

OUR **30** SERVICES





Delivering services to rural areas requires you to think differently, to find innovative solutions to service delivery and to challenge the status quo. This has become even more difficult in the austerity years amid reducing budgets and increasing demands on services. The Rural Services Network is the only organisation in England working to provide a voice for rural areas and on service delivery issues. We include over 110 Local Authorities and 100 other rural service providers. Our network will help you to understand the issues facing your communities by joining up in representation, networking and highlighting areas of best practice.

We work closely with the LGA, and also ACRE, Arthur Rank (United Churches Group), the Federation of Small Businesses, The National Trust and the Plunkett Foundation on rural issues generally.

In our network, you will have access to a wide range of support and information to help you find the answers you need.....here are the 30 key services you can take part in and receive for your membership fee.

- 1** Financial lobbying in Government about the cost of delivering services in rural areas – we specialise in this work and have made significant gains for rural authorities in recent years.
- 2** Comprehensive website containing specific pages of information tailored to your authority.
- 3** Financial analysis of your budgets once a year between your authority and other similar authorities
- 4** Performance benchmarking and analysis each quarter between your authority and similar rural authorities focussing on planning, recycling, benefits and council tax collection (yearly).
- 5** Neighbourhood Planning statistics to help in the preparation of your community or neighbourhood plan
- 6** A weekly e mail news service in relation to rural issues
- 7** Involvement of your Local Councils, schools and Chambers of Commerce through our community group.
- 8** Opportunity for joint working with other rural service organisations

- 9 Representation of rural issues and challenges in Westminster at the Rural Services All Party Parliamentary Group.
- 10 E-newsletters providing a weekly rural commentary, monthly topic and sector bulletins and monthly roundup of funding opportunities available.
- 11 Compilation of monthly consultation requests and suggested draft responses on major rural topics.
- 12 A comprehensive rural observatory providing statistical analysis of your authorities position compared to other rural authorities.
- 13 Library of rural best practice
- 14 Commentary each week on current rural topics
- 15 E-Networking with colleagues from other rural authorities on a range of topics
- 16 Best practice calls for evidence across English, Welsh, Scottish and Northern Irish Local Authorities and compilation of results.
- 17 Sounding Board of Rural Councillors responding to surveys to provide cohesive rural opinions
- 18 Bi-Annual Examination of Rural Services and their operation throughout England.
- 19 Rural Research across England (Rural England)
- 20 Links with the Rural Health Network
- 21 Links with the Rural Housing Service and Conference working with the Chartered Institute of Housing and the Rural Housing Alliance
- 22 Rural Community Safety links with the Rural Crime Network
- 23 Annual Rural Conference with the LGA
- 24 Three meetings a year dealing with finance, performance and rural issues
- 25 An Annual Assembly in Parliament with Councillors and Rural MP's on rural issues
- 26 An Annual Meeting in Parliament between Rural MP's and Councillors to look at Local Government Finance
- 27 Eight subsidised Seminars throughout England on a range of rural topics with expert speakers and practitioners
- 28 Working with the Federation of Small Businesses we seek to allow rural small businesses in your area a voice.
- 29 A Transport Group is currently in development involving appropriate members, transport promotion organisations and franchise operators.
- 30 An Economic Barometer providing information on key economic indicators in your local authority area providing a picture of your local economy.

In order to provide an effective rural service we need all rural authorities to join together. The services we provide give significant value for money. By fragmenting and leaving the group not only will you lose these services, but also you will weaken the rural voice at a time when it needs to be strong to protect its rural communities.

If you would like further information
about the Rural Services Network
or to join please contact us:

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