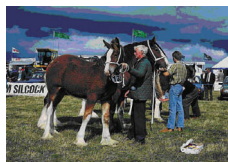


# Rural Matters

Special Edition  
October 2006

Newsletter of the Yorkshire and The Humber Rural Affairs Forum



Welcome to the **October** 2006 issue of Rural Matters. This special edition is a Stakeholder Update on the Yorkshire and The Humber Regional Implementation Plan (RIP) for the Rural Development Programme for England 2007-13.

## Yorkshire & The Humber Regional Implementation Plan (RIP)

### Purpose

This edition of Rural Matters has been produced to provide partners with an update on the production of the Rural Development Programme for England (RDPE) Regional Implementation Plan for Yorkshire and The Humber. It provides an overview of the progress since the last update in August 2006, more detail on the key themes, and the next steps.

### Progress to date

- ◆ The Task and Finish Group of the Rural Practitioners Group has continued to develop the detail of the themes proposed in the draft RIP, and presented the details of the work for discussion at the Rural Practitioners Group meeting on the 12th September.
- ◆ The Rural Practitioners Group endorsed the detailed RDPE themes for submission to Defra, for sharing with the Rural Affairs Forum on the 7th November 2006 and eventually for approval by the Rural Board.
- ◆ The socio-economic remit of the Rural Development Service transferred to Yorkshire Forward on the 1st October.
- ◆ Natural England was formed bringing together the work of The Rural Development Service, English Nature and Countryside Agency
- ◆ The next draft of the RIP was presented to Defra on 20<sup>th</sup> October 2006

### Understanding the themes

To provide some clarity on how activity will be assessed for investment, beyond whether it is eligible, the RIP outlines a series of outcomes sought from RDPE investment, along with a series of attributes that will be looked for in projects seeking support. These attributes will read directly across to the scoring system to judge the quality of projects.

Key outcomes sought from RDPE economic investments include:

- increasing rural productivity;
- broadening the economic base of the region's rural areas;
- increasing employment opportunities;
- reducing social exclusion and economic deprivation;
- developing key rural business sectors.

Key outcomes from RDPE social investments include:

- developing vibrant, inclusive, sustainable rural communities;
- ensuring communities have access to key services, located within the community, where such provision is the most appropriate & efficient solution
- ensuring rural communities can reinforce a sense of place within their settlement and surroundings
- assisting communities to articulate their own needs and proactively shape their future

Key outcomes from RDPE environmental investments include:

- rewarding farmers for looking after the countryside and providing public goods for which there is no market;
- improving water quality and reducing soil erosion;
- improving conditions for wildlife (and particularly farmland birds);
- maintaining and enhancing landscape character;
- increasing protection of the historic environment;
- more public access and understanding of the countryside;

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- helping farmers convert to organic production;
- managing all other land on the holding to at least Good Farming Practice standard;
- sustaining hill farming communities.

### **Broad Themes**

The themes outline what type of activity will be eligible for support through the RDPE. However, this eligible activity may be modified following discussions about other sources of support for rural areas. It may be that within specific geographic areas, or if budgets are severely limited, higher priority is given to certain types of eligible activity.

The outlines of the themes are given below. More detail can be found in the full version of the draft Regional Implementation Plan <http://www.goyh.gov.uk/goyh/menvrur/rrp/437470/?a=42496>

**New Rural Enterprise** to broaden the economic base of the regions rural areas & build on key sectors

- Establishing new businesses
- Establishing new ventures within existing businesses

**Rural Business Improvement** to support existing businesses to grow and increase productivity, through;

- Provision of training and advice
- Development of new products, services and markets
- Adding value to existing products and services
- Improved collaboration

**Community Cohesion and Development** to support rural communities through;

- Investing in the provision of services in the community
- Building the capacity of community partnerships

**Enhancing the Value of the Countryside** by encouraging farmers and land managers to embrace business opportunities of multifunctional land use to provide goods and services to the general public (beyond commodity food production) through;

- Wildlife conservation
- Maintenance and enhancement of landscape quality and character
- Natural resource protection
- Protection of the historic environment
- Promotion of public access and understanding of the countryside
- Flood alleviation through land management
- Conservation of genetic resources
- Provision of renewable energy
- Supporting woodland creation and management in line with Regional Forestry Strategy Priorities.

### **Leader**

The selection of areas to be covered by the LEADER approach will be underpinned by a regional analysis of the need and opportunity for the community development approach of LEADER. This will take account of social, environmental and economic needs and opportunities. The analysis will be carried out in autumn 2006, and will be carried out in an open and transparent manner with partner input, sharing the criteria for the analysis through the YHRF Rural Governance mechanisms.

### **Budgets**

On 12 September 2006 the European Commission finalised the annual allocations of rural development funding for Member States from the EAFRD. The UK's rural development allocation for the 7-year period has been confirmed as €1,909,575,420 – approximately £1.3bn. While this formal allocation provides the starting point for the rural development budget, it will be supplemented by voluntary modulation receipts and domestic match-funding.

As money from voluntary modulation will be a key element of the funding package for the England Programme, the overall budget cannot be confirmed until a new European regulation governing voluntary modulation is agreed. The EU regulation to permit Member States to apply voluntary modulation is currently being negotiated in Brussels.

Further information on budget discussions and progress is provided in Defra's Q&A Briefing:

[http://www.defra.gov.uk/erdp/pdfs/rdp07\\_13/RDPQA.pdf](http://www.defra.gov.uk/erdp/pdfs/rdp07_13/RDPQA.pdf)

### **The Way Forward**

The next update of the Regional Implementation Plan will be presented to the Rural Affairs Forum on 7 November 2006. Further information on timetable, next steps and how this information will be shared, can be found in the Regional Implementation Plan.

### **Key Task Group Contacts**

If you have any specific queries on the RIP development please feel free to contact a member of the RIP Task and Finish Working Group:

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