

Rural Matters

July 05

Modernising Rural Delivery in Yorkshire and The Humber



Welcome to the fourth issue of Rural Matters, the monthly Modernising Rural Delivery update for the Yorkshire and The Humber (Y&H) region. In response to the Government's Rural Strategy 2004, partners in the region are working together to develop a Rural Framework. The Framework will seek to prioritise and co-ordinate activity, funding and delivery of services for rural areas of the region. The Framework will also give effect to the principles of 'modernising rural delivery' - namely more simplified and efficient delivery of services with strengthened customer engagement in decision-making.

NEWS

Y&H Rural Evidence Base is launched!

The Y&H Rural Evidence Base Report was launched to a capacity audience on Thursday 30th June 2005 at the Queen's Hotel in Leeds.

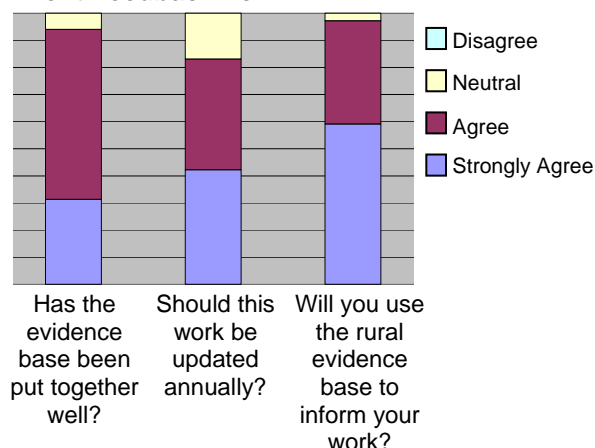


The event, chaired by Wendy Bundy (Chairman of the Yorkshire Rural Community Council and of the Selby and York Primary Care Trust), also featured presentations by Tim Ashelford (GOYH), Tim Frenneaux (Yorkshire Forward), Andy Tordoff (Yorkshire Forward) and Tony Bray (Defra).

The Y&H rural evidence base has been produced in response to demand for better quality regional rural evidence to assist policy development and evaluation. The evidence has been used to help identify the regional rural priorities in the Y&H Rural Framework. GOYH have worked in collaboration with regional partners, including Yorkshire Forward and Yorkshire Futures and have drawn upon the Countryside Agency's State of the Countryside report.

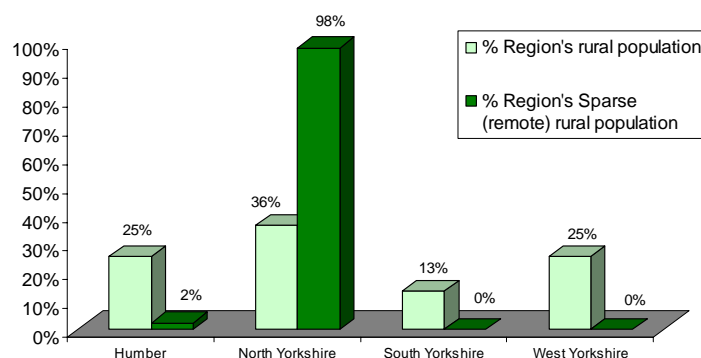
Delegates at the event were asked to provide feedback and over **97%** of respondents agreed or strongly agreed that they will use the Y&H rural evidence base to inform their work.

Event Feedback Form



The report can be downloaded (in pdf format) from the GOYH Rural Framework [website](#). For further information on the Y&H rural evidence base please telephone Tim Ashelford on 0113 283 6656.

Total & Remote Rural Population by Sub Region



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[Y&H Rural Framework Website](#)

Progress – Y&H Rural Framework

Y&H Rural Priority Themes

Based on information gathered from existing regional plans and strategies we have used our rural evidence base and widespread regional consultation to agree ten Rural Priorities. The development of the evidence base has helped to shape the rural priorities by providing a better understanding of their spatial and thematic elements. The Priorities are categorised below using the Government's Priorities for Rural Policy from the Rural Strategy 2004.

Consultation has been carried out through:

- meeting groups with an interest in the Region's rural affairs;
- a written consultation with the Region's Local Strategic Partnerships and,
- a written consultation with our extensive rural stakeholder group.

"Economic and Social Regeneration"

1. **Rural Business Development** - Encourage enterprise and innovation within new and established rural businesses, and to provide a co-ordinated support infrastructure that helps them adapt to change.
2. **Employment, Education and Skills Training** - Develop and encourage participation in quality learning opportunities, and to support rural businesses in workforce development.
3. **Market Towns** - Support market towns as hubs for the rural economy and as service centres, providing locally based employment opportunities.
4. **Sustainable Tourism** - Promote rural Yorkshire and The Humber as a high quality 'sustainable tourism' destination.

"Social Justice for All"

5. **Access to Services** - Ensure that rural communities are characterised by high levels of inclusion and equitable access to quality services recognising demographic trends.
6. **Rural Transport** - Understand and addresses transport needs in rural areas through private, public and voluntary sector provision, to promote rural regeneration and tackle social exclusion.
7. **Rural Housing** - Understand and address housing need in rural areas, recognising and tackling issues of fuel poverty.
8. **Rural Communities** - To promote social cohesion, encourage and support the engagement of rural communities and the active roles that they can play.

"Enhancing the Value of our Countryside"

9. **The Natural Environment** - Conserve and enhance the region's rural biodiversity, its distinctiveness, and the quality of its natural and built environment.
10. **Promote a 'functional landscape'** where development draws on and sustains the natural, cultural and built heritage of the region's rural areas.

Mapping the Delivery of Rural Priorities

The attention of the Steering Group has now shifted to the examination of how these priorities are currently being delivered and how they might be delivered in the future.

Task and Finish workgroups are being established for each individual priority theme with members selected on the basis of their knowledge and experience of the issue being investigated. Work will be undertaken over the summer months with groups reporting on initial activity at the next Steering Group meeting in September.

Progress Report Challenge Session

On the 28th June members of the Framework Steering Group and Working Group met Defra for a Challenge Session to discuss progress on developing the Y&H Rural Framework. Defra were clearly impressed by the real regional commitment to developing the Framework.

Defra commented that:

- the work is underpinned by clear methodology and clear focus and,
- regional partners are "not just engaged, but actively engaged."

The use of regional evidence was highlighted with Defra stating that "at the present time the development of the regional rural evidence base constitutes best practice."

Areas requiring further work included addressing governance structures, sub-regional engagement and specific delivery outcomes, issues which are currently being tackled by the Steering Group and Working Group.

Yorkshire Forward Sub-Regional Allocations

Yorkshire Forward have demonstrated their commitment to the principles of MRD, by making some indicative allocations of funding to the sub regions, to be channelled through the Investment Planning process. The allocations comprise the none committed funds which transferred from the Countryside Agency to Yorkshire Forward, and will be used to deliver improvements to access to services and rural productivity.

The allocations were informed by Defra's new urban rural definition, Defra's assessment of which rural parts of the region have low productivity and the current and planned levels of publicly funded delivery in rural areas. The allocations are rolled together to cover 2 years, to ensure there is no rush to spend funds for fear of them being lost at year end 2004/ 2005. Making the allocations marks a move to a proactive, strategic approach to commissioning activity, a process which enables local organisations to take decisions about how the funds are used, within the overall strategic framework. To date, Yorkshire Forward is the only RDA to have devolved decisions over funding in this way.

North Yorkshire	42%	£2,163,000
Humber	25%	£1,287,000
West Yorkshire	18%	£927,000
South Yorkshire	15%	£772,000

More detail on the rural priorities can be found in the [May progress report](#) on the Framework [website](#).