



The Rural Services Network

National Rural Conference 2021

Levelling Up to Revitalise Rural

Monday 13th - Friday 17th September

Rural Services Network

We are the national champion for rural services



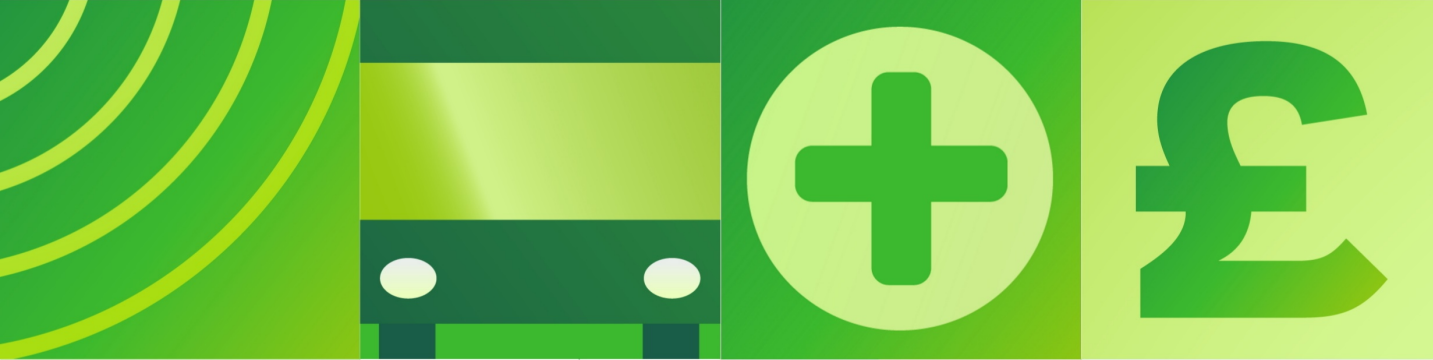
We provide a network for rural areas to come together and share best practice



We represent a range of organisations in rural areas across England



We provide a voice for rural areas in Parliament



Revitalising Rural

Realising the Vision



Revitalising Rural is our campaign focusing on key policy areas affecting rural communities, with a number of asks of Government

We want a fairer distribution of national resources to rural areas and for more nuanced national policies that reflect rural circumstances.



Thank you to our
Conference
supporters and
sponsors





0 Selaine Saddy, MP Chair, APPS Roadside & Digital Connectivity

0 Kerry Booth, Rural Services Network

0 Richard Wainwright, BT Group

0 Ashya Payne, NIW

0 Graham Biggs MBE, CX, Rural Services Network

0 Graham Biggs MBE, CX, Rural Services Network

0 Georgina Edwards, Plunkett Foundation

0 Chris Fuller, Torridge District Council

0 Andy Dean, Community Action Northumberland

0 Chris Taylor, Devonshire Council

0 Gareth Elliott, Mablethorpe

0 Graham Biggs MBE, CX, Rural Services Network

0 Ruth Evans

0 Nik Harwood, Young Sumner

0 Professor Janet Dwyer, NICRE

0 Roger Turner, NICRE

0 Professor Jeremy Phillipson, NICRE

0 Nora Corkery, Devon Communities Together

0 Graham Biggs MBE, CX, Rural Services Network



0 Kerry Booth, Rural Services Network

0 Derek Crichton, Dumfries and Galloway Council

0 Professor Sheena Asthana, Plymouth University

0 Cllr Martin Tett, Buckinghamshire Council / CCN Spokesperson

0 Louise Clayton, Staffordshire County Council

0 Christopher Hammond, Countryside Climate Network

0 Claire Spendley, Plunkett Foundation

0 Graham Biggs MBE, CX, Rural Services Network

0 Graham Biggs MBE, CX, Rural Services Network

0 Ursula Bennion, Rural Housing Alliance

0 Mark Pragnell, Pragmatix Advisory

0 Kerry Booth, Rural Services Network

0 Graham Biggs MBE, CX, Rural Services Network

The conference in numbers!

- Over 425 delegates across the week of sessions
- 74 local authorities represented
- 66 Rural Services Partnership members
 - Housing Associations
 - Universities
 - National Park
 - ACRE
 - Plunkett
 - NFU
- 21 speakers



National Rural Conference 2021

Levelling Up to Revitalise Rural

Monday 13th September

Featuring:

1 Richard Wainer, BT Group

2 Chris Taylor, Shropshire Council

3 Selaine Saxby MP, Chair of the APPG for Broadband and Digital Communication


**DIGITAL
CONNECTIVITY
SESSION**



Key Points:

- Focus for rural should be on hybrid of solutions
- Digital connectivity is the key to unlocking the economic potential of the countryside
- Desire to create 'Smart Rural' but need more support to raise digital skill levels and take up of services that are already provided
- Connecting rural Britain is absolutely vital






National Rural Conference 2021
Levelling Up to Revitalise Rural
Monday 13th September

Featuring:
The Rt Hon Lord Benyon, Parliamentary Under Secretary of State
(Minister for Rural Affairs and Biosecurity)

**AN AUDIENCE WITH
RT HON LORD BENYON**



“I want us to strengthen the rural economy, develop rural infrastructure, deliver rural services and manage the rural environment. I want us to roll out gigabit broadband, use additional police resources to tackle rural crime, invest in the rural transport, see employment growth and make sure that our farmers and fishermen can profit by producing the high quality, high welfare food for which they are renowned.”



National Rural Conference 2021

Levelling Up to Revitalise Rural

Tuesday 14th September

Featuring:

1 Professor Jeremy Phillipson, NICRE | 2 Roger Turner, NICRE

3 Professor Janet Dwyer, NICRE

**RURAL
ECONOMY
SESSION**



1



2



3

What does Government need to change?

- Modify targeting and design of new policies and investment programmes, to eliminate investment bias to cities and larger settlements
- Choose inclusive metrics and indicators of required benefits, economic or operational outcomes
- Offer dedicated investment funds for rural areas to strengthen interdependencies between places
- Build capacity of rural businesses and peripheral communities to develop, apply for and manage investments (eg by restoration of rural Local Action Groups)



National Rural Conference 2021
Levelling Up to Revitalise Rural
Wednesday 15th September


Featuring:
1 Professor Sheena Asthana, Plymouth Institute of Health and Care Research
2 Cllr Martin Tett, CCN Spokesperson and Leader of Buckinghamshire Council
3 Nora Corkery, Devon Communities Together

RURAL HEALTH AND CARE SESSION



1 2 3

- Heath in Coastal Communities Report - Concerns that worrying patterns of deprivation have emerged which raise similar issues to remote rural communities.
- State of Care in County and Rural Areas – Report published by CCN and RSN highlights issues due to sparsity, workforce, demographics, resources and format of care system
- The Indices of Multiple Deprivation (IMD) fails to identify rural areas which may benefit from a different approach to the delivery of local health & care services. – Devon is developing new deprivation indices



National Rural Conference 2021



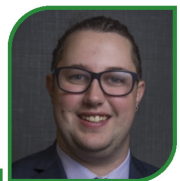
Levelling Up to Revitalise Rural

Wednesday 15th September

Featuring:

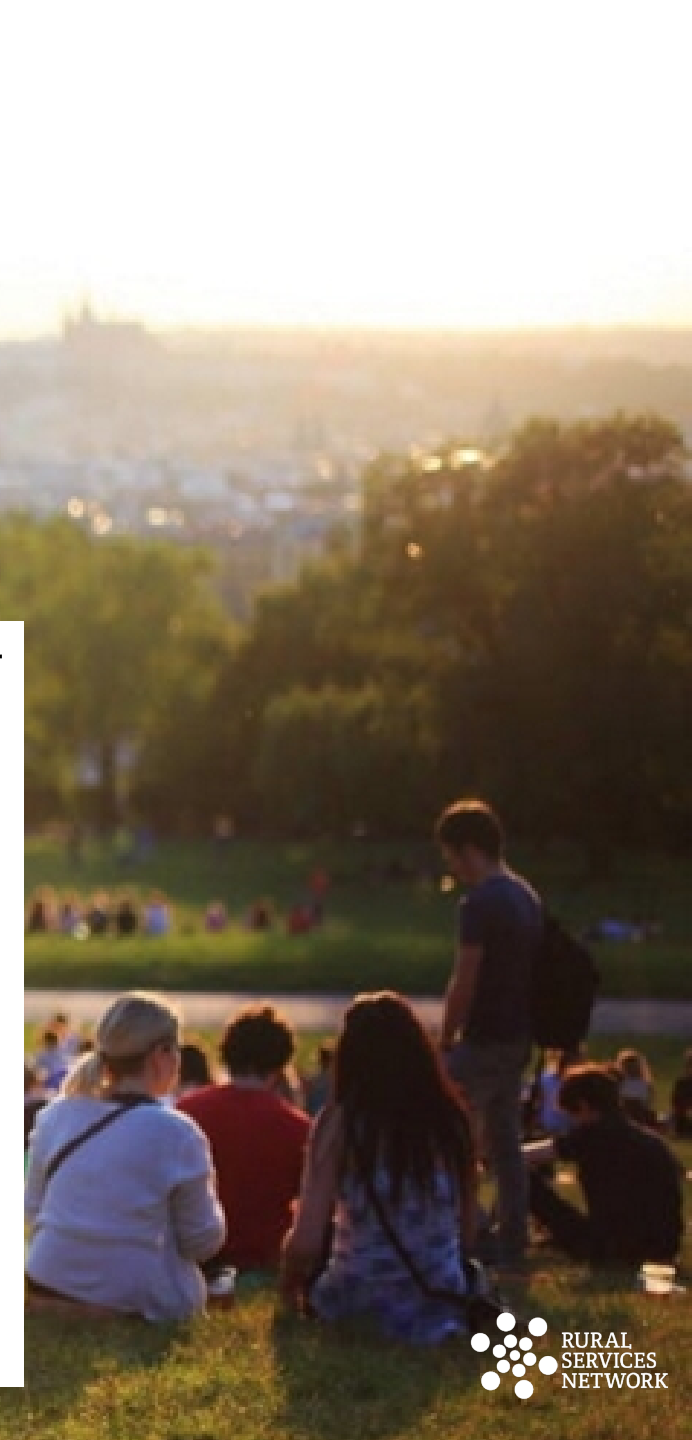
1 Josh Payne, National Farmers Union (NFU) | 2 Nik Harwood, Young Somerset
3 Councillor Freya Davies, Flore Parish Council, NALC Speaker

CHALLENGES FACING YOUNG PEOPLE IN RURAL AREAS



1 2 3

- Trends of young people migrating out of rural areas for higher education, skills training and employment
- Lack of transport options can limit access to education, skills, training, employment and leisure facilities for young people
- Poor digital connectivity in rural areas can impact the way that young people can access learning, services and social activities with friends. It had a significant impact on some young people unable to access home learning during the pandemic.
- Access to affordable housing in rural communities so that young people can stay living in rural communities if they wish





National Rural Conference 2021
Levelling Up to Revitalise Rural

Thursday 16th September

Featuring:

1 Ursula Bennion, Rural Housing Alliance | 2 Mark Pragnell, Pragmatix Advisory
3 Claire Spendley, Plunkett Foundation

RURAL HOUSING SESSION

1  2  3 

The poster features a decorative border with various icons related to rural life and housing. The text is in bold, black and green fonts. The speakers' names and affiliations are listed below the date. The session title 'RURAL HOUSING SESSION' is prominently displayed in green. Three small portrait photos of the speakers are shown at the bottom right, each with a small number (1, 2, 3) next to it.

- Average house price in rural areas £90k more expensive than urban one (Excluding London)
- Importance of Rural Exception Sites for delivering affordable housing in rural areas
- [RSN jointly commissioned research into case for investing in rural affordable housing](#)
- Important role of community led housing to tackle local issues of loneliness, unemployment and provide training



National Rural Conference 2021
Levelling Up to Revitalise Rural

Thursday 16th September

Featuring:
1 Graham Biggs, The Rural Services Network
2 Kerry Booth, The Rural Services Network

**SYSTEMATIC NEGLECT
OF RURAL COMMUNITIES**



- Urban areas in 21/22 will still receive some 61% (£107) per head in Settlement Funding Assessment grant more than their rural counterparts
- Rural residents will pay, on average, 19% (£96) per head more in Council Tax than their urban counterparts due to receiving less government grant
- Ten fold increase in Rural Services Delivery Grant since start, now at £85m
- Unfair funding, means total discretionary spend is almost 3 times greater per head in urban authorities compared to rural



National Rural Conference 2021

Levelling Up to Revitalise Rural

Friday 17th September

Featuring:

- 1 Christopher Hammond, Countryside Climate Network
- 2 Louise Clayton, Staffordshire County Council
- 3 Derek Crichton, Dumfries and Galloway Council

RURAL TRANSPORT AND DECARBONISATION SESSION



- To make net zero a reality, the green premium will be more expensive in rural areas, but need to make sure rural communities are benefiting from this work.
- Great opportunities with Bus Improvement Plans to include DRT and maximise opportunities to increase provision and access to travel, transport and connectivity in rural areas
- Aim for sustainable future is a mixed approach to transport, not just electric vehicles but range of walking, public transport, cycling, alternative ways of working, keeping services local

What did you all think of it?



Worcestershire County Council

It was a great opportunity to share experiences and ideas and what others are doing



Shropshire Council

The range of topics and speakers, and the interactivity of the sessions across the week at this conference, has been not only illuminating, but also climate change friendly and inclusive. Thank you to everyone.



SP Energy Networks

I thought this mornings session was excellent, well managed and a good range of speakers



National Innovation Centre for Rural Enterprise

Very well organised and run on the day

Satisfied with range of speakers

100%

Satisfied with joining instructions

100%

Satisfied with ability to share views and ask questions

98%