

RURAL SERVICES NETWORK

(in association with the Countryside and Community Research Institute)

'Rural Services 2020: the challenge of sustaining rural communities'

ADVANCE NOTICE OF
a ONE-DAY CONFERENCE AT THE UNIVERSITY OF
GLOUCESTERSHIRE
to be held on
24 October 2008

In his recently published review on rural economy and affordable housing^[1], Matthew Taylor comments that the countryside is 'at a crossroads'. He identifies key challenges which threaten the future sustainability of our rural communities, from market towns to the smallest hamlet.

The Taylor Review focuses on the planning system, and the impact that has in influencing, or permitting change. Had its remit included the funding or planning of **public service delivery** it is probable that it would have reached many of the same conclusions. Increased centralisation and the drive for open market style efficiency savings is leading to an increasingly urban centric approach to service delivery, and the infrastructure that supports it.

This conference will focus on the future for rural communities, and the services on which they rely. It will seek to look forward 12 years, to the point when, if current projections and plans are fulfilled, 3 million new homes will have been built in England, new communities established and the government's commitment to improved and locally responsive public services has been delivered.

With particular reference to service delivery, **delegates will be encouraged to consider** what the future shape of rural communities will be in 2020, to review the changes that they will have experienced between now and then and to identify the key crossroads or turning points which have influenced this change.

The **conference will particularly interest**: Rural Service Providers, Ward, Town and Parish Councillors, Local Government Officers, Government Office,

Government Departments, Housing Associations, Social Entrepreneurs, Community Partnerships and Community Workers, Rural Community Councils, Market Town Partnerships, Academics, and Regional Development Agencies.

The conference will be chaired by [Elinor Goodman](#), with speakers including [Professor Malcolm Moseley](#) of CCRI, [Trevor Cherrett](#) of the Commission for Rural Communities, [James Shorten](#) (formerly of Land Use Consultants), [Graham Biggs](#) (Chief Officer of the Rural Services Network) and [Chris Wade](#) of Action for Market Towns.

Programme: The day will include key note addresses, facilitated workshops and a full 'open floor' debate.

Venue: The conference will be held in Cheltenham, at the Park campus of the [University of Gloucestershire](#) on Friday, 24 October. Places at the conference will be limited to 100. Participants will be welcome from any 'stakeholder group' with an interest in these issues. But delegates from member organisations of the Rural Services Network will be particularly welcome. They will receive one free place for every full price booking*.

The cost of attendance will be £75 per head (inclusive of VAT) - to include refreshments and lunch. Information is available on local hotels and guest houses, if needed.

To reserve a place, please complete the form below and return it to Gill Parker at the address on the form, enclosing a cheque for £70 made payable to the 'University of Gloucestershire', or indicate to whom an invoice should be sent. (It will also be possible to book through the University of Gloucestershire's Online Store. Further information on this option is available from Gill Parker Email: gparker@glos.ac.uk (tel: 01242 714123)

On the form please indicate your name, address, affiliation (if any) and contact details, whether your organisation is a member of the Rural Services Network and, if so, whether you are claiming the 'two for the price of one' bonus place! Say if you want information on local hotels / guest houses.

All applications will be acknowledged by Gillian, and full details will be sent out in late September / early October.

Any **further information on the [purpose and content](#) of the conference** may be sought from Rob Hindle of 'Rural Innovation' who is acting for the Rural Services Network in this regard (rob.hindle@ruralinnovation.co.uk)

Note: The **Rural Services Network** is a membership organisation which exists to ensure services delivered to the communities of predominantly rural England are as strong and as effective as possible (www.rsonline.org.uk). The **Countryside and Community Research Institute** is a joint initiative of the Universities of Gloucestershire and the West of England and Hartpury College (www.ccric.ac.uk)

[1] Living Working Countryside, The Taylor Review of Rural Economy and Affordable Housing, July 2008

* Offer restricted to one booking per member organisation.

REGISTRATION: Please complete one registration form for each delegate attending and return it to the address below by Friday 10 October 2008.

Name: _____

Organisation: _____

RSN Member: Yes/No (delete as applicable)

Address: _____

_____ Postcode: _____

Telephone: _____ Email: _____

Registration Rate (please tick requirements):

Delegate rate (£75)

Two for one bonus rate

Please make cheques payable to [University of Gloucestershire](#)

Please tick this box if you require an [invoice](#) to be sent to the above address

Please tick this box if you require [hotel information](#) to be sent to the above address

Please return to: Gill Parker, Countryside & Community Research Institute, Room DH203,
Dunholme Villa, The Park, Cheltenham, Gloucestershire GL50 2RH
Tel: 01242 714123 Email: gparker@glos.ac.uk