



RURAL CONFERENCE 2015

Aspiration to Action

– The Rural Manifesto

Outcomes Questionnaire

Introduction

The Rural Conference 2015, hosted by the University of Gloucestershire, was a reflection and development of the ideas contained within The Rural Manifesto.

(www. <http://rsnonline.org.uk/images/files/rsn-manifesto2015.pdf>)

Delegates were asked before leaving the conference to complete an 'Outcomes' questionnaire to gauge their thoughts and feelings with reference to the various rural issues The Manifesto tries to tackle, and what effect attending the conference had had on their views.

The major points taken and that will be used to develop further work within the Rural Services Network are:

Questions 1 & 2

- Before the conference, delegates who completed the survey thought that public transport was the issue that presented the **most significant challenge for rural communities at this time**, with 21.4% of responses.
- After the conference, this had changed to Local Government Funding with 19.0% of responses.
- Access to health facilities was the issue that had the greatest increase as a perceived significant rural challenge, and public transport was the issue that had the greatest decrease.

Questions 3 & 4

- Before the conference, delegates who completed the survey had the perception that broadband and mobile connectivity was **the issue that was being given most resource or highest priority** as a specific rural challenge that needed to be addressed (23.8% of responses). After the conference, this had gone up to 33.3%.
- Affordable housing was the issue that showed the greatest increase from before to after the conference.
- Both public transport and older people's services showed the greatest decreases.

Questions 5

- Responses from the survey did not pinpoint a single **topic area requiring further research and investigation** as a matter of priority.
- Both local government funding and the rural economy had the greatest number of responses, but not far behind were access to health facilities, older people's services, and viable village services.

The future...

- Responses from the survey will now be used to guide the work of the Rural Services Network and in developing the programme for the 2016 RSN Rural Conference.