

Progress Report



MEMBERS

of the Carnegie Commission

The Rt. Hon the Lord Steel of Aikwood (Chair until February 2006)
Dame Diana Brittan - Former Chair, Community Fund (Chair from February 2006)
William Thomson – Hon President, Carnegie UK Trust (ex officio)
Phil Barton - Director, RENEW – North West Centre for Regeneration Excellence
Graham Benfield - Chief Executive, Wales Council for Voluntary Action
Sarah Benioff - Chief Executive, Community Development Foundation*
Seamus Boland - Chief Executive, Irish Rural Link
Sylvia Brown - Chief Executive, ACRE
Margaret Clark - Director, The Commission for Rural Communities
Professor Gary Craig - President, International Association for Community Development
Niall Fitzduff - Former Director, Rural Community Network (NI)
Sir Ben N Gill - Former President, National Farmers' Union
Lord Christopher Haskins - Former Chairman, Northern Foods
Chris Higgins – Head of Enterprising Communities Team, Highlands and Islands Enterprise
Avila Kilmurray - Director, The Community Foundation for Northern Ireland
The Rt. Reverend Michael Langrish - Bishop of Exeter*
Charlie McConnell - Chief Executive, Carnegie UK Trust
Bhupendra Mistry - Carnegie UK Trustee
Professor Malcolm Moseley - Countryside and Community Research Unit, University of Gloucester
Tony Pender - Convener of the Rural Sub-Committee, Carnegie UK Trust
Jonathon Porritt – Director, Forum for the Future
Vanessa Potter - Director of Policy and External Relations, Big Lottery Fund
Melanie Reid - Journalist, The Herald
Dr Terry Stevens - Consultant, Stevens & Associates
Maura Walsh - Manager, IRD Duhallow Ltd
Sandy Watson – Former Chief Executive, Angus Council

* Alison Gilchrist - Director, Practice Development, Community Development Foundation
deputised for Sarah Benioff whilst on maternity leave.

* Dr Jill Hopkinson -National Rural Officer for the Church of England
deputised for Bishop Michael Langrish.

* Beatrice Andrews-Senior Policy Advisor, Big Lottery Fund
deputised for Vanessa Potter.

FOREWORD

Rt Hon the Lord Steel of Aikwood

During my time as an elected representative for a constituency, which included extensive moorlands, commercial forests and farmland, I developed an abiding interest in the well-being of rural communities. The contribution of community activists to the quality of rural life has been an enduring theme. I am full of admiration for community groups who tackle a multiplicity of funding sources in order to secure resources for their projects.

For these reasons I was delighted to accept the invitation of Carnegie Trustees to chair the Carnegie Commission for Rural Communities and to work alongside a most eminent group of rural academics, practitioners and decision-makers. Given the undoubted experience of the collective membership, it might have been tempting to pronounce on rural community concerns at an early stage. I am grateful for the wisdom of members, who insisted that we first gather evidence from those who live and work in rural communities across Britain and Ireland. Armed with this testimony, we would speak with authority.

I will treasure memories of my fact-finding visits, especially to the island of Gigha in Scotland and Duhallow in Ireland, where we met determined and ambitious people, who were driven to improve the future prospects for their communities. These were people who had identified the assets and resources of their locality as the basis for economic and social regeneration. I am sure that the DVD case studies, included in Part Two of this report, will help the reader to appreciate the 'critical success factors' involved in good rural community development.

I also wish to acknowledge instances where the vision and leadership provided by Ministers, senior civil servants, business leaders and agencies have transformed the prospects for rural communities. Thriving rural communities rely on the contribution of all sectors working together.

I am confident that this Progress Report will generate a lively debate and contribute new thinking in an area that is currently neglected. Furthermore, the commitment of Carnegie UK Trust and the Big Lottery Fund to support exemplar demonstration initiatives through their joint Rural Action Research Programme will ensure that successful approaches are widely disseminated.

Finally, I extend my sincere thanks to the Carnegie trustees for setting up a much needed Inquiry, to the Carnegie Commission members who have given their time so generously and especially to my Vice Chair Dame Diana Brittan, who now takes over the helm to continue their good work.

FOREWORD

Dame Diana Brittan

My interest in rural community development arises mainly from having lived in rural North Yorkshire for many years. In addition, more recently, as a former Chair of the Community Fund, I had a first-hand opportunity to see how lottery funding could provide the spur to local community activity in rural areas. For these reasons I was naturally delighted to join the Commission and now to take the Chair. I would like to express my thanks to all my fellow Commissioners, especially David Steel, and our staff for having worked so hard to launch this important project and for having brought it to this critical stage in its evolution.

This is a progress report. It reflects what the Commission has seen, read and heard so far. The work is not finished. We have not yet reached conclusions or made recommendations. We did, however, as a starting point, ask ourselves some initial questions. Do rural areas experience problems different in kind or merely in degree from urban areas and, if the former, what were the differences? Were there sufficient similarities between rural areas in the UK and Ireland to view them as a group or were they so diverse that this approach was inappropriate? Were rural areas affected in a distinctive way by both devolution and by more supranational trends such as globalisation or EU policies? What was distinctive about rural community development?

Over the past 18 months, we have identified and analysed ideas, policies and programmes designed to improve the sustainability of rural communities and strengthen their voice. We believe that a cross-party consensus on these issues can now be created. More work, however, needs to be done to explain and develop the relationships between policies and practices designed to stimulate rural economic development and those designed to help rural communities as social entities.

Finding ways of improving information exchange and stimulating shared understanding has been one of our major concerns. Carnegie, in partnership with the Big Lottery Fund, has set up a rural action research programme to examine further the issues identified by the Commission. The Big Lottery Fund and Carnegie are also establishing a forum for funders supporting rural community development to exchange ideas and best practice. In autumn '06 we shall be co-sponsoring a conference in Scotland at which rural policy – makers and advisers from 25 OECD countries will exchange practical ideas.

As a society, we must surely be concerned to enlist to the full the energies of all rural areas and to devise policies which provide such areas with opportunities which match those afforded to their urban counterparts. Achieving this is necessary both on grounds of economic efficiency and of social justice. Bringing this about is a challenge to which we are determined to respond with energy and enthusiasm.

CONTENTS

Part One	Page Number
1. Why a Carnegie Commission for Rural Community Development?	7
2. What is rural community development all about?	10
3. The challenge of change	14
4. Commission's observations	27
 Appendices	
i. Carnegie staff and consultants	36
ii. Individuals and organisations consulted	37
iii. References	45
iv. Overview of recent developments relating to rural policy	52
v. Rural Action Research Programme	55
 Part Two	
Fiery Sprits - Rural Community development in action - commentary and DVD	59



WHY?

Why a Carnegie Commission for Rural
Community Development?

WHY?

Why a Carnegie Commission for Rural Community Development?

i. The Carnegie UK Trust

Carnegie UK is one of the leading not-for-profit foundations in Britain. It is one of 22 Carnegie foundations established by Scots American Andrew Carnegie in Europe and the United States. The Trust supports independent commissions of inquiry into areas of public concern through action research and an extensive dissemination and learning exchange programme. Carnegie UK's current programmes focus upon strengthening democracy and civil society, the empowerment of children and young people, promotion of creative social change philanthropy and rural community development.

For several decades the trust supported grass roots rural community action, by way of grants for local initiatives. In 2004, trustees decided to end these reactive grants programmes and to operate at a more strategic level in order to influence public policies and practice in more sustainable ways. One of the main reasons for this was the Trust's concern that the model of short-term, generally modest grant giving, whilst enabling thousands of flowers to bloom, provided little evidence of sustainable change or impact upon deeper structural concerns in society.

ii. Carnegie Commission for Rural Community Development

In 2004, the Carnegie UK Trust established the Carnegie Commission for Rural Community Development ('The Commission') in light of the significant political, social, environmental and economic challenges affecting rural areas. Whilst many studies and official reports have been published on rural development, the Trust felt that the crucial role of communities and the relationship between local community action and the various agencies, public, private and non governmental, that engage in the rural development process had been relatively understudied.

By drawing together leading commentators and thinkers on rural community development and by taking evidence from those who live and work in rural communities, the Trust felt it would be able to contribute some important observations and ultimately propose some practical measures which will in turn inform public policy and improve the effectiveness of all of the players engaged in rural community development.

iii. The Commission's work programme

The Commission held its first meeting in Cumbria, England in July 2004.

Chaired by Lord David Steel of Aikwood, the Carnegie Commission has brought together internationally recognised experts from a wide range of backgrounds and disciplines. From February 2006, Dame Diana Brittan, the Commission's Vice Chair replaced Lord Steel as Chair. The Commission had a specific remit- to examine and promote ways in which rural communities across Britain and Ireland can be empowered to shape and influence these changes and thereby contribute more centrally to the sustainability and vibrancy of rural life. In addressing this remit, the Commission wanted to understand the wider picture and the inter-relationship between state, market and local community players.

With this agenda in mind, the Commission at its first meeting decided that it would take a three-pronged approach to its work:

- To identify, analyse and advocate for more effective public policies and programmes that strengthen the voice and sustainability of rural communities
- To facilitate the exchange of ideas between policy-makers and people living and working in rural communities
- To work with public, private and non-governmental organisations to maximise the resources available for rural community development and their effective application.

Over the past eighteen months, the Commission has taken evidence from a broad range of individuals and institutions in each of the five jurisdictions and has discussed in considerable depth the evidence it had gathered. Full details of the places we visited and the individuals and institutions we contacted are given in appendix ii.

The Commission has now finished the first stage of its work and presents this progress commentary as the summation of its evidence gathering to date. We have talked with hundreds of local people, public-service providers, agricultural interests, business people, the voluntary sector, the European Commission, national and local government policy advisers and decision-makers. We have commissioned reviews of comparative rural community development practice from across the European Union and internationally. Our report also draws extensively upon written evidence presented to us, the research findings of others and wider literature sources.

The Commission recognises that there is still a need for further evidence gathering, not least to test out some of the ideas presented to us in terms of their longer-term viability and replicability. The Commission has not yet agreed any policy conclusions, with one exception. It is our view that the sustainable development and future viability of rural Britain and Ireland should rest less upon subsidy and grant and more upon the capitalisation of rural communities, by way of wider access to and use of wealth and income-generating assets. We term this the asset-based approach.

iv. The Commission's progress report

The Commission is publishing this progress report in order to report back to the many individuals and organisations from whom we took evidence and to highlight some key emerging issues and challenges for rural community development. Our final report, which will contain the Commission's recommendations will be published in the first half of 2007. We owe a great debt to all those who gave freely of their time to meet us and to submit written evidence.

- In Part 1, we offer our understanding of the term rural community development, a snapshot of current rural concerns and key changes and challenges we have heard about and seen in rural communities. We then present our initial observations, which will inform our future work.
- In Part 2, Fiery Spirits- rural community development in action: DVD and commentary, we present over a dozen rural communities' own experiences of what works and what does not, as articulated through the voices of people who live and work there. This is a sample of rural community development in action across Britain and Ireland today. We do not suggest that they provide all the solutions, but they are examples of some of the projects we visited and found impressive.

WHAT?

What is rural community development all about?



WHAT?

What is rural community development all about?

i. Definitions

The initial challenge for the Commission was to define what rural community development is and what distinctive contribution it might make to rural development and regeneration.

At its first meeting, the Commission adopted the 'Budapest Declaration' definition of community development, agreed at a major European community development conference held in Budapest, Hungary in March 2004 on the eve of the accession of several central European states into the EU.

'Community development is a way of strengthening civil society by prioritising the actions of communities and their perspectives in the development of social, economic and environmental policy. It seeks the empowerment of local communities, taken to mean both geographical communities, communities of interest or identity and communities organising around specific themes or policy initiatives. It strengthens the capacity of people as active citizens through their community groups, organisations and networks; and the capacity of institutions and agencies (public, private and non-governmental) to work in dialogue with citizens to shape and determine change in their communities. It plays a crucial role in supporting active democratic life by promoting the autonomous voice of disadvantaged and vulnerable communities. It has a core set of values / social principles covering human rights, social inclusion, equality and respect for diversity; and a specific skills and knowledge base'

Although the declaration is not specific to rural community development, we found the definition particularly helpful because it highlights the role of citizens, as well as institutions and agencies in determining change in communities and is underpinned by core values and principles.

Using this definition as a base, the Commission's work has led it to the view that rural community development is about strengthening civil society. Prioritising the actions, objectives and perspectives of communities (either geographical or interest) secures the development of social, economic, cultural and environmental solutions. Rural community development at its best, should be sustainable and enhance the long-term wellbeing of whole communities. Both individuals and organisations are involved, but no one person or group should dominate. Community development should seek to strengthen the capacity of individuals, especially those who are frequently excluded to respond and to shape change and to become active citizens through community groups, organisations and networks. It should also strengthen the capacity of institutions, agencies and community groups to help deliver the requirements of communities. It should make a contribution to wellbeing, a sense of worth, altruism, volunteering and an individual or a community's ability to make change for itself.

These features apply as much to the development and regeneration of urban communities, as they do to rural. The Commission has deliberated as to what, if anything is particularly distinct in this regard. The concept of community development has been widely used in urban regeneration for over thirty years. It has been closely linked to various programmes to combat social exclusion and to promote community action and cohesion. It has been almost exclusively funded by way of public sector expenditure and, to a lesser extent, charitable trusts and corporate responsibility programmes. The term is also often used, perhaps confusingly, just to describe the work of professional community development workers (under a wide variety of job titles), employed by local councils and non-governmental organisations to assist local people to translate their ideas into practical projects.

This is not dissimilar in rural areas. What differs is the setting: i.e. the geography and demography; the cocktail of political, environmental, cultural and socio-economic issues; the different traditions of voluntary and community organising and self help in rural areas. There is also a slightly different mix of institutional players, for example the role of rural development agencies, landowners and the EU. In addition, there is a history of lower levels of investment and fewer government programmes and initiatives for rural community development. One effect of this is that there are fewer paid community development workers per head of the population in rural communities than in inner cities or urban peripheral housing estates and fewer pots of funding to support community-led initiatives.¹

ii. Social Justice

Most rural community development policies and practice we have observed across the UK and Ireland are underpinned by the notion of social justice, with actions taken at local level to extend equality of opportunity and shift the distribution of power and resources. This is about positive action in favour of people who, for one reason or another, are disadvantaged and addressing how resources, information, status and power are distributed in rural communities and society at large. The Commission believes that tackling social injustice should be a central feature of rural community development.

We believe that rural community development needs to be pro-active, assertive and persistent, questioning prejudices and assumptions and providing support and encouragement for people from a range of social and cultural backgrounds.

Three further concepts are key to rural community development– public participation, public benefit and partnership:

- **Public Participation:** A core objective of rural community development is to involve people in decision-making and problem-solving around real issues in their lives.
- **Public benefit:** Rural Community development should rest on the assumption that whilst both individuals and community groups can generate ideas and projects, from the outset there should be an understanding that any outcome will enrich and improve the wellbeing of all and not just a particular individual or group. Some community projects, will of course, be targeted at specific needs - for example migrant workers or the elderly, but underpinning community development is a clear commitment to contributing towards community well-being.
- **Partnership:** In terms of rural community development, partnership essentially means working together towards a common set of goals, based on equality in terms of ownership, decision-making and recognition of each party's distinctive contribution. This does not assume, initially at least, that a common interest exists around all issues. Indeed, both within rural communities and between communities and outside agencies there can be significant conflicts of interest. But in the long run working and learning together is more likely to realise sustainable results.

iii. Putting the rural into community development

Community development as a professional occupation is well established across both Britain and Ireland. In our evidence-gathering, it became clear to the Commission that much of the training to prepare community development workers was primarily urban in focus. There is little by way of a British, less so Irish, published body of knowledge and a paucity of initial training or continuing professional development specifically designed around rural practice. The Commission has not yet finally come to the conclusion that rural community development involves significantly different knowledge and skills-set to working in an urban setting. However, it believes that this may be the case. We comment in more detail on this issue later in this report.

Important skills, such as enabling the ideas and concerns of local people to be heard and included are essential. Some of these skills may already reside in local rural organisations like the parish council, women's groups, faith communities, young farmers, voluntary groups, sports clubs etc. Other skills, such as how to access relevant information, business and project planning may need to be brought in by outside facilitators. Evaluation is important, for it allows people and organisations to review 'how it was for them,' 'how effective they were', 'how to keep at it' and to assess the difference made to the current and future quality of life of their community.

Rural community development requires both supportive, resourced and skilled public, private and non-governmental agencies, as well as community leaders and volunteer activists within local communities, equally skilled and resourced to work with those agencies.

The Commission believes that the rural community development approach should be adopted more centrally as a feature of rural social, economic and environmental regeneration programmes across Britain and Ireland.



CHALLENGE

The Challenge of Rural Change

CHALLENGE

The Challenge of Change

i. The Issues

From the media headlines it has become clear that many living and working in rural Britain and Ireland are increasingly concerned about the future. Our own observations and consultations confirm this. There is apprehension, anger and a sense of not being able to influence change. This is not a new phenomenon. The history of rural Britain and Ireland is as much a story of hardship and despair as it is of hope and opportunity. Globalisation, changes in EU policies, the crises of BSE and Foot and Mouth, with their impact far beyond the farming and fishing communities, plus ever-growing evidence that our models of economic development are not environmentally sustainable, indicate that we are at a watershed.

Rural Britain and Ireland are not isolated from the global market place and the actions of international currency markets and trans-national agencies and corporations. Decisions made on the other side of the globe have led to job creation and to job losses in rural communities in both countries. Nowhere is globalisation more evident than in the supply of food, with the average meal travelling thousands of miles before it reaches the average plate, demanding the use of ever-larger quantities of fossil fuels. The effectiveness of governments (at supra-national, national, regional and local levels) and the market to address these challenges are, quite rightly, under scrutiny. Local communities seem powerless to respond.

ii. The facts of life in rural communities today

We now examine some of the key social, political, economic and environmental challenges and trends that we believe are impacting upon the quality of life of many people living and working in rural communities. These challenges and trends provide an agenda for rural communities and agencies concerned with rural community development, to address over the coming months and years. In Part Two of this report, we present examples of local community action that is already taking place around these issues.

The distinction between rural and urban communities in both Britain and Ireland can never, however, be hard and fast. Their interactions are complex and fast-changing, illustrated most obviously by migrations of people in and out of rural communities. The rural and urban area classification for England and Wales developed in 2004² exemplifies this. Rural communities include former industrial and fishing villages, the rural/urban fringe and market towns, as well as lowland and hill farming areas. In the main, they are relatively or very sparsely populated and settlement sizes are mostly small. Market towns with populations as large as 15,000 are not themselves rural but often serve large rural hinterlands.

² The Countryside Agency, DEFRA, Office of National Statistics, ODPM and Welsh Assembly (2004) 'The rural classification for England and Wales'

iii. Demographic Trends

During our evidence gathering sessions, it became clear to the Commission members that demographic change is increasingly impacting upon the sorts of concerns which rural communities and agencies articulate and their responses to them. The proportion of older people in rural England and Wales is significantly higher than in urban areas and the rural population is ageing more rapidly³. The 65+ age-group represents 18.3% of the rural population compared with 15.9% as a whole. The average age of a rural resident is 50, compared with 42 in urban areas. By 2028 in remote rural districts it is forecast that half of all residents will be 50+ with a significant rise in the numbers aged 85+. These trends have been exaggerated by the impact of migration. Migration is not, however, being driven by people retiring to the countryside, who account for only 10% of rural migration but by middle-aged people moving into the countryside and staying there into retirement. Scotland's population is also ageing (and is projected to continue to do so) with higher proportions in the older age groups in rural areas.⁴ By contrast, rural areas of Ireland and Northern Ireland have relatively young populations, with around 29% of both populations aged below 20⁵.

There is a marked age profile in population migration to and from rural areas. Whilst rural areas generally attract older people and families with children, younger people tend to be attracted to urban areas with better amenities and greater job opportunities. Consequently, there is a significantly lower proportion of young people aged between 18 and 29 in rural areas compared with urban. This is most pronounced in remote and peripheral areas experiencing depopulation, where the out-migration of young economically active people is particularly significant. Many rural areas with high rates of in-migration of the middle-aged - such as those of the South West of England - are also characterised by high rates of out-migration amongst the younger age groups, leading to the socio-economic recomposition of rural areas⁶. Young people often choose to move away from the rural areas where they grew up. There are many reasons why this might be so: unaffordable homes, infrequent public transport, lack of career opportunities, low salaries, lack of a say in rural affairs, a decline in traditional rural industries and lack of a social life⁷.

³ Age Concern (2005) 'Delivering for older people in rural areas'

⁴ General Register Office for Scotland 2001

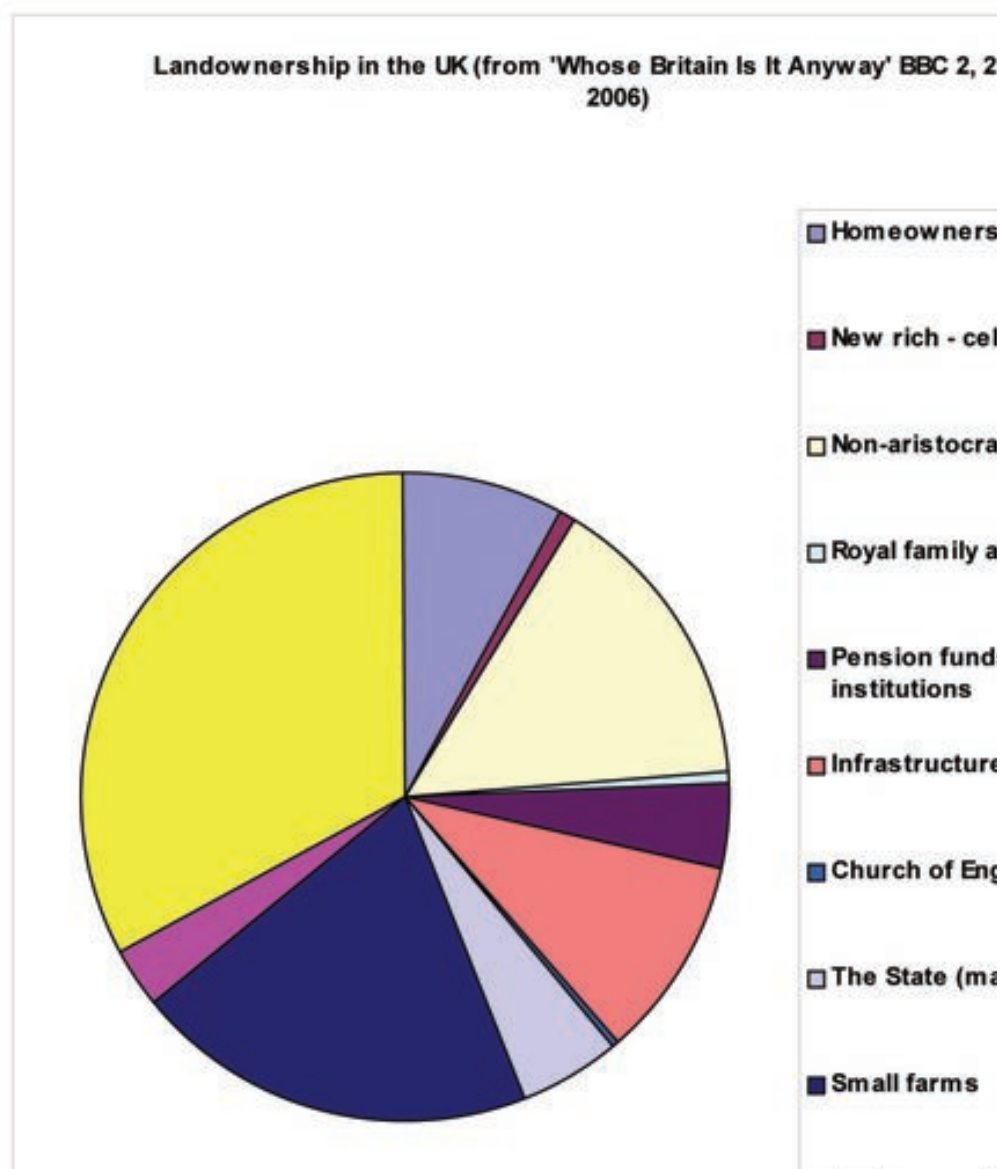
⁵ Figures for the Republic of Ireland are taken from the Census of Population 2002 while NI figures are estimates.

⁶ The Countryside Agency (2001) 'Frontier Economics'

⁷ Pavis, S; Platt, S and Hubbard, G (2000) 'Young people in rural Scotland: Pathways to social inclusion and exclusion'

iv. Land ownership

The UK is some 60 million acres in size, 6 million acres of which are taken up by homes and other buildings, and around 14 million acres are mountains, forest, moorland, water, roadways and industrial land. The UK's 40 million acres of countryside are owned by an estimated 189,000 families, with around 17 million private homeowners (55 million people) owning 10% of the acreage of the country⁸. This has been a pattern of concentration of ownership and influence going back centuries, settling the broad nature and acreage of Britain (Ireland went its own way from the 1880s with the Land Purchase Acts) through to the present time. In Britain the large institutional owners such as the Forestry Commission, Ministry of Defence, National Trust and Pension Funds, while significant, are still considerably smaller owners than individual landowners and a third of the land is owned by the aristocracy and monarchy.⁹ During our evidence gathering we became aware that this pattern of ownership can present challenges for sustainable rural community development. We have also seen examples in Scotland, where opportunities have been created to enable communities to access land as a capital asset for public benefit and for the creation of local enterprise.



⁸ Cahill K (2001) 'Who Owns Britain'

⁹ 'Whose Britain is it Anyway.' BBC 2 February 2006. Presented by Peter and Dan Snow

v. Poverty and deprivation

Research on poverty and social indicators in England¹⁰, has found that, while overall there are fewer individuals who experience poverty and social exclusion in rural local authorities than urban ones, on nearly all the indicators used, both remote and accessible, there are significant levels of poverty and exclusion in rural areas. A recent report¹¹ on Ireland commissioned by the Combat Poverty Agency also highlights a rural population that is older, more dependent, less well educated, at a greater risk of unemployment and excluded from the fruits of Ireland's thriving economy.

Following an extensive analysis of various studies of poverty in rural areas across the UK, Mark Shucksmith¹², one of Carnegie's consultants, has identified the principal groups experiencing poverty in rural Britain as

- Elderly people living alone (predominantly elderly widows) and elderly couples, often relying solely on the state pension - this is by far the largest single group;
- Children, especially of lone parents, or of workless households;
- Low-paid, manual workers' households: rural areas contain a disproportionate number of people in low-wage sectors, notably agriculture and tourism, and in small workplaces;
- Those detached from labour markets, either formally unemployed, or registered as long-term sick or disabled: half of all males in this category are aged 55-64;
- Self-employed people: a major source of rural poverty among those of working age.

Poverty and deprivation is a real concern across rural Britain and Ireland. Many anti poverty measures are implemented at national level (e.g. minimum wage.) However, we have witnessed the positive impact that local action can have on rural poverty and deprivation.

vi. Housing in rural areas

During our evidence gathering, it became apparent that one of the most immediate concerns throughout rural Britain and Ireland was access to affordable housing. The public and private housing sectors need to do much more with regard to building low cost and social housing. It was in recognition of the scale of this problem that the UK Government established an Affordable Rural Housing Commission for England in July 2005 to identify practical ways in which access to affordable housing for people in rural areas could be improved.

Access to affordable rural housing is made difficult because of two issues: shortage of supply and rapidly escalating prices¹³. However, the prospect of large-scale house building in rural areas causes great tension, with many communities and environmentalists seeing themselves at the 'front line', defending the Green Belt and opposing the expansion of nearby towns. This has often led to community action excluding the building of new social and other low-cost housing.

In 1994, according to the Halifax house price database, the average rural house price in England was £85,308 rising by 171% to £231,053 in 2004.¹⁴ One of the reasons rural house prices have outperformed the price rise in urban properties is because a higher proportion of the rural housing stock is made up of detached properties (36%) compared with 17% in urban areas. Only 13% of the rural housing stock is made up of social housing compared with 22% in urban areas. Research by The Bank of Scotland confirms that house prices in rural areas in Scotland have also been increasing at a faster rate than those in urban areas¹⁵. In Ireland prices rose on average 11 per cent each year from 2001 to 2004¹⁶.

¹⁰ Harrop, A. and Palmer, G (2002) 'Indicators of Poverty and Social Exclusion in Rural England: 2002', New Policy Institute, p.4.

¹¹ Combat Poverty Agency (2005) 'Mapping Poverty: National, Regional and County Patterns.'

¹² Shucksmith, M (2003) 'Social Exclusion in Rural Areas: A Review of Recent Research.'

¹³ Barker, Kate (2004) 'Review of Housing Supply Delivering Stability: Securing our Future Housing Needs.'

¹⁴ Halifax House Price Database; ONS

¹⁵ The Bank of Scotland (2005)

¹⁶ Permanent TSB house price index (2004)

Any analysis of the rural housing issue has to include a notion of affordability. It is the combination of high house prices and low wages that causes particular difficulty. Young people in rural areas find it difficult to get a first step on the housing ladder. Evidence presented to the Commission shows that this problem is keenly felt in rural areas and that this contributes in part to the out-migration of young people. In England, the numbers of first-time buyers has declined from 27% (1994) to 16% (2004) of the total number of housing transactions in rural areas. In Wales, first time buyers have declined equally dramatically from 42% (1994) to 27% (2004) of the total number of housing transactions.¹⁷

In many rural areas the housing shortage is further exacerbated by a large number of properties being bought as second homes. For example, within the English South Lakes there are parishes where over 20% of the housing is second homes. Lack of affordable housing for local people represents a significant threat to the sustainability of some rural communities, leading to an imbalanced population where young people and those on low incomes are effectively forced out.

vii. The changing nature of work

It has become more and more evident to the Commission that there is not a single and separate rural economy detached from the economic activity in urban areas. The key drivers of economic development - skills, enterprise, innovation, investment and competition - are not different to those in urban areas. Distinctive characteristics in the rural labour market (such as a higher involvement in land-based industries agriculture, mining and forestry) tend to be, although not exclusively, associated with some of the more peripheral areas. In rural areas there also tends to be a more restricted choice of jobs; limited training opportunities; difficulties in accessing public transport and greater reliance on informal networks for finding jobs.

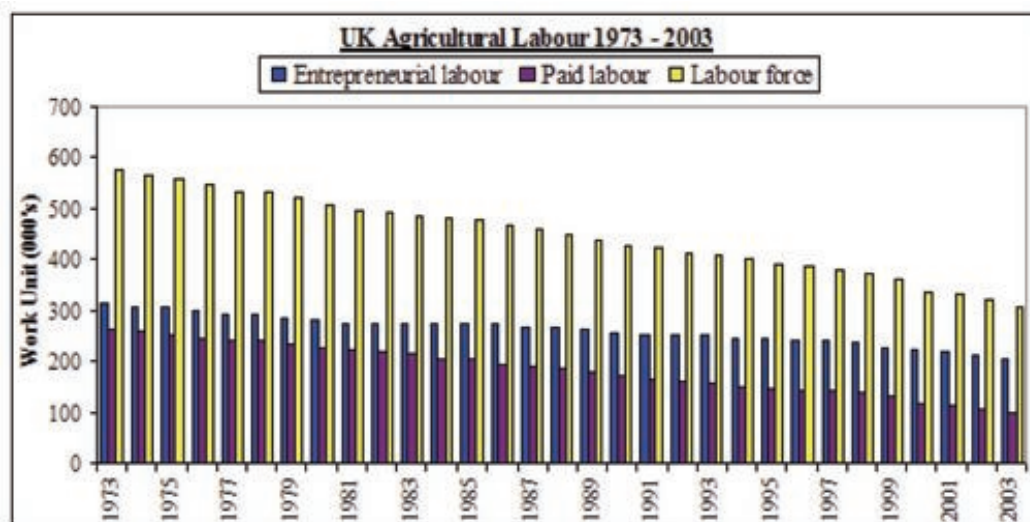
Research by the Joseph Rowntree Foundation¹⁸ has found that these barriers contribute to the high incidence of low pay in rural areas. Some specifically rural issues, such as tied housing, gang labour and seasonality, were also identified. In remote rural areas especially, in-work poverty is more prevalent than elsewhere, particularly for women, young people and those with no or few qualifications. Whilst many rural areas are doing well economically and unemployment rates in rural areas are relatively low, so too are wages and increasingly employers find it very difficult to recruit labour.

The tendency to equate rural employment with farming is increasingly misleading.¹⁹ The number of people working on farms has been declining for a long period of time. There has, moreover, been a move from full-time working to part-time working within the industry. Whilst the number of full time jobs has declined since 1985, there has been a corresponding increase in the number of part-time workers from 21% of the total in 1984 to 34% in 2004. People in rural areas often have more than one part time job to make ends meet.

¹⁷ Halifax House Price Database; ONS

¹⁸ Shucksmith, M (2000) 'Exclusive Countryside? Social Inclusion and regeneration in rural areas.'

¹⁹ The Countryside Agency (2000) 'State of the Countryside Report'



Source: DEFRA (2004)

From the evidence we have collected, we have become aware of the extent to which those living in rural communities have or have not adjusted to this restructuring within rural economies. In Ireland, the Low Income Smallholder Initiative has applied community development approaches to engage farm households in training programmes, collaborative producer groups, debt counselling and the identification of 'progression routes' to a diversified income.

Women play a vital role in the rural labour market. Throughout rural areas of Britain and Ireland, the formation of informal networks has been a popular response by women who are seeking either re-entry into the labour market or a solution to social isolation through the solidarity of contact with others in a similar position. Governments have recognised the importance of engaging women in the labour market as a vehicle to achieve rural regeneration and equality targets and have introduced funding for women's programmes²⁰.

viii. Migrant workers

The issue of migrant workers came to the fore in our evidence-gathering, but more research is needed in terms of understanding both scale and impact. The availability of migrant labour is however increasingly important to staple rural industries, including farming and the hospitality sector.²¹

The National Association of Citizens Advice Bureaux²² argues that migrant workers are most exploited in rural employment, including agriculture, hospitality and food processing. Agencies and gangmasters²³ provide many migrant workers with access to work and as a result exercise significant control. The UK Gangmasters (Licensing) Act 2004 has established a licensing scheme for labour providers operating in the agriculture, shellfish gathering and associated processing and packaging sectors. We are interested to learn more about the situation of migrant workers and their relations with their host community and shall be commissioning further research in this area.

ix. Information and communications technology (ICT)

Improvements in information and telecommunications technology have enabled a rapid growth in the number of people able to work from home. We came across evidence of increasing numbers of people who are taking advantage of the flexibility of new technology and moving to rural areas. Villages and small towns are becoming the beneficiaries of this trend in home working. There is more of a human presence during the day and people are making more use of local services. The extension of broadband will, we believe, sustain the trend. Broadband services, whether delivered over the telephone line, cable, satellite or third-generation mobile telephone, have the potential to open new markets and to ameliorate the disadvantages of remote rural locations.

At the beginning of 2002, only 66% of the UK population had broadband services available to them. By mid 2005, over 99% had broadband services available²⁴. ICT can provide many benefits to rural enterprises but recent research for DEFRA²⁵ suggests that in general, rural businesses adopt ICT significantly more slowly than their urban counterparts. The 'ICT adoption gap' between rural and urban businesses is most pronounced in micro-businesses. However it does seem that ICT developments are having a positive impact on rural economies. Businesses with higher levels of ICT adoption are associated with higher turnover per employee and higher growth expectations. Recent developments in ICT have made it easier to operate from a rural location, and about 30% of urban businesses say that they may consider operating from a rural location now that broadband is available.

Cautionary voices have been raised with us, however. There are those who do not see ICT as a straightforward solution to many of the problems facing rural communities. Intel and Age Concern²⁶ have an initiative aimed at raising awareness of digital exclusion amongst older people in the UK. Research commissioned to kick-start the programme revealed the extent of the digital divide amongst older people, with nearly half of Britain's over 50s not having access to a computer at home, at work or elsewhere. In addition to this 'digital divide' between the 'haves' and 'have-nots', there is the fear that ICT will be one more nail in the coffin of many village post offices because of the growth of online transactions.

²⁴ Prime Minister's Strategy Unit (2005) 'Connecting the UK: the Digital Strategy.'

²⁵ SQW Limited (2005) 'ICT in England's Rural Economies.'

²⁶ Age Concern (March 2006) www.ageconcern.org.uk

x. Changing rural environments

Growing public concern about the environment is reflected in the variety of ways that people in rural communities are developing sustainable alternatives. We saw many examples in food production - local collecting and distribution networks, farmers' markets, organic food shops and community cafes. Common to all is a wish to re-establish links with the land and to involve local people in issues around sustainable development and health. In rural areas dominated historically by coal mining, the environment has always played a central role; organisations like the Groundwork Trust have helped such communities with local environmental projects. We have also documented protests against opencast mining, toxic-waste tipping as well as defence of peat levels and wetlands. Community development approaches are unlocking the widespread interest and concern about environmental issues, and an enthusiasm, especially amongst young people, to do something locally. These approaches are being tested to the full when, as can frequently happen, there are conflicts of interest or strong disagreements about environmental proposals. A prime example would be the disputes about wind farms.

Increasing fuel and energy prices present a growing challenge to rural economies and to the lifestyles of people living in rural areas, whose dependency on the car is high. This is the outcome of a combination of commercial, state and individual decisions. At a national level, investment has been made in road building whilst at the same time cutting back on public transport. At the same time, people are choosing to live in rural areas while commuting to work in towns and cities. We have noted that escalating fuel costs are encouraging responses by rural people, such as community transport schemes, car-pooling or lift-sharing (with the further benefit of reducing carbon emissions). However, we have also received evidence that 'many local initiatives aimed at developing and broadening the use of rural community buildings, such as schools and village halls, do not always consider sustainable construction, energy efficiency or reduced carbon emissions'²⁷

xi. Multi-cultural trends

In general the impression we received from our evidence-gathering is some rural people have found it difficult to adjust to a multi-ethnic and multicultural society. Population profiles for rural areas reveal very small numbers of black and ethnic minority residents. Philomena De Lima at the University of Highlands and Islands is an advisor to the Carnegie Commission on minority groups in the countryside. She argues that there is a neglect of minority ethnic perspectives in policy and strategy documents across rural UK and a lack of recognition that rural racism, as an issue, needs to be tackled²⁸. Home Office figures²⁹ on race incidents for England and Wales indicate that ethnic minorities in low-density ethnic areas are at greater risk (ten times more likely) of being attacked on racial grounds. Since the early 1990s there has been an increase in the number of incidents of racism and violence perpetrated on members of black and ethnic minority groups who either settle in or visit rural communities. This research suggests that it is the increase that is worrying, not just the fact that racist incidents occur. In Northern Ireland the sectarian divide and its impact upon community development work is well documented³⁰ with extensive work on community mediation and conflict resolution.

The Commission has also seen the creative contribution of distinctive cultures to the identities of rural Britain and Ireland. At one level, people living in rural areas, whatever their first language, are a part of the global village, able to access the same cultural influences as people living in cities. However, cultural traditions are of growing importance in rural areas, maintained and promoted more than ever through the media and education.

The part that cultural development plays, in the narrower sense of the arts, in rural community development has been recognised for many years. The Arts Council England³¹ provides evidence that cultural activities as well as being a major boost to rural tourism, contribute to the regeneration of rural communities and to the strengthening of social capital. A report on the impact of the arts on Scotland's Western Isles sums up some of the wider benefits - the evidence has pointed to impressive improvements in self-esteem and self-confidence, prerequisites for healthy individuals and communities and to a range of practical skills development from developing creative ability to managing a small business.³²

²⁸ De Lima (2001) 'Needs, not numbers.' (2003) 'Mapping Rural Racism.'

²⁹ Jay Rayner, Observer, Sunday March 27, 2005

³⁰ The Community Foundation for Northern Ireland (2002) 'Taking 'calculated' Risks for Peace II.'

³¹ Arts Council of Wales (2005) 'The Arts Work, Facts and Figures.'

³² Brain Beattie, Creative Services et al 'The Social and Economic Impact of the Arts in the Western Isles: a report for Comhairle Nan Eilean Siar and Western Isles.'

xii. Trends in service delivery

Concerns about access to good public and private sector services were raised at many of our evidence-gathering meetings and in the written submissions we received. The National Council of Voluntary Organisations argues that it has been recognised for some time that working in rural areas may involve increased service delivery costs due to what is sometimes called the 'sparsity factor' or 'rural premium': the additional costs associated with delivering services in areas of low population density. Additional costs include the extra resources (both time and money) required to cover greater distances, as well as the increased unit costs associated with delivering services through multiple small outlets rather than a single large one. Expenditure on public services is often substantially lower per capita in rural areas than in other areas.³³

A survey of rural services undertaken by the Wales Rural Observatory³⁴ reports that shops selling only food tend to be concentrated in settlements with a population of at least 1000, leaving between 80-90% of rural communities below the 1000 population band with no food shop. In part, this has been a consequence of the development of supermarkets in nearby towns, with village shops being out-priced by large retail stores. The same survey, however, found, contrary perhaps to perceived opinion, that up to 69% of settlements with between 600 people to 4000 people in rural Wales did have access to a Post Office. However, in settlements of below 1000 people, fewer than 15% of communities had a GP surgery.

In England, DEFRA and the Countryside Agency have developed 11 Rural Services Standards covering essential services such as education and health. The Rural Services Standard was first published in the Rural White Paper, 'Our Countryside: the future' (2000). A study commissioned by DEFRA from The University of Gloucestershire³⁵ has attempted to predict what rural service delivery might look like in the year 2015, examples here being:

- reduced role of local authorities in service provision; but increased role in planning, co-ordinating, facilitating and commissioning
- greater coordination and integration of the delivery of hitherto discrete public services – both managerially and often in physical terms
- growing reliance on the voluntary / community / social enterprise sector
- many information-based services routinely accessed from home; and much innovation apparent in the use of ICT to service a scattered clientele.

In recent years there has been a radical reconfiguration of the mode of public-service delivery by central and local government in Britain and Ireland. No longer is it seen as simply a 'top down' process. Some of these services are now typically outsourced and it is increasingly recognised that service users and community organisations can play a role in shaping the planning, delivery and outcomes of public services.³⁶ While some activities have been initiated by statutory agencies - in part, driven by the need to cut costs - one of the strongest drivers for change has been the growth of social enterprises and community pressure for what proponents call the co-production of services³⁷.

³³ Yates, H (2002) 'Supporting Rural Voluntary Action.'

³⁴ Wales Rural Observatory (2005) 'A Survey of Rural Services in Wales.'

³⁵ University of Gloucestershire (2005) 'The Future of Services in Rural England - a Scenario for 2015.'

³⁶ Hyde P, Davies HTO (2004) 'Service design, culture and performance in health services: consumers as co-producers.'

³⁷ Bovaird, Tony (2005) 'Rural Governance- position paper produced for the Carnegie Commission for Rural Community Development.'

xiii. Trends in rural governance

There is currently much concern over apparent ‘voter apathy’ and the lack of citizen involvement in the political process. This has most recently been highlighted by the Rowntree Trusts’ Power Inquiry³⁸ (and forms the basis of another Carnegie Commission of Inquiry and programme, which is examining the strength of civil society and democracy in Britain and Ireland.) Our meetings in Britain and Ireland confirm that this is not simply a concern of the urban political classes.

Residents have experienced great changes in the governance of rural areas in recent years and from our evidence gathering sessions, clearly feel far more distant from centres of power. Local government reforms have invariably continued the trend of the creation of larger unitary authorities, ever distant in terms of mileage from rural communities. One local authority, Highland Council in Scotland set up in 1995 covers an area the size of Wales. There has also been the growth of unelected organisations such as the Regional Development Agencies in England with responsibility for significant rural regeneration programmes and budgets and in Wales, the transfer of quangos directly under central government.

Parallel to this trend, public agencies have had to come to terms with very different ways of working, especially through the mechanism of partnerships. This approach is currently being led in England by the UK’s Office of the Deputy Prime Minister (ODPM) via its advocacy of decentralisation and neighbourhood initiatives, where the former ‘one size fits all’ approach is being replaced by a far more varied approach to community governance. This has also led to the realisation that if the needs of citizens and service users are to be addressed more holistically, then the policy needs to be more cohesive and joined-up and that the organisations implementing policy need to be equally joined-up.

This line of argument underpins community planning, a relatively new concept, referring to the processes by which public authorities, the voluntary sector and the business community join together with local communities to identify policy and service priorities for their area. This approach to more effective inter-agency corporate planning and community consultation and engagement is increasingly being enacted in legislation across the UK. We received a number of comments that whilst community planning, of itself, did not address wider concerns about the democratic deficit or about public disengagement from politics, it could provide an opportunity for substantive community decision-making over public service planning and service delivery.

³⁸ Joseph Rowntree Charitable Trust and the Joseph Rowntree Reform Trust (2006) ‘The Power Inquiry: An independent investigation into the conditions of democracy in Britain.’

xiv. Conclusion

Notwithstanding the many challenges and changes facing people living and working in rural Britain and Ireland, we encountered in our evidence gathering few who did not value rural life, or who would exchange it for life in a city. However, we did encounter many people who were very concerned about the quality of life and of their communities, and who were doing something about it. Quality of life for them was more than an aspiration for the rural idyll, but rather a need to realise and value the best of what rural communities can be.

The table below summarises what we found people in general saying they wanted. Over the coming months we intend to examine in greater detail the views of different groups within rural communities - for example, young people.

- Employment opportunities that provide a living wage and a sense of achievement.
- Housing to buy or to rent that is affordable, economic to run and suited to the size of the household
- Infrastructure of essential utilities such as water supply, electricity, telephone and broadband connectivity
- Access to affordable and healthy food
- An accessible and flexible community meeting place
- Formal and informal education opportunities
- Access to benefits for those who are eligible.
- Access to health care suited to each stage of life
- Security and public safety – access to police and fire services, safe roads and paths
- Opportunities for recreation – including self-improvement, religious activity, arts and hobbies, physical activity and socialising
- Social connections – community spirit, acceptance of diversity
- Civic and political rights – involvement in local decision-making
- Affordable and accessible transport
- Sustainable environment – securing biodiversity, recycling of waste, the stewardship of land and water resources.

This overview of some of the major trends in rural Britain and Ireland today, as gathered from our meetings and written submissions does not provide a complete picture and we recognise the need to further substantiate or indeed to challenge some of the evidence we have received. However, we believe that the main trends are now much clearer. The economic, social, cultural, environmental and political picture we have seen confirms the view that rural Britain and Ireland are indeed in a process of enormous change.



OBSERVATIONS

The Commission's Observations

OBSERVATIONS

The Commission's Observations

We now present our observations as to what local communities, working in partnership with the public, private and non-governmental sectors, can do to create more sustainable rural communities.

We invite responses to the seven questions together with any other comments and ideas by the 1st September 2006. These will inform the Commission's final reports.

This can be done by registering onto our website and logging your comments – www.carnegieuktrust.org.uk

i. The political environment is opportune

In all the jurisdictions we visited, the words 'community' and 'neighbourhood' are, rhetorically at least, at the top of the rural policy agenda of both governments and opposition parties alike. There is now a broad consensus around the importance of involving local people in the planning and management of programmes aimed at tackling social exclusion and generally enhancing the quality of life for disadvantaged communities. Embedded within this approach lies a commitment to producing integrated and sustainable solutions to what are now recognised as very complex and deep rooted problems. In order to achieve this, the main political actors across all the jurisdictions are interested in new forms of governance; including increased community engagement, improved democratic leadership, inter-agency working and new forms of service delivery. The Commission believes that rural community development should flourish in this more positive political environment.

Question 1. How can we ensure that this political commitment is sustained in public policy and practice?

ii. The measurement of rural indicators of need is imperfect

A common concern we heard on our visits was that the indicators generally used by the two Governments and devolved administrations to measure rural disadvantage still have an urban bias. Attempts to construct indices which can be applied usefully to both rural and urban areas (e.g. by the Urban Rural Definition Group in Northern Ireland) have been fraught with difficulty because small area focused measures which highlight clusters of multiple disadvantage based, for example, around electoral wards are less relevant to the scattered incidence of rural exclusion. The call here was for governments to adopt measures targeted less at areas and rather at individuals and social groups in rural contexts.

The Commission for Rural Communities in England is examining new ways to measure rural deprivation and the Carnegie UK Trust will be working with the Commission and others in Britain and Ireland over the coming months on this important issue.

Question 2. What indicators should we be advocating for in order to encompass the sorts of challenges outlined in this report?

iii. More effective rural proofing required

EU and national policies addressing issues which are not uniquely rural impact greatly on rural communities in all five jurisdictions. We believe it is important, therefore, to look beyond the department specifically remitted with rural development. Whilst we were informed by civil servants that their respective rural affairs departments sought to ensure that rural proofing was considered by all other departments, comments we received from those working within government, and from many outside it, suggest that there is still far to go in ensuring both effective rural proofing and cohesive and holistic policy development and programme design.

Rural proofing means that, as policy is developed and implemented, policy-makers should think in a systematic way about whether there will be any significant differential impacts in rural areas and if there are, assess them and consider what adjustments/compensations might be made to fit rural circumstances. We believe that the process needs to be transparent, monitored and reported upon, preferably by an independent body. Rural proofing will only be meaningful if policy-makers and programme managers have a clearer grasp of rural issues, of the possible consequences of their policies on rural communities and of the realities of how to engage local people in the process.

There is a concerted effort to provide good evidence to support rural policy development. DEFRA has a growing research portfolio and the Welsh Rural Observatory has published influential reports. Carnegie UK Trust is supporting an examination of the feasibility of establishing, on a long term basis, a Scottish Academy of Rural Policy. This evidence base is an essential prerequisite of effective 'rural proofing' of government policies. The Countryside Agency and now the Commission for Rural Communities have established much good practice in this area. We note, however, that many of the jurisdictions have very small staff complements in their rural development teams and that these teams need to be strengthened if rural proofing is to be effective.

Question 3. What practical measures do government departments and others need to introduce to ensure that their wider policies and programmes support rural community development?

iv. Community Planning presents opportunities, but is not yet effectively engaging the public

Under the Local Government Act (2000), County and Unitary Councils in England and Wales have a duty to prepare Community Plans to support and strengthen the social and economic development of their areas and to promote sustainable development. In Scotland, the Local Government in Scotland (2003) Act has placed a duty of community planning on local authorities and a duty to support the engagement of local communities in the planning process. Similar legislation is being considered in Northern Ireland.

In all parts of Britain and Ireland we witnessed an increasing demand from rural communities for more involvement in the planning and management of their local area. We have seen many examples where rural communities and community development organisations have risen to the challenge of finding effective ways for local people to be involved.

Many community participatory methods such as; Participative Rural Appraisal, Rapid Rural Appraisal, Action Planning, Future Search, Planning for Real, Parish Plans and Village Design Statements are being adopted widely. There is no shortage of participatory techniques. Their value, however, ultimately turns on two key factors: first, the extent to which all sections of a community are involved (including less confident, visible and articulate members such as children and people who are housebound): second, the responsiveness and capacity of the agencies within the community planning partnerships and the partnerships themselves. The Commission has gathered evidence to suggest that many rural areas have the potential to play a much larger role in future in commissioning, managing and delivering services devolved by the public sector. Most developed in Scotland, but emerging in other parts of the UK, community budgeting has also been expressed to us as the 'coming idea'. The Rowntree Trusts' Power Inquiry has highlighted the potential of community budgeting in giving substantive decision-making power to local communities over significant resources.³⁹

Question 4. How can community planning partnerships be encouraged to support more effectively the active engagement of local communities in both strategic and local decision-making?

v. Moving beyond the short term

Traditionally, rural communities have been dependent upon grants and subsidies for their community development, supplemented by local fundraising. Grants from central and local government, the EU, trusts and the Big Lottery Fund and its predecessors have been the major sources of income. In our evidence gathering, we heard however that too often current funding arrangements inhibit rural community development. Comments we heard time and time again include:

- Excessive bureaucratic procedures resulting in lengthy delays with applications
- The requirement for matched funding so that community groups and organisations have to put together complex funding arrangements which draw funds from a number of sources but which necessitate considerable investment of time by volunteers
- Insufficient awareness among funders of the need to invest in supporting the local people who are so central to rural community development
- Continuing reluctance of power-holders to devolve power and resources to local people.
- The time-limited nature of most capital and revenue funding programmes. In consultations we heard that this led to short-termism, the risk of failures and hence the likelihood of rural communities being damaged
- Excessive auditing and accountability demands placed by some funding organisations on applicants.

Deficit or retrospective funding is still the norm for governments, the EU and local authorities. This places responsibility for cash flow with the applicant and effectively filters out many rural groups from participating because of their small size and financial insecurity. Funding increasingly supports innovative projects rather than the core work of many rural service providers, leading rural voluntary organisations to chase scarce project funding to supplement their reduced (or non-existent) core funding.

Rural community development cannot be fast-tracked. Experience has shown that progress towards outcomes that are sustainable often takes years. Some of the most successful community development programmes we visited were second or third 'tranche' EU funded LEADER areas that had been able to get 10 – 15 years funding. The Commission, as well as advocating for a reform of existing grant funding arrangements to facilitate and support more sustainable rural community development, is very keen to explore additional approaches to build up the assets of local communities. Ideas we have received and approaches we have seen, include:

- More effective allocation and targeting of mainline resources, through the community planning process
- The precept and local levies to enable local parish level councils to raise funds
- Business Improvement Districts to encourage businesses to participate in community-based regeneration
- Community land buyouts – ownership and management of resources by rural communities and community land trusts that own, develop and/or manage local assets for community benefit
- Community Development Finance Initiatives – supporting social enterprises and the social economy through loans
- Futurebuilders - comprising a combination of loans, performance-related investment, grants and capacity building
- Creating more sustained wealth and income streams for rural community development. For example engaging with Big Lottery Fund and the Commission for Unclaimed Assets to explore ways of developing community endowments
- Expansion of the role of community foundations in rural areas, bringing together those who might be interested in creative venture philanthropy in a rural context
- More social enterprises to deliver rural services
- Exploring further a variety of economic transactions, such as local purchasing, that benefit and sustain rural communities⁴⁰

Question 5. As we move towards a broader portfolio of investment in rural community development, what are the opportunities and the pitfalls we need to bring to the attention of communities and funding bodies?

vi. Building up community assets is essential

As we have seen, one of the major problems for community-led development in rural areas is under capitalisation and over-dependency upon short-term, generally small-scale grants. The Big Lottery Fund, Futurebuilders, Community Development Finance Initiatives, the social enterprise sector and the Commission for Unclaimed Assets are at the forefront in advocating for asset-based community development. We believe that this is an area of enormous potential and welcome the emerging public policy developments in this area, most recently stated by the UK Chancellor in his Budget speech in March 2006. We note, however, that whilst these announcements emphasise the importance of investing in a sustainable way, the examples invariably presented are urban in context.

We are also interested in work undertaken in England by the Minister of Communities and Local Government within the UK's ODPM (Office of the Deputy Prime Minister) on asset-based community development.

'Assets enable organisations to diversify their income streams, for instance through taking loans to develop social enterprises that trade directly with business and members of the public. They create a buffer for organisations to take more risks and act more independently. National Government, through the dormant assets commission announced by the Chancellor in the Pre-Budget Report last year, will look to channel assets into the sector from dormant bank accounts. In addition, as I set out last year, we must look at the potential to apply the Scottish model of a Community Right to Buy to enable communities' the first option on the sale of public or private assets. Local government can also take a more active role in asset building. In 2003, we changed the guidance on best value, to enable local authorities to dispose of assets at a discount of up to £2 million, thus enabling some assets to be effectively gifted to the third sector. We need to look at the practical barriers – both for local government, and the voluntary sector'.⁴¹

This 'double devolution' public policy agenda in the UK and the devolved administrations has a major strand on supporting the transfer of state-owned assets to communities. The Scottish model of Community Right to Buy is now extending this idea to private land. During our visits, we saw and heard about the great challenges and opportunities of land reform for sustainable community development. This has encouraged other creative, income generating partnerships between communities and landowners. Here we have seen an unlocking of the enterprise and asset sharing potential that can arise from community ownership and partnership working.

⁴¹ David Miliband's speech at the National Council of Voluntary Organisations (2006)

Another albeit modest example of harnessing local resources more effectively that we have seen in many areas concerns the greater flexibility in the use of community buildings. We have been impressed by the assigning of workspaces to local communities and the development of multi-purpose, flexible and accessible meeting places. An example of this would be a community centre - which provides a number of assisted housing units for elderly people and also a retail space for a community café or a farm market - which, in turn, generates rental income to support the maintenance of the space and of social and cultural activities. In contrast to their urban counterparts, many rural communities already own and manage community buildings, but volunteer management committees continue to struggle with supporting costs of maintenance and upgrade. Recognition of the capacity strain of communities needs to be factored into any future programmes associated with a rural asset transfer agenda. We believe that the asset-based, income-generating approach has enormous potential for rural communities, but must be introduced in ways that empower community action and enterprise.

Question 6. What measures need to be in place and what measures need to be avoided to ensure that an asset-based approach empowers local communities?

vii. Training and skills essential for success

We welcome the Irish and UK governments and devolved administrations' growing commitment to capacity building. This has been defined as:

- Developing skills – learning and training opportunities for individuals and groups, and sharing through networks and mutual support, to develop skills, knowledge and confidence
- Developing structures – developing the organisational structures and strengths of community groups, communities of interest and networks
- Developing support – developing the availability of practical support to enable the development of skills and structures⁴²

However, we remain concerned that skills training and support for capacity-building is still given low priority in equipping those involved in rural community development. Capacity building is needed as much for policy-makers and professionals, whether employed in the statutory or voluntary sector, as it is for local people.

Two studies we commissioned on skills support for rural community development across Britain and Ireland confirm a patchy picture of provision and quality for local communities and agency professionals alike⁴³. These findings evidence a skills deficit amongst the key players in rural community development work – local activists, specialist community development workers, other service providers, managers and policy advisers.

Question 7. How can we ensure that rural community development skills training and capacity building support is taken seriously by local communities and agencies alike?

⁴² Civil Renewal Unit, Home Office (2003) 'Building Civil Renewal. A review of Government support for community capacity building and proposals for change.'

⁴³ Craig, G., Derounian, J. and Garbutt, R (2005) 'Training for rural community development activists, a report for the Carnegie UK Trust.' Henderson, P and Francis, D (2004) 'Rural Community Development Practice in the UK and Ireland, a scoping paper.'



APPENDICES

APPENDIX i

Carnegie Staff & Consultants

Carnegie Staff

Kate Braithwaite – Director, Rural Programme
Kirsty Robb – Rural Programme Co-ordinator
Steven Thompson- Finance Officer

Carnegie Consultants

Sarah Skerratt, Head of Rural Development and Society Research, Scottish Agricultural College

Trevor Cherrett, Head of Planning, Housing and Transport, Commission for Rural Communities

Gary Craig, Professor of Social Justice, University of Hull

Rhys Evans, Integrate Consultancy

Frank Rennie, Head of Research and Post-Grad Development, UHI Millennium Institute

Philomena De Lima, UHI Policy Web Development Officer / Researcher, UHI PolicyWeb

Paul Henderson, Community Development Consultant, Visiting Professor De Montfort University

Mark Shucksmith, Professor of Planning, University of Newcastle (formally Arkleton Institute for Rural Development Research at the University of Aberdeen)

Lucy Young-Smith, formally Arkleton Institute for Rural Development Research at the University of Aberdeen

James Derounian, Senior Lecturer in Community Development, Department of Natural & Social Sciences, University of Gloucestershire

Nick Lewis, Research Assistant, Countryside and Community Research Unit, University of Gloucestershire

David Francis, Director, Community Council of Northumberland

Tony Bovaird, Governance International

Tara O'Leary, Development Officer, International Association for Community Development

Carol Somper, Land Use Manager, Forum for the Future

External Evaluator

Alan Barr, Director Scottish Community Development Centre

APPENDIX ii

Consultations undertaken by the Commission

Consultation conference at Dartington Hall on 15-16 September 2004 in association with the Big Lottery Fund

Organisations that attended:

Action with Communities in Rural England	Action in Rural Sussex	Association of Charitable Foundations
CEI Associates - Countryside Exchange	Church of England	Co-active
Community Action	Community Action Hampshire	Community Council of Devon
Community Council of Lincolnshire	Community Council of Shropshire	Community Council of Somerset
Community Council of Staffordshire	Community Development Finance Association	Community Futures
Cornwall Inter-Agency Forum for Travellers	Cornwall RCC	Cornwall Youth Service
Countryside Agency	Countryside Alliance	Creative Intelligence
Cumbria Community Foundation	Department of Environment, Food and Rural Affairs	Derbyshire Rural Community Council
Development Trusts Association	Forum for the Future	Gay & Lesbian Friend Helpline Gloucestershire
Gloucestershire Rural Community Council	Government Office for the South West	Heritage Lottery Fund
Highlands & Islands Enterprise	Irish Rural Link	Isle of Wight Rural Community Council
Littoral Rural Arts	Loch Lomond Park Authority	Montor Mon
National Association for Mental Health	National Association of Citizens Advice Bureau	National Association of Councils for Voluntary Service
National Rural Touring Forum	Northern Ireland Rural Development Council	Northern Ireland Rural Development Council
Northern Ireland Rural Development Council	Oak Bank Farm	Partnerships Online
Pembrokeshire Local Action Network for Enterprise & Development	Plunkett Foundation	Project Environment
Rural Regeneration Unit	Rural Youth Network	Scottish Executive
Soil Association	Somerset Rural Transport Partnership	Somerset Rural Youth Project
South East Rural Community Councils	South West RDA	Strategic Promotion of Ageing Research Capacity
Teignbridge District Council	The Anti-Racism Project	The Community Foundation for Northern Ireland
The Countryside Agency	The National Trust	University of Derby College Buxton
University of Gloucestershire	University of Hull	Voluntary Arts Network
Wales Council for Voluntary Action	Warwickshire Rural Community Council	Welsh Development Agency
Wiltshire Country Council	Yorkshire Community Council	

The first Annual Rural Convention in association with the Big Lottery Fund, held on Thursday 31 March 2005 in Cardiff.

Organisations that attended:

Area Development Management	Arthur Rank Centre	Association of Local Voluntary Organisations
Cavan Monaghan LEADER	Community Development Cymru	DEFRA
East of England Development Agency	Economic & Community Regeneration Directorate	Forum for the Future
Gloucestershire Rural Community Council	Headshift Ltd	IRD Duhallow
Irish LEADER Support Unit	Irish Rural Link	Kenagh Co-op Society
Local Government Association	Longford Community Resources Ltd	Meath LEADER
Menter Mon	Mentrau Iaith Cymru	Monaghan Community Network
NACVS	New Economics Foundation	North Antrim LEADER
North South Rural Voice	Oak Leaf Rural Community Network	Plunkett Foundation
Powys Association of Voluntary Organisations	Rural Community Network	Ruralnet UK
Rural Policy Division, Welsh Assembly Government	Rural Regeneration Unit	Ruralcity
Scottish Borders Rural Partnership	Scottish Business in the Community	Scottish Community Development Centre
Scottish Council for Voluntary Organisations	Scottish Crofting Foundation	Scottish Episcopal Church
SCVO Rural Community Gateway	Small Town & Rural Development Group	Staffordshire Moorlands CVS (for NACVS)
Strategic Planning Action Network	University of the West of England	Voluntary Action Orkney
Voluntary Arts Network	Voluntary Arts Wales	Wales Council for Voluntary Action
Wales Rural Development Network / PLANED	Wales Rural Forum	Welsh Development Agency
YouthAction NI		

Europe

Carnegie Commission for Rural Community Development visit to Brussels, October 2004

Hugh Frazer, Social Protection and Inclusion Policies, DG Employment and Social Affairs

Rob Peters (responsible for Rural Development) DG AGRI

Luc Jacobs (responsible for LEADER) DG AGRI

Martin Law, Contact Point, Leader+ Observatory

Graham Meadows, DG Regio

Following the Commission visit to Brussels we organised a 5-jurisdiction debate on the future of EU Rural Development Programmes for senior negotiators in April 2005.

Consultees in Northern Ireland

Community Foundation for Northern Ireland

Community Relations Council

Department of Agriculture and Rural Development

Dungiven Community Resource Centre

Gibson Institute, Queens University, Belfast

Glenullin Resource Centre, Garvagh

Granaghan Community Centre, Swatragh

New Opportunities Fund

NI Council for Voluntary Action

NI Rural Community Network

Policy Reference Group

Rural Community Network

Rural Development Council

Rural Support Networks

Voluntary and Community Unit – DSD

Women's Rural Networks

Workers Education Association

Consultees in Scotland

Ross Finnie, Minister for Environment and Rural Development
 Richard Wakeford, Head of Environment and Rural Affairs, SEERAD
 Cairngorms National Park Authority (LEADER Programme)
 Council for Ethnic Minorities
 David Gass, Scottish Enterprise Borders
 Donna Easterlow, Social Research, SEERAD
 Dr Alan Barr, Scottish Community Development Centre
 Elizabeth Drew, Fife Council – Economic Development Executive
 Frank Strang, Head of Land Use and Rural Policy, SEERAD
 Gigha Heritage Trust
 Gordon McLaren, East of Scotland European Partnership
 Helen Betts Brown, SCVO
 Highlands and Islands Enterprise – including the community development staff working within local enterprise companies.
 Isle of Islay & Jura Community Voluntary Service
 Jane Broderick, Community Planning, Finance & Public Service Reform Scottish
 Jim Carruth, Scottish Centre for Regeneration
 Jim Millard, European Structural Funds, Enterprise Transport & Lifelong Learning
 Jon Harris, Governance and Democracy Team, COSLA
 Juliet Harvey SCVO Rural Policy Team
 Norman Macaskill. SCVO Rural Policy Officer
 Perth & Kinross Council
 Renfrewshire Council
 Robert Kelman, Rural Policy, SEERAD
 Rory MacLeod, Communities Scotland
 Scottish Borders Council
 Scottish Civic Forum
 Shane Rankin, Crofters' Commission
 Southern Upland Partnership – Communities on the Edge Project
 Study visit to Birse Community Trust

Consultees in England

Rural Affairs Minister, Alun Michael
Senior civil servants from DEFRA
'Switch on Shropshire' project
Action with Market Towns
Ashton Hayes Parish Council (village initiative)
Business in the Community
Campaign to Protect Rural England (CPRE)
Cornwall County Council
Crispin Moor and Caroline Cotterel Countryside Agency
Derby & Derbyshire Economic Partnership: Peak District Rural Action Zone (DEFRA East Midlands Rural Pathfinder)
Development Trusts Association
Dorset County Council (DEFRA South West Rural Pathfinder)
East Riding of Yorkshire Council (DEFRA Yorkshire/Humber Rural Pathfinder)
Fiona Burgess on behalf of the English Regional Development Agencies.
Hampshire County Council (DEFRA South East Rural Pathfinder)
Institute for Public Policy Research (IPPR)
James Derounian – CCRU, University of Gloucestershire
Jay Talbot – SWAN and Devon Rural Community Council
Lancashire County Council (DEFRA North West Rural Pathfinder)
Malcolm Moseley – CCRU, University of Gloucestershire
Marcus Sangster – Forestry Commission
National Council for Voluntary Organisations (NCVO)
National Rural Knowledge Exchange
New Economics Foundation
North West Rural Affairs Forum
Nottinghamshire County Council
Paul Tabbush – Forestry Commission
Plunkett Foundation
Renata Rees – DEFRA
Scarman Trust
Shropshire County Council (DEFRA West Midlands Rural Pathfinder)
Shropshire Rural Community Council.
St Martins Centre, the West Fenton project,
Stephen Cane - DEFRA
The Countryside Alliance
The Shropshire Local Strategic Partnership.
Voluntary Arts Network
West Durham/Teesdale (DEFRA North East Pathfinder)
Whittington Castle.
Worcestershire County Council

Consultees in Ireland

Eamon O Cuiv, Minister of Community, Rural and Gaeltacht Affairs
 ADM Rural Development Advisory Committee (OAK Partnership, West Offaly Partnership, Ballyhoura Development Ltd, Pobal, (ADM), Teagasc, Liquori, Mountmellick Development Association, Monaghan Community Network)
 Duhallow Community Food Services in Boherbue
 Banteer Pondfield and Playground projects
 Glen Theatre, Banteer
 IRD Duhallow Board and Staff
 Irish Rural Link Community Groups
 Senior officers from the Department of Community, Rural and Gaeltacht Affairs

Consultees in Wales

Carmarthenshire County Council
 Denbyshire County Council
 Flintshire County Council
 Institute of Rural Health, Kate Mitchinson
 Menter a Busnes, Alun Jones
 Menter Mon LEADER+ Group, Anglesey
 Pembrokeshire County Council
 PLANED, Joan Asby
 Powys Association of Voluntary Organisations (PAVO), Linda Pepper
 Rural Housing Enabler, Gwynedd, Arfon Hughes
 Rural Policy Division, Welsh Assembly Government, Jasper Roberts
 Voluntary Arts Wales, Meic Llewelyn
 Wales Council for Voluntary Action (WCVA), Gwenan Davies
 Wales Rural Forum, Shan Ashton
 Wales Women's National Coalition, Rhian Connick
 WCVA and Carnegie Commissioner, Graham Benfield
 Welsh Assembly Government, Mike Dunne
 Welsh Development Agency (WDA), Endaf Griffiths
 Welsh Development Agency (WDA), Ann Watkin

During the period October 2004 – June 2005 consultative events were held in Mon, Gwynedd, Conwy, Ceredigion, Caerfyrddin, Penfro, Powis, Dinbych, Flint and Wrexham. An all Wales conference to listen to the results of the consultation was held in July 2005. The following organisations participated in this event:

Aberystwyth & Penparcau Communities First	Arts Council of Wales	Awdurdod Datblygu Cymru
Agoriad Cyf	Canolfan y Celfyddydau	Ceredigion Association for Voluntary Organisations
Ceredigion Association for Voluntary Organisations	Celfyddydau GC	Ceredigion County Council
Ceredigion WI	CFfl Cymru/Wales YFC	Community Development Cymru
Conwy County Borough Council	Conwy Key Fund	Conwy Voluntary Services Council
Countryside Council for Wales	Creative Rural Communities	Cymdeithas Tai Eryri Ty Silyn
Cyngor Gweithredu Gwirfoddol Cymru	Cynnal Ceredigion	Dawns Dyfed
Dolhuan	Eco Dyfi	Llandysul & Pont Tyweli Ymlaen
Menter a Busnes	Menter Cwm Gwendraeth	Menter Iaith Conwy
Mentrau Iaith Myrddin	Mid Wales Partnership	Mind out for Music
National Assembly for Wales	Powys Association for Voluntary Organisations	Rural Community Action Monmouthshire
Rural Stress Information Network	Swansea Council for Voluntary Service	Sylfaen Cymunedol Cyf
Theatr Felinfach	University Wales, Bangor	Voluntary Arts Wales
Wales Council for Voluntary Action	Wales Rural Forum	Wales Women's National Coalition
Welsh Language Board		

The Commission Director has made presentations on the work of the Carnegie Commission at the following events:

Action with Market Towns national conference

Business in the Community/ Land for People conference

Development Trusts Association national rural event

IPPR rural conference

Irish Rural Link AGM

National Rural Women's Conference

North West Rural Affairs Forum

Northern Ireland's national rural youth conference

Presentation to voluntary and community sector at Royal Welsh Show, Builth Wells

Rural Community Network AGM

Rural Partnership for Wales meeting

Rural Social Enterprise conference (Plunkett Foundation)

Scottish Borders Rural Partnership

SCVO Rural Services Conference

The International Centre for the Uplands Conference

APPENDIX iii

References

The following reports, papers and publications have also been examined:

ACRE (June 2004) 'Characteristics of Rural Communities.' ACRE Network, London

Age Concern (2004) 'Ageing and the Countryside, conference report.' Age Concern England, London

Age Concern, Help the Aged, DEFRA and the Commission for Rural Communities (2005) 'Delivering for older people in rural areas, a good practice guide.' London

Alan Caldwell Associates (2004) 'Re:sourcebook – planning for your community.' Alan Caldwell Associates, Comrie.

Angus Council (2004) 'Angus Community Plan: Progress report and review 2003- 2004.' Angus Council

Area Development Management (2004) 'The Low Income Smallholder Households Initiative: A Guide to Good Practice.' Area Development Management, Dublin

Barker, Kate (2004) 'Review of Housing Supply Delivering Stability: Securing our Future Housing Needs.' HMSO, London

Beacon Council and Improvement and Development Agency (2004) 'A toolkit for facilitating rural delivery: How to oil the wheels of rural revival.' IDeA, London

Beattie, Bryan et al (2004) 'The Social and Economic Impact of the Arts in the Western Isles: A report for Comhairle Nan Eilean Siar and Western Isles Enterprise.' Comhairle nan Eilean Siar

Berry, Simon (2004) 'Rethinking the future for rural service delivery.' Ruralnet/UK, Warwickshire

Bovaird, Tony (2005) 'Rural Governance- position paper produced for the Carnegie Commission for Rural Community Development.' Carnegie UK Trust, Dunfermline.

Big Lottery Fund Research (2005) 'The New Opportunities Fund and rural Scotland: patterns of funding and response to need.' The Big Lottery, Glasgow

Birmingham Voluntary Service Council (2003) 'Connecting Black minority ethnic people in rural areas- are we doing enough? A community development approach to social inclusion.' NACVS, CDX and FCDL/Ubuntu, Sheffield

Business in the Community (2005) 'HRH The Prince of Wales's Affordable Rural Housing Initiative: Developing new affordable rural housing.' Business in the Community, London

CAB (2003) 'Nowhere to Turn, evidence on the exploitation of migrant workers.' London.

Cabinet Office - Prime Minister's Strategy Unit (2005) 'Connecting the UK: The Digital Strategy.' London.

Cahill, Kevin (2001) 'Who Owns Britain'. Canongate Books

Campaign to Protect Rural England (2004) 'Annual Review 2004.'

Citizens Advice Bureau (2005) 'Supporting migrant workers in rural areas- a guide to Citizens Advice Bureaux initiatives.' Citizens Advice, London

- Combat Poverty Agency (2005) 'Mapping Poverty: National, Regional and County Patterns.' Dublin.
- Commission for Rural Communities (2005) 'Beyond digital divides? The future for ICT in rural areas.' Commission for Rural Communities, London
- Commission for Rural Communities (2005) 'Rural Disadvantage: our first thematic study.' Commission for Rural Communities, London
- Commission for Rural Communities (2005) 'Taking forward our study on rural disadvantage.' Countryside Agency, London
- Commission for Rural Communities (2005) 'The state of the countryside 2005.' Countryside Agency, London
- Community Matters and ACRE (2004) 'Serving your community well', Community Matters and ACRE. London
- Community Matters and ACRE (2004) 'Social and Community Enterprise and the future of Village and Community Halls.' Community Matters and ACRE: London.
- Craig, Gary; Shucksmith, Mark and Young-Smith, Lucy (2004) 'Rural Community Development in Europe, an initial scoping study for the Carnegie UK Trust.' Carnegie UK Trust, Dunfermline.
- Craig, Gary; Derounian, James and Garbett, Ruth (2005) 'Training for rural community development activists in rural UK and Ireland.' Carnegie UK Trust, Dunfermline.
- Craig, Gary; Dornan, Paul and Bradshaw, Jonathan (2003) 'Underwriting citizenship for older people: The impact of additional benefit income for older people.' Working papers in Social Sciences and Policy No 9, The University of Hull.
- Craig, Gary (2004) 'A21CVCS4Y+H: The future contribution of the voluntary and community sectors to the Yorkshire and Humber region.' University of Hull
- Cybermoor (2005) 'Cybermoor: Measuring the benefits, an evaluation of the impacts of ITC in a remote rural community.' Cybermoor, Alston.
- DEFRA (2005) 'Social Enterprise, securing the future'. Make a Difference Publishing Ltd.
- DEFRA (2004) 'Rural services review: Reviewing standards 2004.' DEFRA, London
- DEFRA (2004) 'Rural Strategy 2004.' DEFRA, London
- Department of Agriculture and Rural Development (2005) 'Study on Rural Policy: Final Report.' PriceWaterhouseCoopers, Ireland.
- Development Trusts Association (2004) 'Taking Root; stories of rural community enterprise from the DTA.' DTA, London.
- English Regional Development Agencies (2005) 'Smart Growth. Sustainable Development in the English Regions.' East of England Development Agency
- European Commission (2004) 'Fact sheet: New Perspectives for EU rural development.' Office for the Official Publications of the European Communities, Luxembourg.

Forum for the Future (2005) 'A scoping study on asset-based tools and approaches for sustainable rural areas- interim report to the Carnegie UK Trust.' Carnegie UK Trust, Dunfermline.

Gathorne-Hardy, Fiona (2005) 'Recharging the power of place, valuing local significance.' CPRE, The National Trust and Heritage Link

Geraghty, Teresa; Breakey, Caroline and Keane, Tricia (2004) 'A Sense of Belonging – young people in rural areas of Northern Ireland speak about their needs, hopes and aspirations.' Youth Action Northern Ireland, Belfast

Henderson, Paul and Francis, David (2004) 'Rural Community Development Practice in the UK and Ireland, a scoping paper.' Carnegie UK Trust, Dunfermline.

Highlands and Islands Enterprise (2004) 'A smart, successful Highlands and Islands: An enterprise strategy for the Highlands and Islands of Scotland.' Highlands and Islands Enterprise, Inverness

Hyde P, Davies HTO (2004) 'Service design, culture and performance in health services: consumers as co-producers.' *Human Relations*;11:1407-26.

Institute of Rural Health (2005) 'Rural Health Research Report Series Issue 1: A review of the literature: Measurement issues in rural health.' Welsh Assembly Government, Cardiff

Institute of Rural Health (2005) 'Rural Health Research Report Series Issue 2: A review of the literature: Access and service models in rural health.' Welsh Assembly Government, Cardiff

Institute of Rural Health (2005) 'Rural Health Research Report Series Issue 3: A review of the literature: Social Inclusion in rural areas.' Welsh Assembly Government, Cardiff

International Centre for the Uplands (2004) 'Community-based Activity in the Uplands: Opportunities and Limits.' Cumbria

IRD Duhallow (2005) 'Annual Report 2004- 2005.' IRD Duhallow

Irish Rural Link (2004) 'Annual Report 2004.' Irish Rural Link

Jackson, Annabel (2003) 'Doing It Ourselves: Learning to Challenge Social Exclusion through Voluntary Arts.' Voluntary Arts Network, Cardiff

Jones, Nick (2004) 'Case studies in good practice in arts development in rural areas of the North West of England.' Arts Council England, Manchester

Kingsnorth, Paul (2005) 'Your Countryside, Your Choice' Campaign to Protect Rural England

Kretzmann, John and McKnight, John (1993) 'Building communities from the inside out: A path toward finding and mobilizing a community's assets.' ACTA Publications, Chicago

Langelaan, Corrina (2004) 'An Entrepreneurial Countryside: An FSB report into the state of small businesses in the rural economy.' FSB, London

Learning Connections, Communities Scotland (2004) 'Illuminating Practice: Case studies in community learning and development.' Learning Connections Communities Scotland

Lewis, Euros (2005) 'Community Education and the development of sustainable Welsh speaking communities.' The 2005 Marie James Memorial Lecture

Lima, Philomena de (2001) 'Needs Not Numbers: An Exploration of Minority Ethnic Communities in Rural Scotland.' Community Development Foundation

Lima, Philomena de. (2003). 'Mapping Rural Racism.' Commission for Racial Equality.

Littoral Arts Trust (2004) 'Investing in Rural Creativity: New Rural Arts Strategy: A proposed arts and cultural sector response to the new Rural Strategy 2004 report, DEFRA.' Littoral Arts, Lancashire.

Matarasso, Francois (2004) 'Only Connect: Arts touring and rural communities.' Comedia, Nottingham

Mathie, Alison and Cunningham, Gord (2002) 'From Clients to Citizens: Asset-Based Community Development as a Strategy for Community-Driven Development.' The Coady International Institute, St Francis Xavier University, Canada

Mitchell, Stewart (Feb 26, 2006) 'Losers in Broadband Technology.' The Sunday Times.

Moseley, Malcolm (2000) 'Innovation and Rural Development: Some Lessons from Britain and Western Europe.' Planning Practice & Research, Vol 15, Taylor and Francis Ltd

Moseley, Malcolm (2003) 'Rural Development, Principles and Practice.' Sage Publications, London

Moseley, Malcolm; Derounian, James and Lewis, Nick (2004) 'Rural Community Development Policy and Funding in the UK and Ireland, a scoping paper for the Carnegie UK Trust.' Carnegie UK Trust, Dunfermline.

NCVO & The Countryside Agency (2004) 'Changing Landscapes: The Future for Rural Voluntary Action, conference report.' NCVO & The Countryside Agency

New Economics Foundation (2005) 'Proving and Improving; a quality and impact toolkit for social enterprise.' NEF, London

New Economics Foundation (2005) 'Public Spending for Public Benefit - How the public sector can use its purchasing power to deliver local economic development.' NEF, London

Nichols, Claire (2005) 'Beacon Towns: The story continues.' The Countryside Agency, Cheltenham

O'Hara, Patricia (1998) 'Action on the Ground: Models of Practice in Rural Development.' Irish Rural Link, Galway City

Osborne, Stephen; Beattie, Rona & Williamson, Arthur (2002) 'Community involvement in rural regeneration partnerships in the UK: Evidence from England, Northern Ireland and Scotland.' The Policy Press, Bristol

Pavis, S; Platt, S and Hubbard, G (2000) 'Young people in rural Scotland: Pathways to social inclusion and exclusion.' Joseph Rowntree Foundation

Pickering, Jon (2003) 'Innovative Methods of Service Delivery in Rural Scotland: A Good Practice Guide.' Good Practice to Rural Development No. 8' Scottish Executive. Edinburgh

PLANED (2004) 'A guide to developing and supporting community led sustainable tourism'. PLANED, Pembrokeshire

PLANED (2004) 'Creating a culture of entrepreneurship, valuing local people.' PLANED, Pembrokeshire

PLANED (2004) 'Valuing Communities, a community led approach to local development.' PLANED, Pembrokeshire

Plunkett Foundation (2005) 'News, view and reviews, Rural Social Enterprise in the UK press review, 2004/2005'. Plunkett Foundation

Policy Commission on the Future of Farming and Food. (2002) 'Farming and Food: a sustainable future.' The Crown Office.

Postwatch Scotland (2004) 'The future of the rural Post Office network in Scotland- seminar report.' Postwatch Scotland

Rennie, Frank (1987) 'Popular Education for Change: Report to the Arkleton Trust on a visit in April/May 1986 to The Highlander Research and Education Centre, Tennessee, USA.' The Arkleton Trust, Oxford

Rural Community Network (NI) (2004) 'Ageing and Rural Poverty.' RCN, Cookstown.

Rural Community Network (NI) (2004) 'Annual Report 2003-2004.' Rural Community Network

Rural Regeneration Cumbria (2005) 'New Landscapes: A strategy for delivering successful and sustainable economic growth in rural Cumbria.' Rural Regeneration Cumbria

Scottish Centre for Regeneration, Communities Scotland (2004) 'Creating a learning landscape: A skills framework for community regeneration.' Scottish Centre for Regeneration, Communities Scotland, Glasgow

Scottish Community Development Centre (2000) 'Learning and Evaluating and Planning, a handbook for partners in community learning.' Scottish Community Development Centre, Glasgow

Scottish Council for Voluntary Organisations (2004) 'Annual Review 2003-04.' SCVO

Scottish Enterprise (2004) 'Ambitious for Rural Scotland.' Scottish Enterprise

Scottish Executive (2005) 'What can we do to help community councils fulfil their role? A discussion paper.' Scottish Executive, Edinburgh

Scotts, Margie (2005) 'Community development and information technology: International case studies Volume 2.' Working Papers, University of Hull, Hull

Sheil, Helen (1997) 'Building Rural Futures through Co-operation- Study Circle Kit.' The Centre for Rural Communities Inc, Monash University, Australia

Sheil, Helen (2003) 'Growing and Learning in Rural Communities.' The Centre for Rural Communities Inc, Monash University, Australia

Shucksmith, M (2000) 'Exclusive Countryside? Social inclusion and regeneration in rural Britain.' Joseph Rowntree Foundation, York

Shucksmith, M (2003) 'Social Exclusion In Rural Areas: A Review of Recent Research , report to DEFRA, Countryside Agency and ESRC.'

Soil Association (2005) 'Annual Review 2005.' Soil Association, Bristol

Soil Association (2005) 'Cultivating Co-operatives: Organisational structures for local food enterprises.'

Soil Association, Bristol

SQW Ltd (2005) 'ICT in England's Rural Economies.' DEFRA. London.

Steel, Claire; Jochum, Veronique and Eliot, Jake (2005) 'Regional Structures: Rural Issues- the impact of regionalisation on the rural VCS.' NCVO, London

Swindlehurst, Helen (2005) 'Rural Proofing for Health: A toolkit for primary care organisations.' Institute of Rural Health, Powys

Task Force on Resourcing the Voluntary and Community Sector (2004) 'Investing Together report.' Task Force secretariat, Belfast

The Arts Council for Wales (2005) 'The Arts Work: Facts and Figures 2005.' The Arts Council for Wales.

The Community Foundation for Northern Ireland (2004) 'Annual Report 2003-2004.' The Community Foundation for Northern Ireland

The Countryside Agency (1999) 'Tomorrow's Countryside- 2020 vision: The future of the countryside and the Countryside Agency's role in shaping it.' The Countryside Agency, Cheltenham.

The Countryside Agency (2000) 'State of the Countryside Report.' The Countryside Agency, Cheltenham.

The Countryside Agency (2001) 'Frontier Economics.' The Countryside Agency, Cheltenham.

The Countryside Agency (2003) 'Rural Economies: Stepping stones to healthier future.' The Countryside Agency, Cheltenham

The Countryside Agency (2004) 'Planning for vital communities: Good practice in linking parish plans, market towns and community plans.' The Countryside Agency, Cheltenham

The Countryside Agency (2004) 'Rural Proofing in 2003/04: A report to the Government by the Countryside Agency.' The Countryside Agency, Cheltenham

The Countryside Agency (2004) 'The state of the countryside 2004.' The Countryside Agency, Cheltenham

The Countryside Agency, Age Concern, the Plunkett Foundation and PRIME (2004) 'Rural Lifelines, older people and Rural Social Enterprises: Their role as providers and beneficiaries of social provision in rural England.' The Plunkett Foundation, Woodstock

The Countryside Agency, DEFRA, Office of National Statistics, ODPM and Welsh Assembly (2004) 'The rural classification for England and Wales.'

The National Community Learning Training Programme (2000) 'Making Changes.' Community Learning Scotland, Edinburgh

University of Gloucestershire (2005) 'The Future of Services in Rural England - a Scenario for 2015.' University of Gloucestershire

Voluntary Arts Wales (2004) 'Monitoring and evaluating your arts event- Why Bother – a book of ideas and encouragement.' Voluntary Arts, Powys

Voluntary Arts Wales (2004) 'Worth making a song and dance about: Case studies of exemplary voluntary and community arts projects in Wales.' Voluntary Arts, Powys

Welsh Assembly Government (2005) 'The Affordable Housing Toolkit- consultation draft.' Welsh Assembly Government

Welsh Development Agency (2004) 'Working for rural Wales.' Welsh Development Agency, Swansea

Welsh Local Government Association (2004) 'Regeneration not stagnation, a manifesto for rural Wales.' WLGA, Cardiff

Wales Rural Observatory (2005) 'A Survey of Rural Services in Wales.' Wales Rural Observatory

Yates, H (2002) 'Supporting Rural Voluntary Action.' National Council for Voluntary Organisations.

APPENDIX iv

Overview of recent developments relating to rural policy

In 2004 the Carnegie UK Trust commissioned the University of Gloucester to produce a scoping study for the Commission on EU and domestic policies affecting rural community development in Britain and Ireland.¹ This was updated in February 2006 to include the main contextual changes relating to government policy, institutions and funding. Here we note the most significant trends, related to rural policy emanating from the European Union and the five jurisdictions.

European Union

In terms of agriculture and land use, the EU's Common Agricultural Policy is the biggest influence shaping people's lives in rural economies across Europe. It is perhaps ironic therefore that the debate about what is going on in terms of CAP reform generally is still all but invisible. The 'Strategic Guidelines' for the new Rural Development Regulation and 2007-2013 European Programmes have now been agreed by the EU and member governments, and the ball passed to national governments to fashion their respective programmes. DEFRA is working with the administrations in Scotland, Wales and Northern Ireland to develop the UK application of the Regulation. Each jurisdiction has or is now consulting on the content of programmes. In Scotland for example, The Scottish Executive Environment and Rural Affairs Department (SEERAD) team charged with developing the Scottish Rural Development Plan has conducted a series of meetings, focus groups and workshops in order to ascertain stakeholder preferences in terms of funding, strategy format, and programme structure. DEFRA launched its consultation for England on 27th February.

The Rural Development Regulation will see the establishment of a new fund, the European Agricultural Fund for Rural Development (EAFRD), with simpler financial rules. There will be three priorities for spending; agricultural and forestry competitiveness; land management; and wider rural development. From the perspective of the remit of the Carnegie Commission, the plan to strengthen of the role of LEADER (funding for local action groups in rural communities) is a significant feature of the new Regulation. This should complement the impressive rural community development work we have seen, for example in both rural Ireland and Wales through the current LEADER+ programme. The new Rural Development Regulation presents an important opportunity to further develop a strategic approach to the delivery of wider rural regeneration.

England

The Haskins Review of Rural Delivery has led to significant change in England, with the creation of the Commission for Rural Communities in 2005 as a 'strong voice for the people, communities and businesses of rural England with a particular focus on tackling rural disadvantage.' The Natural Environment and Rural Communities Bill will also create 'Natural England', with responsibility for integrated resource management, nature conservation, biodiversity, landscape, access and recreation. Another outcome of the review is the decentralisation of delivery to regional or local level. For example much of the socio-economic work formerly undertaken by the Countryside Agency has now passed to the regional Government Offices and to the Regional Development Agencies. Many concerns have been expressed to us about the ability of Regional Development Agencies to design successful rural development programmes that meet communities' needs at the local level. Commissioners consider this new role for Regional Development Agencies to be of vital importance and in over the coming months we shall seek to work more closely with the English RDAs in this regard.

Scotland

There has been recent re-organisation within The Scottish Executive Environment and Rural Affairs Department (SEERAD) establishing a Rural Group, within which are a Rural Development Team and a Rural Communities Team. The Rural Communities Team's responsibilities cover rural policy, land reform and crofting. This suggests that rural community development now has a much clearer focus within the department.

Northern Ireland

A major study of rural policy in Northern Ireland, commissioned from consultants PricewaterhouseCoopers and published in 2005 seeks to provide a broad strategic direction for rural development policy in Northern Ireland over the period 2007- 2013. There was a common view that the Northern Ireland Department for Agriculture and Rural Development's primary role in rural development required a more integrated approach with other Government Departments, allied to a strong case for Government funding to complement EU initiatives and a vigorous 'rural proofing' agenda.

Wales

In July 2004, the Welsh Assembly Government outlined their vision for the shape of governance in Wales, with the incorporation the major rural development 'quangos' (the Welsh Development Agency, the Wales Tourist Board and ELWa-National Council) directly into the Assembly Government from 1st April 2006. This suggests a concern to direct rural development policy by the Welsh Assembly Government.

Ireland

The Establishment of the Department of Community, Rural and Gaeltacht Affairs in the Republic of Ireland brought together various sections from four different departments, which formally had responsibility for community and rural development into a single department with a senior minister. This has paved the way for a more cohesive approach to rural community development.

Community planning

In all of the jurisdictions there is a growing emphasis on effective local governance and community planning is now a policy imperative across the UK. Under the Local Government Act (2000), County and County Borough Councils in England and Wales have a duty to prepare Community Plans to support and strengthen the economic, social and environmental welfare of their areas and to promote sustainable development. In Scotland the Local Government in Scotland (2003) Act has placed a duty of community planning on local authorities and a duty to participate in the community planning process on partner organisations.

In England, one element of this is the promotion of 'Local Area Agreements' whereby local authorities are permitted to determine the deployment of certain central government funding in their areas, as a means of delivering the area-wide 'Community Strategies' that they and their local partners have been creating in recent years. Another manifestation of the government's devolution agenda envisages the empowerment of communities below local authority level (so called 'double devolution').

In Northern Ireland the conclusions of the review of Public Administration have been announced. Seven local authorities will replace the current 26 by 2009 and it is proposed that the delivery of rural regeneration and community planning will be important responsibilities of these new councils.

In Ireland the White Paper, Towards Better Local Government, paves the way for a more consultative approach by local authorities. Central to this policy is the formation of County Development Boards comprised of elected local authority members, state agencies, local LEADER and social inclusion groups and voluntary sector and the other social partners. This county Development Board structure has drawn up a 20-year development strategy for each county.

APPENDIX v

Rural Action Research Programme

In support of the work of the Commission, Carnegie UK Trust has established working groups, each supported by staff and consultants to take forward six themes. Detailed action research plans are currently being finalised and partner organisations contracted. There will be a high level of exchange of ideas and information. This work is co-funded by Big Lottery.

While the pace at which the six Rural Action Research Programme themes work will vary, the links and joint activities that emerge will be maximised. To facilitate this process, the Carnegie plan to hold working conferences and seminars at which the findings of the action research themes can be shared. Further details of this developing programme is available on the rural pages of Carnegie UK Trust website www.carnegieuktrust.org.uk

The six themes are:

1. Involving rural residents in community planning

The Commission believes that community planning is potentially a powerful route to secure community-led work. Since community planning is intended to improve the connections between those at regional, local and neighbourhood levels, with the aim of enhancing the quality of people's lives and the delivery of services, this facet of the work of partnerships is of critical importance. There is much to be done to improve the quality, reach and connectiveness of community planning in all five jurisdictions. But of even greater concern, in relation to the remit of the Commission, is the very varied picture of effectiveness with regard to the capacity of community planning partnerships to seriously engage the active participation and interest of local people. This is an area that still requires a considerable investment of time and energy by such partnerships. This action research project is focussing attention on several pilot areas to demonstrate ways of improving the capacity of agencies, public, private and non-governmental to work with communities in ways that are inclusive and empowering.

2. Addressing skills development for those involved in rural community development

Given the different roles of key stakeholders in rural community development – local people, community development workers, other professionals, policy-makers and funders – there is a need to support their different learning needs in more systemic ways. The scope for the five jurisdictions to collaborate on ways of meeting the needs identified is considerable. Carnegie has established a consortium of leading training experts in this field across Britain and Ireland and is working closely with the UK's Lifelong Learning Sector Skills Council on reviewing standards for community development learning. The consortium is currently undertaking an assessment of the learning needs of four key target groups: members of community groups, professional community development workers, other professional practitioners working in and with rural communities and policymakers, managers and funders. The consortium aims to improve the exchange of good practice across the five jurisdictions and will examine the feasibility of establishing centres of excellence for Britain and Ireland to support rural community development practice and skills development and to achieve a recognised currency of training qualifications.

3. Developing sustainable management of community assets

Here the Commission's concern is to explore the potential for expanding opportunities for community-owned assets such as land and buildings. Inseparable from this aim is the growing challenge of generating new wealth creation and income streams. Community asset ownership is still at a relatively early stage. Further work is required for example around the extent to which current patterns of land ownership inhibit or stimulate rural community development. Carnegie has commissioned Forum for the Future and the International Association for Community Development to undertake in-depth research into asset-based community development approaches in Britain, Ireland and internationally. We are also working closely with the Commission for Unclaimed Assets and Ministries such as the ODPM.

4. The needs of remote and peripheral rural areas, with reference to young people and those involved in vulnerable occupations

The situation of young people and those in vulnerable occupations in these areas are of particular concern to the Commission. This action research programme will seek to identify and engage with processes that add value and sustainability to natural and local resources. It will have a particular focus on the potential of culture to contribute to economic, social and environmental development and the integration of sustainable land management practices in the wider rural economy.

5. Building inclusive communities

Several linked issues will be addressed by this programme, the existence of excluded communities and groups, notably the position of migrants, asylum seekers and refugees and of members of black and minority ethnic communities including travellers. We are also working with the New Economics Foundation around issues of financial exclusion. Identifying models of good practice for rural community development around these concerns is of critical importance. Carnegie will also be working with the Commission for Rural Communities and with the Young Foundation and the University of Oxford to explore different ways of understanding and measuring need and social exclusion.

6. Developing models of community led service provision in rural areas

The detailed knowledge and understanding of people in rural communities should inform the assessment of priorities undertaken by service providers. This action research project will take a broad approach where the provision of services means that they are commissioned, planned, managed or delivered by the community, and where services enhance the wellbeing of local people. We believe that there is much scope for the co-production of local services and we are also working closely with Professor Tony Boviard at Governance Internationale on identifying and developing models of good practice.



Progress Report - PART TWO



Fiery Spirits: Rural community development in action - commentary and DVD

List of case studies

Birse Community Trust, Banchory, Scotland
Gigha Heritage Trust, The Isle of Gigha, Scotland
Growing Well, Cumbria
Keswick Business Improvement District, Cumbria
Rural Futures and Fell Farming Traineeship, Cumbria
Theatr Felinfach, Ceredigion, Wales
EcoDyfi, Powys, Wales
Hands That Talk, Derry, Northern Ireland
Broughshane District Community Association, N Ireland
IRD Duhallow, Cork, Ireland
The Wayland Partnership Development Trust, Norfolk
Hopes of Longtown- Independent Village shop, Herefordshire
Community Council of Devon, Exeter

Drive. Imagination. Passion. Compassion. A fiery spirit. In every significant rural community development project around Britain and Ireland, there are certain human qualities that shine out again and again. Commitment. Energy. Love. Positivism. Left-field thinking. In every case of a local community doing amazing things, it all comes down to that handful of charismatic individuals who say: 'We can do this.' The study of rural community development encompasses a myriad issues: processes and structures; global influences; byzantine funding streams; and a spider's web of local, national and European bureaucracy. Vital as these things are to enable and facilitate, they are meaningless in the absence of that spark: the human desire to change; to grow ones own community for the benefit of all.

Preserving a community is about persuading young people not to emigrate to the cities. About creating art and music that means something. It's about helping local businesses increase turnover; protecting farming; building affordable houses; and integrating disabled and minority groups into day-to-day life. It could be something as simple as starting a local shop or teaching people the basics of sustainability: how to install a small wind turbine, how to insulate, how to plant trees. At a spiritual level, it's about love and respect and hope. Perhaps the only golden rule in this hugely diverse field is that it cannot be successfully imposed from above. In its most effective, durable form rural community development is a bottom-up thing; organic; rooted in the hearts of the people themselves.

This DVD features groups in rural areas who are doing some of the most inspirational things in the Britain and Ireland today. The case studies of best practice show just what it is possible to do if there is a collective will. They are examples to teach us much and make us all, perhaps, a little humble. Collected here are 13 schemes from around the British Isles: two in Northern Ireland, six in England, two in Wales, one in Ireland, two in Scotland. In size and scope and subject, the projects differ enormously. But all share common threads.

Theatr Felinfach, in Ceredigion, is an extraordinary place, an independent centre that has reinvigorated the heart of the community, engaging young and old alike, developing confidence and identity through the performing arts. Like all the featured projects, this is an innovative solution that suits the area. It is not, say its administrators, about doing 'arts' stuff: instead, it is about taking part in the community, allowing local people to realise invisible economic and cultural ties. '*Anything is possible,*' says one of the leaders. Magic words. And so the centre empowers children through drama, teaching them a sense of shared responsibility for themselves and their community. Theatr Felinfach is now recycling young people back as community leaders. '*This was my place of escapism,*' says one young woman, speaking of her schooldays. Significantly, as a young adult, she has chosen not to escape, but to stay.

Successful communities are those that embrace their minority elements. Several of the case studies illustrate how this positive process strengthens both those who are embraced, and those who do the embracing. At Hands That Talk, in Dungiven, Northern Ireland, deaf people have been uniquely integrated into the community. At the Growing Well project, near Kendal in Cumbria, pleasing metaphors can be found between the commercial nurturing of organic produce and the re-growth of confidence in the employees, people recovering from mental ill health. Meanwhile, at IRD Duhallow, in Cork, similar synergies can be found in the way that people with disabilities and others disadvantaged in the job market, are employed in a food centre producing meals on wheels, baking and home catering. Thus is the social infrastructure shored up. It's win-win.

When it comes to bold and original thinking, one would be hard pressed to beat the business savvy of Keswick. Home to 5,000 people, Keswick is the first and only rural town in the UK to have a Business Improvement District a economic device usually intended to solve inner city problems. *'We'll have a slice of that,'* said Keswick's business champions, and against all the odds they organised themselves and got it. BID status there is being used as a mechanism for rural regeneration: the money they have won is being spent on an effective lobby group to represent business; baby changing facilities; marketing the town; and Christmas lights. The glue of everyday life. As John Walker, one of Keswick's driving forces puts it: *'one of the biggest lessons we learnt is that as a tiny community no one really speaks for you. We found a way to help our town.'*

Self-help. It is a recurring theme. New life and prosperity has come in the same way to the island of Gigha, off the west coast of Scotland. In the last 30 years the population had halved to under 100. But rather than accept decline passively, the 'fiery spirits' on the island decided to fight back, using new opportunities offered by the Scottish Land Fund. The leap of faith was huge. The islanders bought their wild green place, seven miles long and one a half miles wide, engaged the funding streams, and set in place an inspirational social revolution. Gigha is a minor miracle. The population is back up to 130, affordable houses are going up, businesses are starting, local people are returning. The community is united. *'There's positives everywhere,'* says Willie McSporran. *'The seeds are now sown and they're growing.'*

A common theme in successful rural community development is sense of place; of commitment to the landscape. From the achingly beautiful seascapes of Gigha, we travelled to the Cumbrian fells to discover a project, which has the potential one day to be widely used to preserve fragile hill farming communities. Farming was precarious enough before the foot and mouth outbreak of 2001: in its wake, isolated hill farming communities reeled from the trauma and the business disruption. Despite the beauty of the surroundings, the National Trust, a major owner of fell farms, struggled to find tenants. Young people looked towards more viable careers. The hills were in danger of emptying. Agencies, coordinated by Fell and Dales LEADER +, came up with the idea to recruit six young trainees to work with clusters of farmers and learn the trade. The outcome was excellent. Over a year, the youngsters not only proved invaluable to the farmers, they also fell in love with the job. All now want to stay on in some capacity. One of the most heart-warming sights on our DVD is the face of Edward Liddle, a fell farming trainee: young, ruddy-cheeked and enthusiastic, talking of what the scheme has done for him. *'You learn respect, you can pass it on to young people,'* he says. And so social good cascades. But the fell farming traineeship scheme also highlights a recurrent, but far less welcome theme in rural community development the lack of consistent funding and the time-consuming bureaucracy involved in accessing it.

This pilot scheme was a great success, but no money is available to repeat it, let alone mainstream it. Instead, organisers must try and wangle funding for something similar from DEFRA. Countrywide, the frustration born out of having to negotiate a multiplicity of funding streams, the time it takes to research them and fill in forms, plus a lack of continuity in funding, mean that many exciting projects will never get off the ground. Those that do manage it, however, demonstrate another truth about re-energising communities, which is that the most successful always build on what they have got. They are rooted.

In the case of Broughshane District Community Association, in Country Antrim, the image is appropriate. Roots, shoots, flowers and tubers are central to this remarkable community centre, which is home to 25 affiliated groups and a huge amount of horticultural expertise. The centre has won environmental Oscars for everything from Ulster in Bloom to Europe in Bloom. Their motto is *'People, plants and pride, growing together.'* In fact, the idea of the centre was first conceived more than 30 years ago, using an old potato factory to get young people off the street. There are now 1800 members, 1000 volunteers who have worked over 1 million hours in a voluntary capacity and the centre is regarded as a flagship for rural community development in Northern Ireland. The centre has promoted relationships and communication between all age groups. Many of the community projects have targeted the most vulnerable older people, children, young parents, the unemployed and farmers. *'If we can do it, other groups can do it,'* says Valerie Blake, the development manager. *'You must work with everyone. We were lucky, we did that with plants.'*

Deep in Powys, an organisation called EcoDyfi is also carving out a niche market, theirs being green in a different way. EcoDyfi's local regeneration is achieved through developing sustainable energy schemes. Acting as a bridge between local people and the council, they have helped establish small schemes with water and wind turbines (including the UK's first community-owned and developed turbine), and solar and wood-fuel sources. They aspire to create a 100% renewable energy supply in the community. Sustainability, or self-sufficiency, is also a driver for the Birse Community Trust, in Banchory. The trust's area covers 50 square miles, which contain only 270 households. During the trust's first seven years it restored half a dozen important local buildings, set up a unique water mill and is directly involved in managing over 2,500 acres of land. The trust is an unusual but effective business model: significantly it makes no use of volunteers other than its trustees, thus avoiding any competition with local groups. Secondly, it raises no money from within the parish but draws money in from outside and pays for all its work to be carried out. Thirdly, it contracts all work to local contractors. Birse is currently trying to address the issue of interrupted funding by buying woodland planted 50 years ago, from which it hopes to generate a sustainable annual income.

Another project with a big canvas, in reality as well as aspiration, is the Community Council of Devon, an independent charitable company founded in 1961. It has 900 members, including the principal statutory and voluntary organisations in the county. The CCD is by far the largest of the projects we looked at, and is a facilitator of smaller schemes. It has a vision and a mission to realise that vision, working directly with communities to influence structure, planning and regeneration. Experience has taught the administrators, however, what their most precious asset is. As the Chief Executive says bluntly: *'It's people who make things happen.'* The Wayland Partnership Development Trust, in Norfolk, is another regeneration project focusing on the market town of Watton and 13 neighbouring parishes, which for some years have been vulnerable to deprivation because of a downturn in the local economy. The partnership now has a presence on the High Street, four full-time and two part-time staff, and has enabled a variety of innovative and successful community projects. The Trust's aim is to help its partners help themselves, as seen in the village project of Ashill, whom the Trust has just supported through the agonies of raising £40k plus to build an extension to their call-in centre.

Sometimes a project hinges upon one remarkable person. At Longtown in Herefordshire, one such woman is Christine Hope, the owner of the independent village shop. If you could bottle Christine's drive and sell it, you would be rich indeed. *'People pick up on your enthusiasm,'* she says modestly. Christine came home from travelling just when the local shop was closing in 2001. The nearest alternative outlet was six miles away; the nearest supermarket ten miles. She wanted to stay in the area, but had no assets and a graduate loan to pay off. Quite simply, this fiery spirit went for it. Someone gave her £500; she borrowed the same again. She got an overdraft facility for £10,000 and set up shop. She did the job so well, and with such zest, that in the first year the turnover was just under £200,000, with sales up 48%. She's created employment, given an outlet for local suppliers, offered a vital community service, and has created a hub that promotes tourism and local businesses. *'I just had an energy that this was going to happen,'* she says. Maybe, in the end, rural community development is actually as straightforward as that: the power of being positive. Christine has the remarkable knack of making things simple and then making them happen, for the benefit of the whole community. Hers is the kind of dynamism common to every one of the 13 projects. Our job is to nurture and cherish it.

THANKS

Carnegie UK Trust would like to express its sincere thanks to the following people for giving their assistance and time so generously for the production of this DVD.

Robin Callandar and the members of Birse Community Trust

Lorna Andrew and the members of Gigha Heritage Trust

Beren Aldridge and the people of Growing Well

John Walker, Keswick Business Improvement District

Geoff Brown, Cumbria Fells and Dales LEADER+ Programme

William Rawling, Brian Armstrong and Eileen Simpson, Rural Futures

Joe and Hazel Relph, Yew Tree Farm

Edward Liddle, Fell Farming trainee

Dwynwen Lloyd Evans, Euros Lewis, Carys Mai Lloyd, Jennifer Thomas and the members of Theatr Felinfach

Andy Rowland, EcoDyfi,

Dorothy Hegarty and the members of Hands That Talk

Valerie Blake, Broughshane District Community Association

Maura Walsh and the staff of IRD Duhallow and the Community Food Service

Jan Godfrey and the staff of The Wayland Partnership Development Trust

Christine Hope and the staff of Hopes of Longtown shop

Jay Talbot, Andrea Leplae and the staff of Community Council Devon

Anna Penkala and the parents and children from Wagtails Workshop

FIERY SPIRITS DVD

With Commentary



Commission for Rural Community Development
Fiery Spirits: Rural community development in action - DVD

DVD produced by WeeFlee Productions © 2006
www.weeflee.com
T: 0131 476 5388
E: info@weeflee.com



The Carnegie Commission for Rural Community Development invites responses to the questions raised in this report by 1st September 2006. This can be done by registering onto our website and logging your comments - www.carnegieuktrust.org.uk



CHANGING MINDS • CHANGING LIVES

**Commission for Rural Community
Development
Carnegie UK Trust
Head Office
Comely Park House
80 New Row
Dunfermline
KY12 7EJ**

**t: 01383 721445
e: kirsty@carnegieuk.org
www.carnegieuktrust.org.uk**