

# Rural Affairs

18th January 2012



RURAL NETWORK  
E A S T M I D L A N D S

Welcome to Rural Affairs, the e-newsletter formerly published by the East Midlands Rural Affairs Forum. This will be the last newsletter sent out in this format. As from the beginning of February this newsletter will take on a new format and will be sent out via the new Rural Network East Midlands website.

**WE ARE LOOKING FOR ITEMS RELATING TO FARMING AND RURAL ISSUES FOR INCLUSION ON THE NEW WEBSITE AND IN THE NEW NEWSLETTER. IF YOU HAVE ANYTHING TO CONTRIBUTE PLEASE EMAIL LYNN HAGE [lhage@rcan.org.uk](mailto:lhage@rcan.org.uk)**



RURAL NETWORK  
E A S T M I D L A N D S  
**NEWS**

## **Rural Network East Midlands Accepted into Defra's Rural and Farming Network**

Rural Network East Midlands are one of the 14 organisations who have been accepted to join Defra's Rural and Farming Network (RFN). The RFN will be made up of people from rural communities, rural businesses and the food and farming industries who will feed back local issues and concerns straight to the heart of Government, in order to make policies more rural friendly. For further information and a list of the other networks who have been accepted please visit <http://rdpenetwork.defra.gov.uk/news-and-publications/defra-news/rural-and-farming-networks-to-provide-hotline-to-the-heart-of-government>

## **Rural Network East Midlands Conference 22<sup>nd</sup> March 2012 at Welbeck Estates**

On the 22<sup>nd</sup> March 2012 we will be holding a conference style event to promote the role of Rural Network East Midlands, showcase projects developing through the network, develop action focused groups and agree the way forward for the network. The conference will be held at Welbeck Estates, Worksop, Nottinghamshire. Formal invitations and booking forms will be sent out during the next couple of weeks. If you would like to be included on the invitation database please contact [lhage@rcan.org.uk](mailto:lhage@rcan.org.uk) and include your name, organisation and email address.

### **Rural Network East Midlands Strategic Panel Meeting**

The next meeting of the Rural Network East Midlands Strategic Panel will be held on 20<sup>th</sup> February at the NFU offices in Uppingham, Leicestershire. The meeting will be used to discuss the arrangements for the Rural Network East Midlands forthcoming Conference on the 22<sup>nd</sup> March. The recent acceptance of Rural Network East Midlands into the Defra Rural and Farming network will also be discussed. If you would like further details about the meeting please contact [jbowers@rcan.org.uk](mailto:jbowers@rcan.org.uk)

### **[www.rnem.org.uk](http://www.rnem.org.uk)**

A new website to promote Rural Network East Midlands is currently in the development stage and will be live at the beginning of February. This website will replace the old EMRAF website [www.ruralaffairs.org.uk](http://www.ruralaffairs.org.uk) and will include a discussion forum, a news alert system and a new newsletter.

### **Rural Network East Midlands Chair Awarded an MBE**

Geoff Stevens was listed in the Queens Birthday Honours List to receive an MBE for services to the community in Matlock, Derbyshire. Geoff, who was the vice Chair of the East Midlands Rural Affairs Forum (EMRAF), is currently serving as the acting Chair for Rural Network East Midlands.

## **Other News**

### **Farming Advice Service**

The new Farming Advice Service (FAS) aims to help farmers to improve their economic and environmental performance and gives advice on cross compliance, nutrient management, climate change adaptation and mitigation. The website also contains information on FAS events, dates and locations of farm workshops, walks, drop-in clinics and road shows. For further information visit <http://www.defra.gov.uk/farming-advice/> or for technical questions and advice call 0845 3451302.

### **New Business Hubs to Promote Rural Economic Growth**

A £15 million pilot project to support rural businesses and grow the rural economy is now open for applications, Environment Minister Richard Benyon has announced. Rural Growth networks will help rural areas to overcome barriers to growth, such as lack of suitable premises and poor provision of infrastructure, such as superfast broadband and mobile telephone networks. Businesses in Rural Growth Networks will have preferential status when applying for grants from Defra's Rural Development Programme for England, making it easier to obtain financial aid to help make themselves more competitive. The closing date for applications is 31<sup>st</sup> January 2012.

For more information please visit the Defra website <http://www.defra.gov.uk/news/2011/12/29/rural-economy-growth/>

### **£100,000 Fund to Help Farmers Protect Wildlife and Manage Flood Risk**

Farmers and rural communities across England are set to benefit from nearly £100,000 to reduce the risk of flooding, maintain farmland and create new wildlife habitats. 12 local Internal Drainage Boards have been awarded extra funding to support innovative projects which protect communities or improve the local nature environment. Grant funding amounting to £99,796 is being awarded to the 12 most innovative and effective applications from across the country, 4 in Somerset, 2 in Nottinghamshire, 2 in Norfolk, 2 in Yorkshire & Humber, 1 in Bedfordshire and 1 in North Lincolnshire. For more information please visit the Defra website <http://defra.gov.uk/news/2011/12/28/100000-fund-to-help-farmers-protect-wildlife-and-manage-flood-risk/>

## Events

### **Midlands Rural Housing Week**

This year's Rural Housing Week will take place between Monday 12<sup>th</sup> and Sunday 18<sup>th</sup> March. The idea is to raise awareness of affordable rural housing and the value it adds to villages and market towns. The National Housing Federation is co-ordinating Rural Housing week and will be issuing press releases to promote affordable rural housing.

To find out how you can get involved with Rural Housing Week please visit [www.housing.org.uk/ruralweek](http://www.housing.org.uk/ruralweek) or contact Amy Beddis, at the National Housing Federation at [amy.beddis@housing.org.uk](mailto:amy.beddis@housing.org.uk) or call 0117 9529918.

### **Excellence in Rural Housing Conference**

**13<sup>th</sup> March 2012, Radisson Blu Hotel, Bristol**

This event offers a chance to hear about the government's vision for rural communities and how it will help deliver rural homes. Find out about neighbourhood development plans, gain tips on how associations can benefit from building links with community organisations such as Community Land Trusts and consider local green space designation and how town and village green applications might affect you.

To find out more and book a place visit <http://bit.ly/zhDIzZ>

### **Adapting Rural Policy for A Sustainable Future**

The Countryside and Community Research Institute (CCRI) are hosting their 2012 Policy Conference in Gloucester in May 2012. The conference will concentrate on understanding the tools and the evidence required to develop more adaptable forms of rural policy. The aim is to encourage participation and integration between academics, practitioners and policy makers in a conference setting.

For more information please visit the CCRI website <http://www.ccri.ac.uk/Events/2012CCRIPolicyConference.htm>

### **Village SOS National Conference**

**Monday 27<sup>th</sup> February, Burlington Hotel, Birmingham**

This event is for rural communities looking to community enterprise to rejuvenate their villages and will include the best rural and community enterprise speakers, innovative and informative breakout sessions and will feature the most inspiring rural community enterprises in the UK.

To book a free place visit <https://www.villagesos.org.uk/national-conference-signup>

### **Making Local Food Our Future**

**Tuesday 20<sup>th</sup> March, Mermaid Conference Centre, London**

This conference will bring together the innovators, drivers and investors in the community food sector to show how they are making an impact by working together. Delegates will have the chance to connect with key stakeholders and will find out how to make it work in their own community by looking at real examples.

The conference is free to attend and tickets can be booked at <http://makinglocalfoodourfuture.eventbrite.co.uk/>

## **Local People, Local Food - One Day Conference, 24<sup>th</sup> April, Aston University, Birmingham**

The Plunkett Foundation are hosting a conference to explore inspiring examples of local food retailing. The event will appeal to Farmer's Market organisers, Community Shop managers, volunteers and committee members.

For more information or to book a place please contact Eileen Keenan on [info@plunkett.co.uk](mailto:info@plunkett.co.uk) or telephone 01993 810730.

## **Members Wanted**

### **New Members Wanted for National Park Authorities and the Broads Authority**

The Secretary of State for Environment, Food and Rural Affairs, Caroline Spelman has announced her intention to appoint new members to five National Park Authorities (NPAs) and to the Broads Authority. There will be two vacancies in the New Forest, North Yorkshire Moors, and Yorkshire Dales NPAs and one vacancy in the Peak District and South Downs NPAs and the Broads Authority. The appointments will commence in May 2012, or as soon after as practical and are initially for up to four years with the option of re-appointment for a total period of up to eight years. The deadline for receipt of applications is 13<sup>th</sup> February.

For further information visit <http://www.defra.gov.uk/news/2012/01/09/new-members-wanted-for-national-park-authorities/>

## **NEWSLETTER CONTACT DETAILS**

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## **PUBLICATION DETAILS**

**THE NEXT NEWSLETTER WILL BE IN A NEW FORMAT  
AND WILL BE SENT OUT VIA THE NEW WEBSITE  
IN EARLY FEBRUARY 2012.**

**PLEASE SEND ANY ARTICLES FOR INCLUSION  
TO [lhage@rcan.org.uk](mailto:lhage@rcan.org.uk) BEFORE THE END OF JANUARY 2012**