



# RURAL CONFERENCE 2015

Graham Biggs

16th November 2015

LGA, Local Government House

# Aspiration to Action

## – The Rural Manifesto

- Park Campus, Cheltenham, University of Gloucestershire
  - Tuesday 8th September 2015
    - Seminar Session on Devolution – What does it mean for Rural England?
    - Finance Seminar – Closing the Funding Gap between Rural and Urban England



# Aspiration to Action - The Rural Manifesto

- Park Campus, Cheltenham, University of Gloucestershire

Wednesday 9th September 2015

- Keynote Speaker -Tony Travers (Director of the London School of Economics and Political Science) – "What the future holds for Local Government"
- Round Table Panel Discussion – Delivering services in new ways
- Plenary Session – Older People and Viable Villages
- Housing, Crime & Healthcare Workshops
- Plenary Session – The Rural Economy and Broadband
- Key Priorities and Approach of BIG Lottery

# Attendance Breakdown

- 40 Member Authorities in attendance
- 62 Delegates over 2 days
  - 41 on day one
  - 48 on day two
  - 27 attending both days
- Over 30 contributing speakers and exhibitors



“... the conference succeeded in highlighting rural issues and demonstrating work already being done. The speakers were informative and delegates were all fully committed ...”



# We asked you what changed for you over the course of the conference?

- Prior to the conference you thought that the most significant challenge facing rural communities was public transport....after you thought it was local government funding
- Access to health facilities increased most significantly for you as the issue which was the biggest rural challenge, and public transport decreased in importance for you

# We asked you about resources...

- You thought that the rural issue given most resource or highest priority was broadband and mobile connectivity (no change)
- Both public transport and older people's services showed the greatest decrease in terms of perceived resource or priority given to those rural issues

# We asked you where we should do more work...

...You said we should consider research into the following areas:

- Local government funding
- Rural economy
- Health facilities
- Older people's services
- Viable village services



# What next in 2016?



- Planning already underway for next years Rural Conference – dates for the calender – 6<sup>th</sup> & 7<sup>th</sup> September
- Building on the success of the 2015 event
- Using all feedback to deliver a conference that engages rural practitioners
- A conference that enables the sharing of experience and understanding of the key issues