

The Rural/Market Towns Group



RURAL/MARKET
TOWNS GROUP

A RURAL/MARKET TOWNS GROUP- A FORMAL INVITE

We are a Special Interest Group of The Local Government Association representing Rural Areas across England. Our mission is to be the national champion for rural services, ensuring that people in rural areas have a strong voice. We have 123 Principle Authority members from across England. We also have a grouping of 200 plus non- local authority service providers (the RSP) and we issue a Rural Bulletin weekly to around 23,000 rural contacts across England. We also issue a monthly Funding Digest of rural grant opportunities and Government consultations.

Our website is www.rsnonline.org.uk

What we do:

We aim to ensure rural issues are given a high profile, unfortunately we now find ourselves as the only organisation in England currently undertaking this vital work. Our network is the countries' largest rural network. We ourselves deliberately don't work from a grant or government funding base but from member subscription. We provide value for money to our members. This has allowed growth and continuity of operation together with the ability to make the rural case honestly and from within ourselves without fear of upsetting any external funding stream on which we may be dependent.

What we have achieved to date:



The first general rural parliamentary groups in history



Better finance settlements for rural authorities



Continual Pressure on Government in relation to issues ranging from broadband to rural housing and vulnerability



The creation of Rural Crime, Rural Health and Rural Research organisations and now a Rural/Market Town Grouping that will hopefully span across England

The facts:

There are many rural areas in England spun across 200 different local authorities. Only by working together can we present a cohesive approach to an urban facing government. It is easy for urban areas to gather support but more difficult for dispersed rural areas. We have to get rural messages across and backed if they are to properly be heard and acted upon.

What we want from you:

The wider our membership the stronger the rural voice- it's a simple fact. We want to establish a Rural/Market Towns Group to allow towns a conduit into our services and policies and operation. We wish to see Rural Towns given the opportunity to establish the commonalities of their case and to be able to argue for it. We charge an annual subscription which is low and affordable but it's what it can give back that we wish to be judged upon.

What we can give you back:



Formation of a dedicated Rural/Market Towns Group, offering some peer-to-peer networking and discussion opportunities (either face-to-face or online) and input into the national rural agenda. (Representation on this Group can be by Council Clerk or Member)



Development of a representational role, for example responding to selected public policy consultations or meeting with interested Parliamentarians. There is no rural or market or small towns APPG



Development of good practice and learning material related to the key policy areas and delivery challenges and opportunities for rural/market towns



Provision of a dedicated quarterly newsletter highlighting relevant latest policy developments, showcasing interesting member practice and flagging relevant initiatives or funding opportunities (perhaps drawn from the Rural Funding Digest)



Where made possible by published material - provision of some benchmark statistics about rural/market towns



Management of occasional online surveys of the member rural/market towns, to gather comparative information about topics of particular interest to this grouping and to the RSN as a whole



Free RSN community membership for your local organisations



Entry onto a bulletin calendar of the major local rural/market town events



The ability to establish and present the collective voice of rural/market towns



The ability to say what your council think about English rural issues which affect their area as and when they arise



An expectation that those views will be taken forward



Full entitlement to attend, free of charge, any of the seven annual seminars each based around a specialist topic



Involvement in the English Rural Sounding Board system



Discounted rates at the National Rural Conference every September



An annual Rural Town networking meeting held online

If you don't receive these currently you will also get:



The weekly Rural Bulletin



The monthly RSN Funding Digest

Summary:

Our target is to form a Rural Market Towns Group of approximately 200 towns by the end of 2020 and harness the argument of these rural areas. Both the town councils, people in the towns, and their surrounding hinterlands will be better placed to put their arguments across and contribute to the rural voice. We hope you can help us grow from the start!

As we exit the EU we are currently calling on government to produce a 'Rural Strategy' giving both direction and promise to rural areas. Our wish is that Rural and Market Towns should be given clear opportunities in such a Strategy. To date government has received this call somewhat negatively. It is only by working together and by establishing and pursuing common goals that your town can input into the national picture. Please back us to back your town and your area.

LET'S BRING & ARGUE THE RURAL CASE TOGETHER

If you would like further information about the Rural/Market Towns Group please contact us:

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