



RURAL  
SERVICES  
NETWORK

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NETWORK and  
SPARSE

# RURAL SERVICES NETWORK and SPARSE

- Ribble Valley Borough Council (RVBC) are the only Lancashire Borough or District Local Authority to be eligible for membership of SPARSE.
- RVBC have been members for over 20 years.
- Previously to attend meetings meant a trip to London for a 2-hour meeting.
- Using Zoom: Average attendance now 120, before 20 Local Authorities.
- Now take advantage by expanding to include rural towns and villages.

## HENCE THIS PRESENTATION

(Source RSN Website)



# WHAT IS THE RURAL SERVICES NETWORK (RSN)?

## The National Voice for Rural Areas.



- RSN is a Special Interest Group of the Local Government Association
- National champion for rural services.
- Shares best practice and rural expertise among members.
- The RSN has different levels of membership and currently represents:
  - 92 Local Authorities in Sparse Membership
  - 22 Local Authorities in Rural Assembly Membership
  - 216 Organisations across England as part of the Rural Services Partnership
  - 232 Rural Market Towns and Larger Parishes.

## LOCAL AUTHORITY MEMBERS – SPARSE (RIBBLE VALLEY IS A SPARSE MEMBER)

- Most sparsely populated local authorities.
- RSN campaigns for fairer funding for public services in these rural areas.
- Revitalising Rural: challenge Government on policy areas that affect rural communities.
- Represents rural Local Authorities campaigning for fairer funding for Rural Areas.
- Government should produce a comprehensive long term and funded Rural Strategy.
- RSN have developed a Template Rural Strategy.



## A RURAL MARKET TOWN GROUPING OF THE RSN (CLITHEROE AND LONGRIDGE TOWN COUNCILS ARE MEMBERS)

- RSN is creating a Rural/Market Town Group for rural towns which are the meeting place or service centre for their adjacent rural areas.
- Services provided:
  - Weekly edition of the Rural Bulletin.
  - Monthly Funding Digest.
  - Involvement in RSN Consultation Programme.
  - Dedicated Rural Market Town Group newsletter.
  - Free access to the Rural Services Network Seminar Programme.
  - Twice - yearly meeting of the Rural Market Town Group (via ZOOM).
  - Yearly meeting of the Rural Market Town Group Clerks (via ZOOM).
  - Cataloguing of good practice and learning material.



# NEW RURAL VILLAGE GROUP

- Parishes in rural areas (generally population size of 1,500 or above) containing a central village or villages from which local services (for instance shop, post office, pub, church, village hall) flow to the population of the parish.
- Over 17% of the English population live in rural areas, about a quarter live in rural villages.
- Starting the recruitment process across Parish Councils.
- Period of free 'no obligation' membership to introduce parishes into the group who can decide after that period if they wish to continue.
- Important that the village services case is made time and again - need to achieve as much joined up thinking and working as is possible.



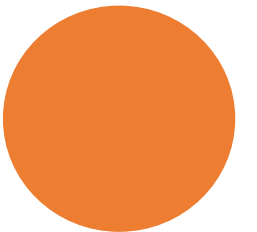
# RURAL VILLAGE GROUP - SERVICES PROVIDED

- **A Weekly Rural Bulletin:** Rural News, Member Insight, Economic Profiling, Spotlights on Economy & Housing, Hinterland, Analysis/Commentary Pieces, Week in Parliament
- **A Monthly Funding Digest & Government Consultations:** with funding and grant opportunities, along with relevant Government Consultations related to rural areas.
- **A Rural Village Group (RSVG) Newsletter:** bi-annual newsletter - rural transport, broadband, affordable housing.
- **Area Profiles:** of your Principal Council (RVBC) issued once a year - key statistics to give overall picture of local area to help plan services and understand local issues.
- **Engagement and Involvement in RSN Campaigns.**
- **Involvement in the RSN Consultation Programme:** responding to Government Consultations, White Papers, Calls for Evidence and Select Committee Inquiries.



# RURAL VILLAGE GROUP SERVICES (Contd..)

- **Annual Rural Village Services Group (RSVG) Meeting:** dedicated for discussions of key strategic issues facing rural villages across England. This meeting would also involve discussions on Rural Vulnerability and Utility Company services.
- **Annual Rural Poll:** seeking to establish the top 5 issues currently facing Rural Village Group members across England.
- **Facilitating Member Networking on a National Economic Level:** through more joint working, networking with the goal of tackling most relevant rural challenges, seeking solutions and improvement.
- **Young People:** To facilitate work in key areas, members may nominate a representative interested in young people in their rural area, who may be contacted to gather specific views and evidence throughout the year to support national campaigning.





# Rural Villages Services Group

## What will it cost?

RSN will give a period of free 'no obligation' membership (ends 31 March 2022) to introduce parishes into the group and they can decide after that period if they wish to continue.

## Proposed fees after March 2022 – based on population.

- £70 per annum plus VAT for Local Councils of up to 2,750.
- £80 similarly plus VAT p.a. for Local Councils with 2,750 to 5,000.
- £90 plus VAT for parishes above 5,000.



# RURAL VILLAGE GROUP – ELIGIBILITY



Size of Parish the RSN is looking to join the group.

| Village                    | Size  |  | Village               | Size  |
|----------------------------|-------|--|-----------------------|-------|
| Aighton, Bailey & Chaigley | 1,249 |  | Billington and Langho | 4,555 |
| Chatburn                   | 1,104 |  | Chipping              | 1,046 |
| Clayton-le-Dale            | 1,142 |  | Mellor                | 2,126 |
| Read                       | 1,383 |  | Ribchester            | 1,535 |
| Sabden                     | 1,371 |  | Simonstone            | 1,152 |
| Whalley                    | 2,645 |  | Wilpshire             | 2,569 |

Parish Councils not in the Rural Village Group are entitled to a Rural Associate Service.

This entitles them to receive the Rural Bulletin (weekly) and the Rural Funding Digest (monthly) free of charge. Associates **are not** entitled to receive any other RSN services but Bulletin & Digest should enable them to keep up to date with key rural news and issues relevant to rural areas.

**Can I have a show of hands of how many of the Councils present are interested in joining.**

Interested or require additional information

Email: [david.inman@sparse.gov.uk](mailto:david.inman@sparse.gov.uk)

Call: 01822 851370

Visit: [rsnonline.org.uk/](http://rsnonline.org.uk/)

