all relevant public, private and voluntary bodies, driven by the nature of each local area and with active community participation, breaking down the silos that too often characterise rural policy. (Paragraph 119)
10. To ensure that place-based approaches are adopted, they should be set out as a key objective of the rural strategy, with clear guidelines and examples of good practice from existing rural initiatives. Accountability mechanisms for the rural strategy should also ensure that they incorporate checks on whether policies are being delivered in a truly “place-based” manner—for example, checks on community participation. (Paragraph 120)
11. In designing place-based approaches, the government and other relevant bodies should look to previous schemes such as the Market Towns Initiative, a successful example of partnership working, to help deliver local economic development. Such initiatives could be revived or reconceived in a new form,

reflecting the new and emerging challenges of today's rural economies.
 (Paragraph 121)

12. To ensure that post-Brexit rural funding is effectively prioritised and delivered, we believe there may be merit in appointing a joint Defra-Treasury minister charged with this specific responsibility. Such an appointment could be combined with or complement an enhanced "rural champion" position as discussed in Chapter 2. (Paragraph 129)
13. We take it as self-evident that rural economies should not be materially disadvantaged by Brexit. The Shared Prosperity Fund presents an opportunity to deliver investment into rural economies to boost productivity and promote growth and to support social infrastructure, and to replace RDPE and LEADER funding in a way which genuinely reflects and delivers upon rural priorities. (Paragraph 144)
14. The government has yet to provide sufficient detail on the Shared Prosperity Fund, hampering the ability of businesses and communities to plan for the long term and secure and promote investment. (Paragraph 145)
15. The government must bring forward the consultation on the Shared Prosperity Fund as soon as possible and give much more information on its proposed scope to enable rural businesses and communities to begin planning for the future. (Paragraph 146)
16. The Shared Prosperity Fund must incorporate a dedicated, ring-fenced rural funding stream for supporting rural economies and communities. This should be devised with a clear awareness of the opportunities and challenges of rurality and should reflect ambitions to increase the rural contribution to national and local economic growth. It must also address wider social priorities in rural areas, in recognition that not all rural challenges are reflected in economic statistics. Performance in this area should be a key part of the annual report to Parliament on the rural strategy. (Paragraph 147)
17. Rural development programmes should be decided and delivered locally to meet local needs. The mechanisms set up to replace LEADER funding should follow the bottom-up and place-based principles of the most successful LEADER initiatives. The Shared Prosperity Fund must be properly rural proofed as it is developed, and government must be transparent from the outset as to how it is doing this. (Paragraph 148)
18. Funding made available through the Shared Prosperity Fund must also be designed to meet the needs of rural SMEs including micro and family businesses which predominate in rural areas. This means providing clear, concise and timely information as well as delivering a simplified and accessible process, which allows for long term planning and investment. (Paragraph 149)
19. LEPs are being invested with greater significance by the government through their responsibility for the delivery of Local Industrial Strategies. In conjunction with local authorities, they would clearly therefore have a major role in place-based initiatives to support rural economic development. At present, however, they are not working for many rural areas. (Paragraph 166)
20. While we heard some evidence of good practice among LEPs, the poor rural performance of many LEPs to date does not give us confidence that they will use their expanded responsibilities to take rural interests seriously

and incorporate them fully into their Strategies and delivery programmes.
 (Paragraph 167)

21. All LEPs containing notable rural areas must adopt a rural economic strategy, within the Local Industrial Strategy or Strategic Economic Plan, or as a standalone document. These strategies should have reference to the rural strategic framework discussed in the previous chapter and take a place-based approach, ensuring that communities and rural businesses are fully involved in their development and implementation and with full reference to local circumstances and priorities. Annual reports from LEPs should set out how they have worked to deliver their rural strategy in the relevant year.
 (Paragraph 168)
22. LEPs should be required to transparently rural proof their Local Industrial Strategies and Strategic Economic Plans, according to the same principles and guidelines set out for national level rural proofing. (Paragraph 169)
23. We welcome the government's support for SME representation on LEP boards in its LEP review, but further action is needed to reduce the dominance of big urban businesses on LEP boards. All LEPs containing notable rural areas should have a specified board member or 'champion' to focus on the needs of the wider rural economy. LEPs must also seek to engage more actively with communities and other bodies that are engaged in rural economic development and incorporate this work into their strategies.
 (Paragraph 170)
24. The proposal for a minimum of two-thirds private sector membership on LEP boards—in addition to raising wider issues about accountability—means some rural local authorities are likely to lose representation. LEPs should establish rural subgroups or partnerships with wider rural representation from local authorities, public bodies and rural businesses, and should seek to involve SME representatives in these. (Paragraph 171)
25. We welcome government commitments to reflect the additional costs of rural service delivery in future funding allocations. In the meantime, the consolidation of the Rural Services Delivery grant is a positive step in this direction. (Paragraph 186)
26. The Fair Funding Review must ensure that rural local authorities are adequately compensated for the additional costs of service provision, and that rural areas are fairly treated in future funding settlements. (Paragraph 187)
27. The planned switch to a local authority funding system based on business rates retention is likely to be cost neutral initially and could prove beneficial thereafter if business growth is strong. However, we are concerned that the emerging system does not account for the interests of rural local authorities, who may be put at a disadvantage where their area has less potential to experience such growth or where their area has many businesses that can claim full business rate relief. (Paragraph 188)
28. The government must ensure that the planned implementation of a funding system based on 75 per cent business rates retention within the local authority sector is properly rural proofed and is designed to ensure that rural authorities are not disadvantaged. We expect the pilots of 75 per cent retention to take account of this as a priority. (Paragraph 189)

29. Local authorities can play a key role in driving place-based economic growth and sustainability through entering into local partnerships and bringing local stakeholders together to promote rural economic development. As with all areas of discretionary local authority activity, the potential is likely to be constrained by budget cuts which oblige councils to focus on the delivery of statutory services. (Paragraph 196)
30. Rural-facing local authorities should adopt rural strategies as good practice where these are not already in place. These strategies should leverage their wider roles and powers to support rural economic development, including through planning policy, support for digital infrastructure and transport provision. They should also consider the interventions that may be necessary to support the prosperity of smaller towns and outlying settlements. (Paragraph 197)
31. The government must give more support to local authorities in devising and delivering place-based approaches to rural development, and funding allocations should reflect this. government should also promote and share good practice in the development of place-based rural strategies and initiatives and enable access to appropriate advice and support. government should also consider whether some funding programmes being delivered by LEPs could be more effectively implemented by local authorities. (Paragraph 198)
32. While still relatively small, community business is growing fast and has huge potential in rural areas. For a place-based approach to be successful, national and local government and local public bodies must do all they can to support the growth of this sector. (Paragraph 215)
33. national and local government should review their procurement policies to ensure that small and local organisations have the genuine ability to bid for the delivery of services. Such a review should include an exploration of the potential for smaller-scale, locally-driven commissioning with a specific objective to support the growth and economic participation of community organisations and businesses. (Paragraph 216)
34. The Community Right to Bid should be replaced with a 'Community Right to First Refusal', strengthening the power of community organisations to acquire Assets of Community Value by ensuring they have priority in any bidding process. (Paragraph 217)
35. government should make use of the existing Dormant Assets Scheme—where money from dormant bank accounts is directed to good causes—to establish a Community Ownership Fund, providing support for community owned assets and amenities. (Paragraph 218)
36. government must also review how else community rights may be strengthened to support rural economic development and should explore other forms of grant funding to support community ownership and community business more widely. (Paragraph 219)
37. Volunteering and community activity have always played a key role in rural areas and their economies, but this role has become increasingly important as local public services have reduced. In this context, it is important that communities with lower levels of civic engagement do not fall further behind and that community participation avoids perpetuating the wider structural inequalities that can lead to entrenched deprivation. There may be a need

for intervention and funding from national and local government to address this challenge. (Paragraph 227)

38. In light of the evidence that service delivery is increasingly dependent on volunteers, government must pursue more initiatives for developing and maintaining rural voluntary capacity and participation. These should focus in particular on rural areas where civic engagement may be lower and incorporate a Community Capacity Fund, targeted to build capabilities and share best practice in such areas. (Paragraph 228)
39. The Community Capacity Fund should also be used to help identify and provide training and financial support for community leaders, or to fund external support where local leadership is limited. The Fund would help support these leaders in enabling local engagement in economic and community initiatives. (Paragraph 229)
40. Town and parish councils should be encouraged to use their discretionary powers to promote local growth through strategic investment, asset management and service delivery. With this objective in mind, government should provide funding for relevant organisations such as nALC and the Rural Services network to produce a best practice guide on the use of town and parish council discretionary powers to support rural economies. (Paragraph 236)
41. Local authorities should also work with rural towns to introduce town centre managers where appropriate, as these can help drive new investment and footfall, promoting rural towns as community hubs. (Paragraph 237)
42. government should not pursue any suggestion of imposing referendum thresholds for town and parish council precepts, and instead encourage them to be set locally and responsibly to fulfil local objectives for rural economic development and for other needs. (Paragraph 238)

Chapter 4: Digital connectivity

43. Both policy and delivery have been poor in the past but recent policy and funding announcements, particularly in relation to the rollout of full fibre and 5g technology, are encouraging. The government appears to have identified the challenges and we are optimistic about the overall direction of travel outlined in the FTIR which is giving greater focus to rural areas. (Paragraph 252)
44. The 5g Testbeds and Trials Programme and efforts to promote fibre to the premises on all new builds, and other initiatives, will be crucial. Efforts to mandate FTTP to all new builds are welcome as are incentives to provide FTTP on housing developments of 30 or fewer units. However, we are concerned that those smaller developments will still suffer from digital disadvantage. (Paragraph 253)
45. We welcome the government's ambition to achieve nationwide full fibre connectivity by 2033 as set out in the Future Telecoms Infrastructure Review (FTIR) but stress the need for effective coordination, monitoring and accountability in its implementation. In particular, this should be achieved through the Statement of Strategic Priorities and through the various rural broadband funding streams and initiatives such as the Rural gigabit Connectivity Programme and the gigabit Broadband Voucher Scheme. (Paragraph 254)

46. It is important that rural areas, and businesses within them, are not left behind during the rollout of 5g for mobile services. We were pleased to learn that in 2018 the government was keen to ensure that those mobile operators who plan to bid in the auction for the 700MHz spectrum would be required to ensure rural areas were prioritised, but are disappointed to see that these obligations have been watered down in the most recent Ofcom consultation document. (Paragraph 258)
47. Ofcom should revisit its latest proposals for the auction of the 700MHz spectrum with a view to strengthening again those obligations which are to be attached to some licence awards, in terms of network coverage and delivery timescales. It will also be important for Ofcom strictly to monitor mobile network operators' progress in achieving their coverage obligations. DCMS and Ofcom should also identify what further actions are necessary to address poor mobile connectivity in areas unlikely to benefit from the spectrum auction. (Paragraph 259)
48. Ofcom must improve access to information about digital connectivity. This should include regularly updated information about when residents and businesses can expect to be connected to digital infrastructure, connectivity options for communities and details of providers operating in their local area, and regular reporting on the progress of 5g rollout in local areas. (Paragraph 269)
49. We welcome the principle of the USO which will give people in the UK the right to request a decent broadband connection. However, we believe the upload and download speeds are too modest in the USO commitment and should be reviewed along with the £3,400 payment threshold. (Paragraph 278)
50. Ofcom has a duty to review the USO if directed to do so by the government and report on any provision that is being or may be made for broadband connections or services. We recommend that the government direct Ofcom to conduct such a review as soon as possible, focusing on what minimum commitment would be needed to sustain and support rural businesses and communities, especially in remoter areas, and including both download and upload speeds. (Paragraph 279)
51. Ofcom should also re-assess the £3,400 payment threshold so that rural homes and businesses are not excluded. This must include consideration of home workers and businesses operating from home in remote areas. (Paragraph 280)
52. While we recognise that Ofcom has updated their aggregate statistics on rural mobile coverage better to align with consumer experience, we believe it should be required to develop an accurate evidence base for consumers about phone coverage in specific locations. Without this, it is not possible to identify the full scale of the problem or to assess how best to go about fixing it. (Paragraph 289)
53. We welcome the proposal that Ofcom should review the option of introducing roaming in rural areas to address partial not-spots and would urge Ofcom to begin this review as a matter of urgency. government and Ofcom should also encourage mobile network operators to share transmission masts more often at locations where they offer a practical means to improve rural connectivity.

Mast sites should nonetheless be chosen sensitively, especially in areas of high landscape value. (Paragraph 295)

54. Training opportunities are limited and often too distant or too expensive for rural SMEs to participate in; the case for developing and improving digital skills is not being delivered to rural businesses. (Paragraph 303)
55. Local and national governments must do more to realise the potential of improving digital skills in rural areas, including supporting the establishment of digital enterprise hubs; promoting networking opportunities; facilitating knowledge sharing and the dissemination of good practice among rural businesses; and enabling more effective IT support for small rural businesses and start-ups. (Paragraph 304)

Chapter 5: Housing, planning and rural working spaces

56. For the rural economy to thrive, there needs to be an adequate supply of new housing in the right places and of the right types, brought forward in a sensitive way which respects and engages with local communities. We heard evidence that this is not enough of a priority for the government, and the rural economy risks falling behind as a consequence. (Paragraph 327)
57. The absence of data on new housing in settlements of fewer than 3,000 people is a significant weakness in the ability to assess the success and sustainability of rural communities. The government must explore means of gathering this data, make greater efforts to identify housing shortages in smaller rural villages and, where possible, work with local authorities and housebuilders to identify opportunities to develop new homes in village locations. This will help ease the burden on larger settlements where large schemes are being proposed, improve the sustainability of smaller villages, and ensure that development is more sensitive to local scale and context, minimising local community opposition. (Paragraph 328)
58. government must also review the rural impact of the Housing Delivery Test and particularly whether it is incentivising developers to seek to build on greenfield sites over and above brownfield sites that should have priority in the planning system. The review should focus on whether the test acts as a disincentive to brownfield development. (Paragraph 329)
59. government should also introduce stronger policies to support the sustainability and adaptability of rural housing for older populations, including making provision for new homes to be constructed to Lifetime Homes standards, and supporting energy efficiency measures to reduce the cost of heating and ease fuel poverty. Local authorities should also ensure that sufficient housing for older people is allocated through local plans. (Paragraph 330)
60. It is clear from most of the evidence we have received that the affordable housing unit threshold policy does not work for rural areas. As well as severely limiting the supply of much-needed rural affordable housing it is also likely to increase the hostility of communities to new development, in the knowledge that small housing schemes may no longer meet genuine community need. There is little evidence that requirements for affordable housing contributions made small housing sites unviable for development in the past. (Paragraph 340)

61. government should provide a full and comprehensive exemption for all rural areas from the policy to limit affordable housing contributions on small sites. Local authorities should be free to work with developers to seek the necessary level of affordable housing contributions on all new housing sites to help meet the fullest range of rural housing needs. (Paragraph 341)
62. Homes England should restore its rural housing target, and this target should reflect the rural population of England. The government and Homes England should also work more closely with rural affordable housing providers to ensure that grant rates reflect the higher cost of development on small rural sites. government should also ensure that a fair share of the Housing Infrastructure Fund goes to rural areas to help aid the viability of new development of all types. (Paragraph 346)
63. Rural exception sites are an important contributor to rural affordable housing, but evidence suggested that they are not yet meeting their potential, with delivery being heavily concentrated among a small number of local authority areas. In addition, wider government policy may disincentivise landowners from bringing forward rural exception sites for rural affordable housing. (Paragraph 357)
64. The government should publish best practice guidance for the incentivisation and delivery of rural exception sites, drawing on the example of authorities such as Cornwall which has particularly high delivery rates. The government should also undertake further research to understand why rural exception site delivery is so concentrated and so poor across much of the country. (Paragraph 358)
65. government should also amend policies which restrict private landowners from becoming registered providers of affordable housing. The government should consider taxation reforms to incentivise the availability of rural exception sites, including Capital gains Tax, Inheritance Tax and Business Rate reliefs where appropriate. (Paragraph 359)
66. There is also a wider challenge of land values in relation to affordable housing delivery. Because the grant of planning permission can be so lucrative, rural housing sites often command very high prices which leads to the exclusion of affordable housing as the cost of the land makes it unviable. (Paragraph 360)
67. Increasing the supply of affordable housing in rural areas will continue to prove difficult unless fundamental action is taken which either reduces the jump in land values typically arising from development permission or which captures and apportions that gain. This is a complex issue which requires serious study. government should establish an inquiry to examine this question within the next six months and should ask that enquiry to report back with policy recommendations within the following twelve months. (Paragraph 361)
68. Community Land Trusts play an important role in the provision of affordable housing in rural areas and have the potential to play an even bigger role in the future. We urge the government to ensure that the funding provided through the Community Housing Fund is consolidated in the long term. government should also introduce a guarantee scheme to support development finance for CLTs. (Paragraph 366)

69. The Right to Buy for council tenants has enabled home ownership for some, but has caused a significant depletion of affordable housing in rural areas. The problem is particularly acute in rural locations where it may be difficult or impractical for homes sold to be replaced by a new affordable home in the same locality. (Paragraph 371)
70. Current replacement rates for rural council homes sold under the Right to Buy policy are woefully inadequate. The government should therefore consider suspending the local authority Right to Buy or making it voluntary for local authorities in specific locations, to ensure that much-needed affordable housing is not lost where it would be difficult or impractical to replace it. (Paragraph 372)
71. Regarding the operation of the 'Voluntary Right to Buy' for Housing Associations, we welcome the assurance that there will be exemptions where housing is designated as affordable in perpetuity, such as rural exception sites. nevertheless, questions remain over how the policy will operate in practice in rural areas. (Paragraph 373)
72. The Housing Association Right to Buy is inappropriate in many rural areas as it will often be impossible to provide a replacement home in the same locality. The policy must not be implemented in rural areas unless and until clarity is available on how it would ensure adequate local replacement of affordable homes sold, or comprehensive exemptions are in place where replacement is not possible. (Paragraph 374)
73. It is to be welcomed that the government has established an advisory body within MHCLg to consider aesthetics in new developments. This body must fully rural proof all of its proposals and ensure that, in developing its ideas, distinctive rural vernacular is considered in full, to help win community support for future development. government should also consider how such proposals might be reflected in future national planning policy and guidance. (Paragraph 378)
74. The national Planning Policy Framework makes some welcome changes to support the rural economy, particularly with regard to viability assessment reforms, and in its new references to the rural economy and rural housing. It is also welcome that the document states that planning policies should identify opportunities for villages to grow and thrive, making clear that housing in small villages without local services is not necessarily "unsustainable". There may still be scope for stronger support for new housing in small settlements as a means of supporting rural economies, however. (Paragraph 389)
75. The government should revise national planning practice guidance to clarify that sustainable development should be supported in rural villages, to ensure their survival and appropriate growth. guidance against the designation of villages as "unsustainable communities" should be enforced more strongly where appropriate. (Paragraph 390)
76. The government should also monitor new nPPF policies on viability assessments and entry level exception sites to ensure they are operating as intended and helping the supply and maintenance of new rural affordable housing. It should bring a report to Parliament on the outcome of its monitoring within three years. (Paragraph 391)

77. The Raynsford Review makes an important contribution to the debate over planning reform in England. Although not specifically rural proofed, many of its recommendations are much-needed in a rural context and would lead to much better and consistent outcomes in rural development, helping strengthen rural economies more widely. (Paragraph 396)
78. We take particular note of the proposals in the Raynsford Review to enhance the ability of local authorities to plan for the needs of their localities, and to ensure a higher level of community participation and engagement in the planning process. We recommend that the government gives serious and urgent consideration to these proposals in particular, with a view to adopting them as policy, and that it should also give full consideration to how they may be applied and implemented in rural contexts. (Paragraph 397)
79. government must ensure that the work of the national Infrastructure Commission complements, rather than displaces, the role of local planning. Projects such as the proposed Oxford-Milton Keynes-Cambridge corridor must be developed with this in mind. (Paragraph 398)
80. government should revisit the merits of a spatial plan for England, particularly as it relates to rural areas, to ensure that planning policy operates in a framework where land use priorities are properly considered above the local level. This will help ensure that the right type of development is brought forward in the right places, enabling sustainable and growing rural economies and communities. government must carefully consider how such a plan may be developed at a local and regional level, focusing on how groups of local authorities may be encouraged or required to work together to develop and implement the plans. (Paragraph 405)
81. neighbourhood planning is of crucial importance in a place-based approach to rural economies. While it is a valuable tool, however, its take-up has been patchy, often in ways which reflect existing economic inequalities. It also risks being undermined where local authorities do not have adequate housing sites in place and so neighbourhood plans may be overridden in favour of the Presumption in Favour of Sustainable Development. (Paragraph 414)
82. government should proactively encourage uptake of neighbourhood planning, particularly in areas with lower levels of civic engagement. This should be done through support to local authorities, and engagement and training for community leaders and organisations through bodies such as Locality. Those local authorities that have promoted neighbourhood planning across their geographic areas could be treated as exemplars and encouraged to share good practice. (Paragraph 415)
83. While recognising the need for sustainable development and adequate housing land supply, the overriding of neighbourhood plan policies in planning decisions where there is found to be a shortage of local housing sites can undermine faith in the development system. There should be a five-year protection of 'made' neighbourhood plans which presumes against their being overridden in all but the most exceptional circumstances. (Paragraph 416)
84. The government should take proactive steps to support the delivery and maintenance of affordable rural working spaces. In particular, it must review incentives and planning rules in relation to smaller floorspace developments and promote good practice initiatives such as flexible workspaces at rural

enterprise hubs. It should also undertake an urgent review of the impact of Class Q Permitted Development Rights on the availability of rural employment space. In addition, Local Enterprise Partnerships should be tasked with ensuring economic development is not constrained by the lack of available work places and should work closely with planning authorities to facilitate this. (Paragraph 423)

Chapter 6: Access to skills and rural business support

85. We welcome the Industrial Strategy's emphasis on skills, research and innovation and its support for Sector Deals. We see potential for Sector Deals to help boost the rural economy provided they are properly rural proofed and successfully implemented. There is a lot in the Industrial Strategy that is very relevant to rural businesses with the potential to provide a real boost for productivity and growth. (Paragraph 441)
86. We particularly welcome the development of local industrial strategies, which will be crucial for ensuring that rural needs are part of the wider plans for local delivery. We stress the need for all local industrial strategies to be fully rural proofed. (Paragraph 442)
87. The Business Productivity Review has the potential to genuinely help rural businesses tackle low productivity and find solutions to boost their businesses. given that so many SMEs are based in rural areas, it is essential that the Review make rural considerations paramount and that it too should be rural proofed. (Paragraph 443)
88. Bus routes remain an essential service for people needing to access education and training. We would encourage education institutions, local authorities and bus service providers to cooperate on exploring public transport solutions for getting students to local education institutions. (Paragraph 451)
89. Although we recognise the concern of bus service providers, we still see merit in initiatives such as "Wheels to Work" and training. government should work with LEPs and local authorities in seeking to reinvigorate these types of programmes, with a focus on securing longer-term funding and more comprehensive coverage for people needing to access employment and education. (Paragraph 452)
90. The current criteria of the apprenticeship scheme often favour large firms, making it difficult for rural small businesses to host apprentices. government should review the funding arrangements of the Apprenticeship Levy to make it easier for small businesses to engage. (Paragraph 468)
91. There are opportunities to support new land-based apprenticeships and a further increase in the amount of Apprenticeship Levy that may be transferred from large to small firms should be considered. (Paragraph 469)
92. We agree that the current skills system is too centralised and that the dilution of funding streams over multiple government departments is unhelpful. In this regard, devolution of funding for skills training is welcome and we are encouraged by the possibility for change through the development of local industrial strategies and the establishment of Skills Advisory Panels. (Paragraph 478)
93. There should be particular focus on rural skills within local industrial strategies. This could include improvements to the accessibility of training,

measures to support rural apprenticeships, and schemes to make further education options more accessible. For this purpose, Skills Advisory Panels must have sufficient influence within LEPs. (Paragraph 479)

94. We see potential in the proposed Skills Advisory Panels. In conducting their analysis on local skills and labour market needs, Skills Advisory Panels should also seek to:
 - Address careers guidance as part of their remit, not least to point to the changes in land-based occupations which now require higher skills and offer good career opportunities;
 - Provide guidance on pathways for potential students, trainees, apprentices and employers explaining the range of funding streams available. This would help to overcome the complexities of the current system and before rationalisation—which we think should happen—is introduced;
 - Identify ways in which rural businesses can be linked more closely to schools, colleges and universities and for these groups to collaborate more effectively when designing courses; and
 - Improve remote access to further education college courses. (Paragraph 480)
95. The government's post-Brexit immigration proposals should be monitored to ensure that the employment needs of rural businesses, particularly for seasonal work, do not suffer. (Paragraph 488)
96. Rural growth networks offer a promising way of ensuring that attention is given to rural economic growth and support. It is disappointing that this programme has not been rolled out more widely. (Paragraph 497)
97. More local authorities should be encouraged to include the establishment of, and funding for, Rural growth networks in their growth Deals. (Paragraph 498)
98. Many rural businesses operate in a different context, and with different challenges, to businesses in larger towns and urban centres. While rural rate relief and small business rate relief reflect these challenges to an extent, more could be done to reflect the challenges of rurality in business rate design. (Paragraph 507)
99. The government should review the impact that the revaluation and current multiplier levels for business rates are having on rural businesses, particularly stables and garden centres. There is also an urgent need to review the impact of small business and rural rate relief provisions on rural pubs, local shops and other businesses that may be providing essential services and amenities to the local community beyond their primary commercial activity. (Paragraph 508)
100. Existing tax arrangements are complicated for farmers and small businesses (including sole traders) to navigate, and can also impose real financial disincentive to investing in diversification. The situation is even more difficult for tenant farmers, who may also be prevented from diversifying their businesses due to restrictions in their tenancy agreements. The government should investigate whether the current tax system is putting

off farmers and rural small businesses from investing in diversification with regard to both complexity and financial disincentives. As part of its review into tenancy agreements, the government should also address restrictions on tenant farmers that may prevent diversification. (Paragraph 514)

101. Although the closure of bank branches in rural areas has reduced opportunities for face-to-face banking, rural businesses still need access to bespoke financial support as well as loans to grow and diversify their business. The withdrawal of commercial operators from rural locations has left some businesses increasingly reliant on the Post Office network, which will not always meet the needs of businesses. This makes it all the more important for LEPs and Councils to provide information on sources of finance to help rural businesses meet their business banking and financial needs. (Paragraph 523)
102. Access to cash is an essential service for businesses, including access to out of hours deposit mechanisms such as can be provided by cash machines. government must review the availability of ATMs in rural areas and in particular the sustainability of the current costs, including costs for security measures, for rural businesses hosting these machines and taking on banking functions in cases where bank closures have also led to the closure of bank operated cash machines. (Paragraph 524)
103. Banks should agree an increase, to a realistic level, in the fees that they pay for cash withdrawal and deposit transactions carried out on their behalf through the Post Office network. Post Office Ltd should then ensure that a sufficient proportion of those fees are passed on to individual post offices, so that those running them are properly remunerated for the effort involved. There should also be ongoing monitoring of the Access to Banking Standard to ensure it is being effectively implemented by the banking industry. (Paragraph 525)
104. The Shared Prosperity Fund should be a source of financial support for rural businesses looking to grow and invest, and it is to be hoped that the government treats access to finance as a priority when it consults on the shape of the Shared Prosperity Fund. Local authorities and LEPs should also be proactive in advising rural businesses as to where financial assistance and advice can best be sourced in rural areas. (Paragraph 526)
105. LEPs and local authorities should work together to provide ‘portals’ where sources of finance for rural enterprise may be listed. (Paragraph 527)
106. Business support measures should be embedded in Local Industrial Strategies to enable targeted approaches to rural business support, based around local circumstances and identified needs. This would include measures to promote and improve access to finance, which is a particular area of concern for rural businesses in light of widespread rural bank branch closures. (Paragraph 528)
107. To be successful, rural tourism needs promotion. Once established, those Tourism Zones which include rural areas will need to address the issue of attracting funding for the promotion of rural tourism in their areas. (Paragraph 538)
108. The Tourism Sector Deal has potential to provide a more consistent and systematic support to the rural tourism sector. It is important that this deal be

rural proofed and its implementation monitored in rural areas in particular. (Paragraph 539)

109. Where appropriate, tourism support should be a key part of local industrial strategies, and LEPs covering areas with notable rural tourist sectors should have a particular focus on the sector's economic importance and potential. There should be more focus by LEPs on tourism as a rural career option. (Paragraph 540)
110. It is clear that the creative and arts industries in rural areas already contribute a significant amount to the rural economy and also have wider positive impacts in supporting rural businesses and communities, as well as supporting high-quality jobs. We also recognise that they have potential to grow further and make an even bigger contribution to rural economies. (Paragraph 547)
111. Arts Council England and other public arts and creative sector funders should ensure that rural communities receive an equitable share of their future investments. This should include a strategic investment programme for the creative rural economy to help fulfil its potential. There should also be a wider review of other measures necessary to ensure the potential of rural creative industries is achieved. (Paragraph 548)

Chapter 7: Delivering essential services at the local level

112. Public spending cuts have had a significant impact on rural transport provision and in particular rural bus use. In addition, complex funding streams and poorly integrated services mean that rural economies are often held back by transport connections that are poorer than they need to be. (Paragraph 569)
113. government should undertake a full review of funding streams to rural public transport as part of a new rural strategy. The aspiration should be to develop a "single transport investment pot" that could be used to better support rural transport using a place-based approach, in collaboration with local authorities and other public bodies. Within this, government should work with local bodies to support the expansion of demand-led services. (Paragraph 570)
114. Such a programme should draw upon the examples of Total Transport Pilots, which successfully sought to maximise benefits from existing transport resources including pooling resources from the public sector. (Paragraph 571)
115. The programme should also seek to explore the potential of community transport as a means of supporting and supplementing existing routes. In this context, government should reconsider proposals to change guidance on eligibility of Section 19 and 22 permits issued to not-for-profit community transport providers. The introduction of a short-distance exemption is welcome, but government must ensure that new guidance on the non-commercial exemption does not threaten the viability of community transport operators. (Paragraph 572)
116. government should also support targeted investment in the maintenance of rural road networks in collaboration with local authorities, to identify those networks outside the major routes where investment would be most important in supporting rural economic development. (Paragraph 573)

117. The impact of rural crime on rural economies is a significant concern. More needs to be done by government to better understand, track and respond to rural criminality. Initiatives such as Farm Watch and WhatsApp groups between farmers, land-owners and police forces to monitor and report on rural crime should be shared widely among rural police forces and rolled out more widely. (Paragraph 590)
118. We welcome new measures to tackle fly-tipping and the introduction of tougher new penalties, but we would also like to see new measures introduced to ensure that farmers and land-owners do not have to pay for the cost of clean-up of rubbish that is dumped on their land. (Paragraph 591)
119. Magistrates, Courts and the Crown Prosecution Service should be trained to better understand the scale and impact of rural crime. Reforms to sentencing guidelines should be considered, where appropriate, to widen the range of possible sentences to better reflect the seriousness of some crimes. (Paragraph 592)
120. We welcome the government's promise that its Industrial Strategy research into the "grand challenge" of ageing will incorporate specific issues identified in rural communities. nonetheless, the government's statement that it funds clinical commissioning services to the proportion of the population that they cover indicates that it still does not understand the additional challenges and costs associated with rural service provision. (Paragraph 604)
121. government must ensure that the challenges and costs of providing health services in rural areas are properly reflected in funding allocations to Clinical Commissioning groups. This should include proper recognition of sparsity costs as well as a recognition of the ageing population of rural areas. (Paragraph 605)
122. The Department of Health and Social Care together with nHS England should also take further steps to improve the availability and accessibility of rural healthcare provision, including support for the development of multi-use health centres or hubs. The government's investment in digital health is welcome, but the success of this approach will depend on the urgency with which it addresses the rural-urban digital connectivity divide. (Paragraph 606)
123. government should also take steps to improve rural pharmaceutical services. This might include reopening the Essential Small Pharmacies and Local Pharmaceutical Services (ESPLPS) scheme, which helped rural pharmacies in places where they would not otherwise have been financially viable. (Paragraph 607)
124. Isolation, loneliness and associated physical and mental health challenges are key issues in rural communities. In this context, it is particularly important that policy solutions are rurally oriented, taking account of the greater challenges of combatting isolation in sparsely populated locations. (Paragraph 618)
125. The government's loneliness strategy is to be welcomed, as is the commitment to support community infrastructure and community action to tackle loneliness in rural areas. government must ensure that, as it implements its strategy, it continues to pay close attention to the distinctive challenges of combatting isolation and loneliness in a rural context. government should

promote and spread good practice among rural voluntary and community organisations in this regard. (Paragraph 619)

- 126. It is of great concern that there is no adjustment for the additional cost of providing rural mental health services in England. government must remedy this and ensure that sufficient staff and support services are available to tackle rural mental health. It must also take wider steps to address rural mental health, such as supporting mental health first aid training schemes which will enable early intervention. (Paragraph 620)**

176 TIME FOR A STRATEgY FOR THE RURAL ECOnOMY

TIME FOR A STRATEgY FOR THE RURAL ECOnOMY 193

APPENDX 8: RECOMMENDATIONS RELEVANT TO ORGANISATIONS OTHER THAN CENTRAL GOVERNMENT

Our inquiry into the Rural Economy has been wide-ranging and multi-faceted, and so while many of our recommendations are oriented towards central government, others are targeted at other public bodies or other organisations. The following table has been compiled to indicate which organisations in the UK we believe should take the lead on implementing each recommendation where central government is not the intended target. In some cases recommendations apply to more than one organisation.

Table 2: List of recommendations for organisations outside central Government

| Organisation | Priorities |
|------------------|--|
| Local government | <p>Develop local rural strategies and take responsibility for implementation (paragraph 59)</p> <p>Rural proof policy impacts with monitoring and annual reports (paragraph 104)</p> <p>Participate in a “place-based approach” to the rural strategy (paragraph 119)</p> <p>Rural-facing authorities should adopt rural strategies as good practice (paragraph 197)</p> <p>Review procurement policies to ensure small and local organisations have the genuine ability to bid for service delivery contracts (with national government) (paragraph 216)</p> <p>Town and parish councils should be encouraged to use their discretionary powers to promote local growth (paragraph 236)</p> <p>Local authorities should work with rural towns to introduce town centre managers (paragraph 237)</p> <p>Cooperate with education institutions and bus service providers to cooperate on solutions for getting students to education institutions (paragraph 451)</p> <p>Seek to reinvigorate “wheels to work and training” programmes (with LEPs and national government) (paragraph 452)</p> <p>More local authorities should include establishment of, and funding for, Rural growth networks in their growth Deals (paragraph 498)</p> <p>With LEPs, be proactive in advising rural business as to sources of financial assistance and advice, and work together to provide portals where sources of finance may be listed (paragraphs 526-527)</p> |

| Organisation | Priorities |
|-------------------------------|--|
| Local Enterprise Partnerships | <p>Develop local rural strategies and take responsibility for implementation (paragraph 59)</p> <p>Must adopt a rural economic strategy and transparently rural proof their Local Industrial Strategies and Strategic Economic Plans (paragraphs 168–169 and 442)</p> <p>LEPs with rural areas should have a specified board member or champion to focus on the rural economy (paragraph 170)</p> <p>LEPs should establish rural sub-groups or partnerships (paragraph 171)</p> <p>Seek to reinvigorate “wheels to work and training” programmes (paragraph 452)</p> <p>Local Industrial Strategies should have a particular focus on rural skills (paragraph 479)</p> <p>With local authorities, be proactive in advising rural business as to sources of financial assistance and advice, and work together to provide portals where sources of finance may be listed (paragraph 526–527)</p> <p>Business support measures should be embedded in Local Industrial Strategies (paragraph 528)</p> <p>Tourism support should be a key part of Local Industrial Strategies and there should be more focus by LEPs on tourism as a rural career option (paragraph 540)</p> |
| Ofcom | <p>Revisit its proposals for the auction of the 700MHz spectrum to strengthen network coverage obligations and delivery timescales, and identify other actions necessary to address poor mobile connectivity in areas unlikely to benefit from spectrum auction (paragraph 259)</p> <p>Improve access to information about digital connectivity and provide regular reports about 5g rollout progress (paragraph 269)</p> <p>government should direct a review of the USO with a particular focus on minimum commitment needed to sustain and support rural businesses and communities, and Ofcom should review payment threshold (paragraphs 279–280)</p> <p>Develop an accurate evidence base about rural coverage in specific locations (paragraph 289)</p> <p>Urgently begin review of introduction of roaming in rural areas, and encourage mobile network operators to share transmission masts more often (paragraph 295)</p> |
| Homes England | <p>Restore the rural housing target, ensure this reflects the rural population and work more closely with affordable housing providers in ensuring grant rates reflect cost of development on small sites (paragraph 346)</p> |

| Organisation | Priorities |
|---------------------------|--|
| Skills Advisory Panels | Address careers guidance, provide guidance on pathways, identify ways to connect rural businesses and education institutions and improve remote access to further education colleges (paragraph 480) |
| Banks and Post Office Ltd | Agree realistic increase in fees for cash transactions undertaken through Post Office network and ensure that a sufficient proportion of those fees are passed on to individual post offices (paragraph 525) |
| Arts Council England | Ensure rural creative arts are adequately funded and review measures necessary to ensure potential of rural creative sectors is achieved (paragraph 548) |
| nHS England | Work with Department of Health and Social Care to improve availability and accessibility of rural healthcare provision (paragraph 606) |

