

## RDPE East Midlands Regional Consultation Group (RCG) Meeting Notes

Wednesday 28 October 2009, GOEM Offices, Nottingham

**Chair:** Helen Woolley (EMRAF Chairman)  
**Minutes:** Melanie Fischer (MF) *emda*  
**Attendees:** see end of meeting notes

Please note that these notes, together with all papers, handouts, presentations and speaking notes relating to the meeting, will be made publicly available via EMRAF's website:

[http://www.ruralaffairs.org.uk/extra\\_list.php?filter=RDPE+Regional+Consultation+Group](http://www.ruralaffairs.org.uk/extra_list.php?filter=RDPE+Regional+Consultation+Group)

Agenda Item	Notes	By Whom / Date
<b>Actions from last meeting</b>	Impact of planning issues: <i>emda</i> is reviewing endorsed Expressions of Interest to establish reasons why they have not yet been developed into full applications. It appears that up to one third may be delayed by planning issues. Further analysis will be undertaken and reported back to next RCG meeting.	<i>emda</i>
<b>Programme Updates &amp; Discussion</b>	<p>Programme updates from all delivery partners provided as handout for meeting; provided basis for discussion, and will be circulated with notes of meeting.</p> <p style="text-align: center;"><b>Discussion/ Questions/Answers</b></p> <p><b>Natural England update (James Couzens):</b></p> <p>New uplands ELS in development. Options are currently being refined before rolling out.            ELS Training and Information Programme (ETIP) being developed – will provide advice and training to farmers in order to help meet ELS delivery targets.            Likely overspend on HLS this year. (NB: This does not mean less money for HLS next year; there will still be more available next year).</p> <p>Q: Charlotte Gault, EMEL: How is the East Midlands progressing towards targets for educational access (no. of schoolchildren visiting farms) associated with HLS?            A: Currently about half way towards 5000 target; always looking for more opportunities. Also working to improve recording so that children's visits can be identified more clearly (as distinct from adults).</p> <p>Q: Andrew Shirley, CLA: Figures provided cover the whole region; would like to see county breakdown, and identification of</p>	

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	<p>renewals of legacy agreements, in order to get full picture.  A: This info is available, and can be circulated.  It was agreed that all delivery partners will produce county-level breakdowns for future meetings.</p> <p>Clive Keble (National Forest): Would like to see mapping of short rotation coppice and miscanthus establishment, in order to see any correlation.</p> <p>Q: Tim Allen (English Heritage): With ref to the reported difficulty in spending allocation for historic farm buildings, would it help if EH asked local authority conservation officers to produce lists of known heritage farm buildings where renovation would be welcomed?  A: The meeting agreed it would be helpful.  The issue is not so much to do with identifying buildings, as with the process of application and the fact that owners must find 20% of project costs (grant is 80%), without known returns on investment. Working to try to simplify process and investigate whether Heritage Lottery Fund may be able to assist?</p> <p><b>Forestry Commission update (David Bole):</b></p> <p>See handout provided – includes summary notes.  Extra programme funding has been made available due to changes in euro exchange rate and eligibility definitions. No increase in running cost funds however, so greater pressure on delivery resources.  Launch of Woodland Birds project has been very successful, with wide appeal to public and woodland managers alike.</p> <p><b>emda update (Michael Stubbs)</b></p> <p>Figures provided on handout – will be standard format from now on, including county breakdowns.  Short presentation included recent notable project approvals and successes, plus details of developing activities of Landskills East Midlands. Slides included in circulation of meeting notes.</p> <p><b>LEADER Approach update (Jo Finlow, Coastal Action Zone)</b></p> <p>On behalf of 7 East Midlands LAGs:  Projects are now being approved and contracted by those LAGs which have been operating longest.  Bolsover has experienced delay due to change in LAG manager. Northamptonshire &amp; North Notts are still at earlier stages, but are promoting and receiving expressions of interest.</p> <p>All LAGs have NFU representatives to assist engagement with</p>	<p>NE to provide</p> <p>NE to follow up availability of data &amp; provide</p> <p>Tim &amp; James C to explore and report back to future meeting</p>

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	<p>farming community. Bolsover &amp; Northamptonshire LAGs would particularly welcome any additional support with this engagement. Some LAGs also have FWAG representatives. Links from LAGs to NFU website are in the process of being developed.</p> <p>Planning is proving to be a major issue impacting upon progress of applications. It can take up to 8 months to secure approval. In CAZ, flood risk is also a major issue; applicants are advised to speak to Environment Agency before approaching planners.</p> <p>In general, processes are too unwieldy for local applicants/small scale projects. Spend is still in its early stages, although 'commitment' (?) is approaching 40% on some measures (CAZ).</p> <p><i>Post meeting note: emda &amp; GOEM had a positive meeting in October with LAG Chairs/Board members &amp; accountable bodies of LAGs, to discuss strengthening delivery performance.</i></p> <p>NOTE: Contact and other details for all LAGs are on emda website <a href="http://www.emda.org.uk/rdpe/newleader.asp?nav=08&amp;snav=0802">http://www.emda.org.uk/rdpe/newleader.asp?nav=08&amp;snav=0802</a></p> <p>Short discussion followed about the current coastal assessment process, related planning policy and the ongoing impact of this on CAZ rural development proposals and delivery. It was reported that the Coastal Study is due to complete by March 2010 to inform the Regional Spatial Strategy.</p> <p>Q: Andy Guy (SSFF) – to emda, regarding Axis 1 figures presented: Concerned about the contrast in the balance of funds remaining (headroom) in regional &amp; livestock budgets. Feels that a lower grant threshold would speed up the rate of take up of livestock funding. A: Will consider in context of RIP refresh.</p> <p>Clive Keble (National Forest) – re planning issues – request that applicants engage early and positively with planning, not regard planning process as 'the enemy' when its purpose is to secure the best outcome for local communities.</p> <p>Andrew Shirley (CLA) – Any scope to influence planning so as to reduce barriers impacting on RDPE delivery? CLA is planning events later this year at which these issues will be addressed.</p> <p>Chairman – EMRAF is also increasing its work in relation to planning – aiming to establish a planners' network. Aware that Lincolnshire County Council is also producing a guide to farm diversification for planners, which they hope to roll out regionally.</p>	<p>Deleted: on xx</p>



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	The Chairman invited any organisations interested in making use of this slot in future meetings to make contact with Melanie Fischer ( <i>emda</i> ) on behalf of PMG as soon as possible.	
National/RDPE Network update	<p>Rebecca Frost (CRC) – return visit to East Midlands RCG one year on, during which time much progress has been made in setting up the National/RDPE network. (see <a href="http://www.rdpnetwork.org.uk">www.rdpnetwork.org.uk</a>)</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Presentation on Network is available on web link given at top of these notes.</li> <li>• Final draft Regional protocol &amp; action plan was presented to RCG members. Copy of agreed version to be provided for posting on EMRAF website.</li> <li>• Will be reviewed in March/April 2010.</li> <li>• Matthew Kempson (LRP) agreed to promote the network among East Midlands local authority networks.</li> <li>• All East Midlands RDPE delivery partners (including LAGs) to encourage programme beneficiaries to load project details on to the Network project database.</li> </ul>	MK
RIP refresh proposal	<p>Melanie Fischer (<i>emda</i>) - Short presentation on 'refresh' of Regional Implementation Plan. Proposal and presentation available on web link given at top of these notes. To be discussed more fully at consultation meeting on 27 November. Details of event plus draft second edition RIP to be circulated 7-10 days in advance of 27 November meeting.</p> <p>Q: Ruth Fish, NE: Asked about relationship of this refresh with the mid term evaluation of RDPE at Programme level. A: Confirmation from Defra (Amanda Desmond) that mid term evaluation of RDPE will commence during 2010, but RIP review does not need to wait until then.</p> <p>Q: Charlotte Gault, EMEL: Request for PMG to check diary clash with SNR event on 27 November, and change the date if necessary. <i>Post meeting note: PMG considered there would be few clashes of attendance where no alternative representative could be found, and will proceed with planned date.</i></p>	MF

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AOB		<p>Andy Guy (SSFF) updated RCG members on delivery structures for Sustainable Farming &amp; Food. New animal health &amp; welfare group, in addition to existing land management and skills/business support groups. Seeks to maximise linkages with RDPE.</p> <p>Sue Buckenham (Natural England) – recent ‘No Charge’ report published on NE website. Aims to identify the value of the natural environment as an economic driver. See <a href="http://www.naturalengland.org.uk/Images/nochargev2_tcm6-14259.pdf">http://www.naturalengland.org.uk/Images/nochargev2_tcm6-14259.pdf</a></p> <p><i>Post meeting note:</i>  <i>Assessment of the economic value of agri-environmental schemes published on 4 November by NE. See <a href="http://naturalengland.etraderstores.com/NaturalEnglandShop/NE220">http://naturalengland.etraderstores.com/NaturalEnglandShop/NE220</a></i></p>	<p>Formatted Table</p> <p>Deleted:</p>
Dates of next meetings:		<p>27 November 2009 (special consultation meeting focusing on RIP review)</p> <p><u>Thursday 21 January 2010</u> at Natural England offices, Chalfont Drive, Nottingham</p> <p><u>Tuesday 11 May 2010 at emda (LEADER focus)</u></p> <p><u>Thursday 16 September 2010</u></p>	<p>Formatted: Left</p> <p>Deleted: www.xxxx</p> <p>Deleted: 09</p> <p>Formatted: Font: Italic</p>

#### Attendance/contact list

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EBLEX	Andy Guy		
Environment Agency	Michael Richardson		
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	Ulrika Franke		