**RURALITY ISSUES IN NORTH AND NORTH EAST LINCOLNSHIRE**

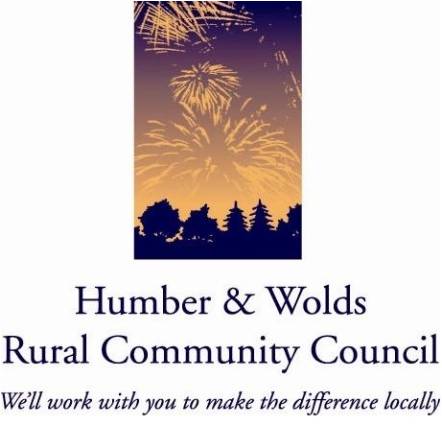
**Gaps, Hotspots and Local Priorities 2010**



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**Executive Summary**

The Report covers the rural areas of North and North East Lincolnshire, bringing together information from a wide variety of sources, national, regional and local. The purpose is to inform the work of the Northern Lincolnshire Rural Partnership and the newly appointed Rural Officer, by producing an up-to-date rural evidence base for North and North East Lincolnshire that identifies current needs and gaps in services and support to these rural areas.

**Population trends (inc. Migration)**

Comparing the latest population estimates with the 2001 census, there has been a small rise in the rural population of Northern Lincolnshire, 4% in North Lincolnshire, 3% North East Lincolnshire.

* **An Ageing Population**

The smaller villages of North East Lincolnshire e.g. Hatcliffe (where there are only 14 young people aged under 15 years, and 67 people aged over 45 years out of a total population of 116) or East and West Ravendale (where there are only 14 young people aged under 15, but 139 people aged over 45 years out of a total population of 194).

In North Lincolnshire retired residents dominate in Haxey, Saxby-All-Saints and East Halton, making up more than 40% of all households in these parishes (Fordham Research, 2009).

* **Migrant workers**

In line with the national picture, little is known about the numbers of migrant workers in the area. It is clear that few are living in the rural areas of Northern Lincolnshire but little evidence is available about how many are employed, on basis or whether numbers are increasing or decreasing.

**Service needs**

In North Lincolnshire the northern parishes of North Axholme Ward, are predominantly those most isolated from services, Garthorpe and Fockerby being about 7 miles from the nearest shop, GP Surgery, library etc. Public transport is perceived as infrequent, expensive and not meeting local needs, though transport providers advise that services provided are based on the demand in such areas.

In North East Lincolnshire the southern villages of Wolds Ward are most lacking in services, these are also the smallest villages with the most ageing populations. For some public transport is non-existent, which can pose as a greater difficulty for the communities accessing services, including shops and GP surgeries.

In both areas local small businesses (shops, pubs etc) serving these communities are closing due to expensive rental charges and greater running costs. The experiences of a number of rural local businesses is that services cannot feasibly run (and make profit) in rural areas given a lesser demand from rural communities. Large numbers of those living in rural areas commute to work and will more frequently pop into a superstore on the way home citing cheaper goods and more product choice as the benefits to buying in towns. However approximately half of all the rural communities do still have a post office or a shop and there are a handful of examples of post office services being delivered part time via village halls or other community facilities. Rural pubs face the same challenges with greater running costs (more expensive rent and greater fuel charges) and smaller numbers of potential customers (lower populations in rural areas, higher numbers of older people who do not frequently visit a pub).

**Deprivation issues**

While for the most part the rural areas of northern Lincolnshire are more prosperous than the urban areas there are areas of deprivation, particularly in the towns of Barton and Immingham, both of which have areas of deprivation equal to those in the larger towns.

* **Affordable Housing**

In North Lincolnshire the annual need for affordable housing has been calculated at 493 homes, in North East Lincolnshire the need is for 57 new affordable homes. The areas of highest need are Crowle and Ealand, Broughton, Winterton, Kirmington and Croxton. Rural areas can have additional challenges to implementing affordable rural housing through concerns such as greater flood risk and sometimes challenge from community members who resist development within the area. For example, Luddington in the North Axholme ward needs 8 affordable homes though planners will not build in the area given the greater flood risk.

* **Fuel Poverty**

In North Lincolnshire, Axholme North Ward is one of the 5% of rural areas that expereince the most fuel poverty in the country with a number of areas relying on oil for heating and houses being more expensive to heat. In North East Lincolnshire the southern part of Wolds Ward, (the villages of Wold Newton, East and West Ravendale, Beelsby and Hatcliffe) suffers the highest levels of fuel poverty.

**Current economic picture**

Unemployment is still lower in rural areas than in urban ones but, in line with the trend, have approximately doubled in all rural wards. There are however some areas where concerns are great and within North Lincolnshire unemployment remains highest in Barton, Burringham and Gunness and North Axholme Wards, in North East Lincolnshire the Immingham Ward has comparatively higher levels of unemployment.

Business Link advise that the rural areas have large numbers of small businesses, three quarters of which have fewer than 5 employees, mainly working in the agricultural, construction and property and business services sectors. There are a small but growing number of social enterprises which, anecdotally, have proved resilient to the recession.

**Current skills needs**

The local authorities have commissioned more detailed research into the skills needs in their areas which will be available soon. The major gaps identified here have been the need for skilled workers for the industries along the Humber Bank where due to competition there have been difficulties in both recruitment and retention.

**Community Led Plan Local Priorities**

As there are about 70 communities, (villages, smaller settlements and market towns) across the rural areas of northern Lincolnshire, there are a multitude of local priorities reflecting the differences between villages and towns. However some of the main themes coming out of existing parish plans, consultation exercises, parish councils etc. are:

* Children and young people – varying from the need for play facilities and youth “clubs” to dealing with anti-social behaviour
* Traffic/parking – everything from worries about lorries driving through villages to access industrial areas to parking on verges
* Flooding – issues arising from the floods of 2007
* Transport – the need for available, affordable, flexible transport to services
* Preserving the Rural Environment – ensuring that new developments are “in keeping”
* Local jobs
* Community facilities

1. **Introduction**

The purpose of this report is to inform the work of the Northern Lincolnshire Rural Partnership and the newly appointed Rural Officer, by producing an up-to-date rural evidence base for North and North East Lincolnshire that identifies current needs and gaps in services and support to these rural areas. The evidence collected and collated will focus on: how these rural communities access, or not, the services they need; whether the services are available and the transport links within and to these areas. The report brings together what we already know about rural areas in northern Lincolnshire through existing data and previous research work undertaken at ‘village’ level which identifies gaps in knowledge and information.

**Background Information**

The rural areas of northern Lincolnshire stretch from the Isle of Axholme in the west to Humberston on the outskirts of Cleethorpes in the east. It is diverse in its make up with areas of agriculture, suburbs, commuter villages and along the Humber Bank docks, oil refineries and heavy industries.

There are approximately 70 communities, ranging from markets towns like Barton and Brigg to villages which are little more than hamlets like Hatcliffe in North East Lincolnshire and Amcotts in North Lincolnshire. Some of these communities are close to towns and have good links to services while others are more isolated.

**Methodology**

The timescale of this research has meant that it has primarily been an exercise in collating and interpreting existing information rather new primary research. The approach taken has included:

* Desk research, identifying and review existing rural information, strategies, plans and policies (both local and national) and collating them appropriately in the context of this research;
* Liaison, consultation and joint working with other organisations and staff, including representatives from the local authorities, voluntary sector and private sectors;
* Consultation with rural community groups, forums, parish councils and strategic bodies;
* Analysis of community including developing rural ward level directories of community organisations, facilities and services.

Interim findings were fed into the Northern Lincolnshire Rural Conference on 22nd March 2010.

**Rural Partnerships Plus**

Celia Wangler is employed as the Rural Partnerships Plus Northern Lincolnshire Development Worker, the project is funded by the Big Lottery.

1. **Issues – Synopsis of Existing Data**
2. **Population Trends (inc. Migration)**

In North East Lincolnshire 8,610 people live in rural areas, 5.4% of the total population for the area, in North Lincolnshire the rural population is 83,280, 52.0% of the total population.

This section looks at changes in population, including: inward and outward migration;migrant workers; and issues such as ageing populations.

Comparing the latest population estimates with the 2001 census, there has been a small rise in the rural population of Northern Lincolnshire, 4% in North Lincolnshire, 3% North East Lincolnshire.

However, populations do in many ways remain unchanged this is demonstrated through 56% of the rural population of North Lincolnshire having lived in the same parish for at least 10 years (Fordham Research, 2009).

**Migrant Workers**

*“There is general recognition that official statistics on migration are inadequate and need to be improved, particularly at a local level.”* (Institute for Community Cohesion, 2007).

Information about immigrant workers in rural areas of North and North East Lincolnshire is sketchy to say the least.

The latest Office of National Statistics (published February 2010) states that: between 2004 and 2009, 2,700 migrants have settled in North and 3,100 in North East Lincolnshire. Information about where exactly within the authority people have settled is more difficult to ascertain, and comes from sources such as school registrations which only identifies those who have children of school age. There appears to be no information about migrants who may have left the area. From information available (e.g. school registrations) very few migrant workers are living in the rural areas. There may be some small pockets of migrant workers such as those who are working (and living) at the Winteringham Fields Restaurant, in North Lincolnshire.

There are however, migrant workers who are living in urban areas, where accommodation is cheaper (quite possibly including those who are living in neighbouring authorities) who travel to work in rural businesses and agriculture, perhaps on a seasonal basis.

There is evidence from other neighbouring areas such as the East Riding that many migrant workers have returned to their home countries leaving gaps in the labour force for some agricultural and food production businesses, who are not able to recruit local labour at the lower rates paid to migrant workers. It is not clear whether this is happening in Northern Lincolnshire. The migrant workers registration scheme shows that in North Lincolnshire 8% are registered as working in agriculture but none in North East Lincolnshire.

**Ageing Population**

The ageing of the rural population is a national issue. This is categorised through young people tending to move out of rural areas for reasons including lack of affordable housing in rural areas, distance from jobs and education, and the attraction of urban lifestyles, returning when they reach middle or old age. Likewise, previously urban residents often view the countryside as an attractive place to retire or move to when they have children of school age for what is perceived to be a better quality of life.

Older people residing in rural areas often encounter difficulties in accessing services. Travelling to centralised services is not an option for many older people, through either lack of access to their own transport or the high cost of it, as well as sparser public transport. As they become frailer and require increased support and access to care services, most will eventually have to leave the countryside unless the community can provide care. Younger people leaving the rural areas can mean that there will be no one to care for their elderly relatives who are in need, placing a greater burden on health and social care services. This is further exemplified through the East Riding report which highlights the difficulties in sourcing domiciliary care for rural areas. (\*)

Both North and North East Lincolnshire have slightly higher proportions of older people living in rural areas than in urban. In north East Lincolnshire 5.4% of the population is rural but 6% of people of pensionable age live in rural areas, and in North Lincolnshire 52 of the population is rural but 55.2% of people of pensionable age live in rural areas.

In the whole population of North East Lincolnshire,19.4% of the population is aged 15 or under and 20.4% is made up of men aged 65+ and women 60+. In North East Lincolnshire only Immingham, Healing and Barnoldby-le-Beck have smaller populations of older people.

This is most marked in the smaller villages of North East Lincolnshire e.g. Hatcliffe (where there are only 14 young people aged under 15 years, and 67 people aged over 45 years out of a total population of 116) or East and West Ravendale (where there are only 14 young people aged under 15, but 139 people aged over 45 years out of a total population of 194). The small numbers of children in this area is particularly surprising given there is a thriving primary school in East Ravendale.

In North Lincolnshire the there is a similar picture with 18.6% being 15 or younger and 21.2% being of men aged 65+ and women 60+. In North Lincolnshire Keadby, Flixborough, Cadney & Howsham, and Manton have smaller populations of older people. In North Lincolnshire overall 28.0% of households contain older person(s) only and 25.8% contain children. Retired residents dominate in Haxey, Saxby-All-Saints and East Halton, making up more than 40% of all households in these parishes (Fordham Research, 2009).

**Access to** **Services**

This section looks at the issues of access to services, including gaps in services and barriers to accessing services.

The Index of Multiple Deprivation (2007) identifies a number of areas of North Lincolnshire as being in the 10% most deprived areas for access to services nationally. These are: the northern villages of North Axholme ward (Garthorpe and Fockerby, Luddington, Estoft and Amcotts, is listed as being the 350 most isolated in the country); Bonby and Elsham; Roxby, Low Risby and Appleby; Owston Ferry and West Butterwick; Cadney; and East Butterwick and Manton. This is borne out by the North Lincolnshire Rural Affordable Housing Needs Survey, carried out by Fordham Research and commissioned by North Lincolnshire Council (2009),which contains detailed information about villagers’ perceptions of their ability to access services.

Rural communities may be some miles from services whihc are vital to everyday wellbeing, and those services and businesses which exist , e.g. shops or pubs,often play a vital role in the community providing much more than their core service. They are often the hub of a small community providing information and meeting places.

They are are however privately run businesses, with the aim of providing a living for their owners. They are now competing with supermarkets, which are cheaper and have a wider selection of goods on sale. For those people with access to a car the loss of a shop or post office may be a minor inconvenience, but for those who do have access to car it will mean the loss of easy access to essential goods as well as the loss of a community hub.

**Shops**

Half of all parishes (35) have at least one village or grocery shop though there has been a marked decrease in rural shops over more recent years. This is largely due to such shops finding it difficult to compete with supermarkets, given the comparatively low prices and the increased number of village dwellers who commute to urban areas for work. As such rural shops are finding it increasingly difficult to ensure sufficient business to continue in operation.

“...*households in Garthorpe and Fockerby were most likely to have difficulty in accessing grocery shops, whilst households in Messingham were most likely to find it easy to access these types of shop.”* (Fordham Research, 2009, p.79)

The impact of an increasing number of rural shops closing has lead to a number of properties being at a significant distance to a shop. This is highlighted through Garthorpe and Fockerby, in the northern part of North Axholme Ward, which are approximately 7 miles from the nearest shop, with the village shop having closed about two years ago.

**Post offices**

In recent years a number of rural post offices have closed, due to difficulties in making them economically sustainable given low population numbers using local post offices for postal and banking services.

... *“households in Garthorpe and Fockerby were most likely to record difficulty in getting to a post office, whilst households in New Holland were most likely to find it easy.”*  (Fordham research, 2009, p.81).

Just over half of all parishes (38) still have a post office, although some are very part time. Experience has proven that this has been found to be a more viable way of sustaining a service in a rural area.

***Solutions***

*A number of post offices in villages are now part time, some for as few as two hours a week and run from other community facilities such as village and church halls e.g. Eastoft, Alkborough*

**Banking**

Banks are limited to the urban areas of Scunthorpe, Grimsby, Cleethorpes and Immingham and the market towns of Barton, Brigg, Epworth and Waltham, although there are ATMs in shops in some villages, there are greater difficulties for those residing in rural areas accessing cash and this can create a need for planning and having more cash in the home.

... *“households in the parish of Wroot were most likely to record difficulty in getting to a bank/building society, whilst households in Flixborough were most likely to find it easy.”* (Fordham research, 2009, p. 83)

**Health Services**

Doctors’ surgeries are most often found in rural towns which means travel either via public or personal transport is vital without asking the doctor to visit in the home. This difficulty typically impacts more over in the elderly who may no longer drive and struggle to travel via public transport.

... *“households in the parish of Garthorpe and Fockerby were most likely to record difficulty in getting to a doctor, whilst households in Kirton in Lindsey were most likely to find it easy.”*  (Fordham Research, 2009, p.87)

“*Overall a hospital is the facility which is least accessible to households in rural North Lincolnshire....* *households in the parish of West Halton were most likely to record difficulty in getting to a hospital, whilst households in Gunness were most likely to find it easy.”* (Fordham Research, 2009, p.89)

To address challenges in gaining vital medical help some rural areas have seen the introduction of the LIVES (Lincolnshire Integrated Voluntary Emergency Services) charity providing first response training to individuals to deal with emergencies, this has proven particularly useful in rural areas where times to hospitals are longer and time can have an impact. The LIVES charity has established groups across Northern Lincolnshire, including Scartho and Immingham in North East Lincolnshire and in nine rural areas in North Lincolnshire including Ulceby and Wooton, Crowle, Epworth/ Owston Ferry and Barrow.

**Education and training**

Access to education and training can prove more difficult for those residing in rural areas given that educational facilities such as schools and colleges tend to be in the most densly populated areas.

Adult education have sought to outreach to more rural areas through operating in rural towns and in some village halls where a service has generated sufficient demand to be sustainable, though it should be recognises that this is more often in the more densly populated rural areas and often through residents in other villages/ parishes travelling through particular interest.

... *“households in the parish of Amcotts were most likely to record difficulty in getting to a school/educational or training facilities, whilst households in Flixborough were most likely to find it easy.”* (Fordham Research, 2009, p.91)

**Leisure and recreation**

... “*households in the parish of East Halton were most likely to record difficulty in getting to leisure facilities, whilst households in Epworth were most likely to find it easy.*” (Fordham Research, 2009, p.85)

All but the smallest of villages has a village hall or church hall providing some leisure/recreational services to the community, but the number and type of activity varies widely. Some village halls, often in the more populated rural areas will host classes and meetings of groups or associations.

There has been some work in recent years through Northern Lincolnshire’s Leader programme to increase and improve parks in many villages though this has been sporadic and is dependent on the village/ parish highlighting a desire to improve facilities through the application process.

**Participatory Appraisals**

In 2007 VANL was commissioned by North Lincolnshire Council to undertake participatory appraisals in 9 wards across the authority, most of which were rural. These involved talking to local people about their views of their communities and what were the gaps in the service provision in their communities. VANL asked the communities about health services and transport issues.

**Dentistry**

The appraisal of North Axholme identified access to dentistry as problematic. The only local dentist was in Crowle and the surgery was only open for two four hour sessions per week.

**Transport**

Transport needs for rural communities are complex, when there are no essential services within walking distance people must travel by car or public transport to go to work, education, use shops or health services, this fits with a high number of the rural populations in Northern Lincolnshire.

People in rural areas travel more miles compared to the English population overall. Small communities cannot support the range of jobs and services that more urban populations enjoy. Traditional public transport is often uneconomic because of the small number of people wishing to use it and is therefore either infrequent and/or expensive. For those people who are able to use and afford a car, transport is in many ways not an issue, they have the ability to travel to whatever services they need though there are additional costs to individuals associated with this method of transport as well as a greater environmental impact. The cost of transport for rural people does contribute to a higher cost of living and to rural poverty.

The underlying issues/ concerns are, however, clear:

* What happens to people when they no longer have access to a car; either due to ageing, disability or changes in their financial circumstances, or for young people who cannot afford one?
* The higher carbon footprint of rural communities caused by higher car usage;
* Also there tends to be higher levels of road accidents in rural areas.

The smaller more isolated communities are least served, for instance:

* The villages of Brigsley, East Ravendale and West Ravendale are served by one bus route running twice daily from Monday to Friday. On Saturday there is only one service and on Sundays there is no service at all. It would just be possible to use this service to get into Grimsby for a “9 to 5” job but would give very little flexibility for someone who had other needs.
* The villages of North Axholme Ward are on a regular bus route between Goole and Scunthorpe and are about equidistant between the two, but the last bus leaves Goole at 4pm.

Public transport to the more isolated and smaller communities is problematic, in terms of providing a service which meets the varied needs of the community at an affordable price while also providing a service which is viable for the service provider. There are some schemes in the area to alleviate these issues for instance voluntary car schemes, dial a ride type schemes and community transport. The issue must be to ensure that these meet the real needs of rural people, whether these are getting people to and from work, education, leisure activities or enabling them to access basic services such as health services or shops. This means that schemes need to be flexible and responsive. In some cases the numbers of people needing transport are far too small to make service economically viable, it maybe that communities may need to find some of the answers themselves through identifying local issues and developing local small scale solutions such as car sharing, volunteer drivers etc.

In North East Lincolnshire, the larger communities, which are closer to the urban areas, are well served with regular public transport, local shops and services. The smaller villages are further from the towns, with fewer or non-existent public transport and few community facilities. For instance Brigsley is served by a bus that runs twice daily and has no village shop, pub or post office. The smaller villages in Wolds Ward, such as East and West Ravendale, are smaller still with no or few transport links, non-existent community facilities and an ageing population.

**Solutions**

*Humber and Wolds Rural Community Council run a number of Transport Schemes in Northern Lincolnshire including:*

* ***Wheels to Work*** *which provides low cost scooter hire*
* ***Voluntary Car Service*** *– trained volunteers provide low cost lifts to people in need*
* ***Transport Solutions*** *is a community vehicle brokerage service based in North Lincolnshire. It has access to 12 community vehicles*

*(Humber and Wolds Rural Community Council, 2007)*

**Digital Inclusion**

Use of the digital media has become vital to successful business functioning, education and social inclusion. For some people the broadband access will fill some of the gaps caused by isolation from other services: the need for local shops and banks are reduced by the easy availability of internet shopping and banking; communication (both social and business) can be carried out by email and applications such as Skype or Facebook; education can be backed up by internet based research; government services (everything from taxing your vehicle to jobs search and healthcare diagnostics) and can be accessed easily online; and entertainment obtained by downloading films rather than trips to the cinema.

However, all this only works if the correct infrastructure is in place. Both broadband access and mobile phone signals can be problematic in some rural areas. Installing the necessary infrastructure can be expensive and customer density is low, making installation unprofitable

The Commission for Rural Communities, 2009, study “*Mind the Gap: Digital England – a rural perspective*” concludes that although the true picture of broadband access is unclear there are a significant number of villages which are distant form their exchange making access difficult and that rural areas are not well covered by the market , in urban areas cable access is widely available giving fast broadband access, this is rarely available in rural areas.

*Approximately three-quarters of rural internet users say they use the internet for transactions; this is higher than the UK average of 69%.*

*Those in rural areas are also more likely to watch films or television online, because other forms of entertainment such as live music, theatre and cinema are not as accessible or available.*

*Currently, the incidence of rural home working is as much as three times greater than for urban areas. Most rural businesses are also small and medium sized enterprises (SMEs) – a key source of innovation and rural wealth creation. Many would be forced out of business or have to relocate if adequate and competitive broadband provision was not available. Many rural businesses are already adversely affected by inadequate broadband connectivity and the negative effect of the digital divide is increasing. Collectively, the greater the negative impact on rural business, the greater the impact on the country’s economy as a whole.*

*Rural areas have seen enormous benefits from existing digital access:*

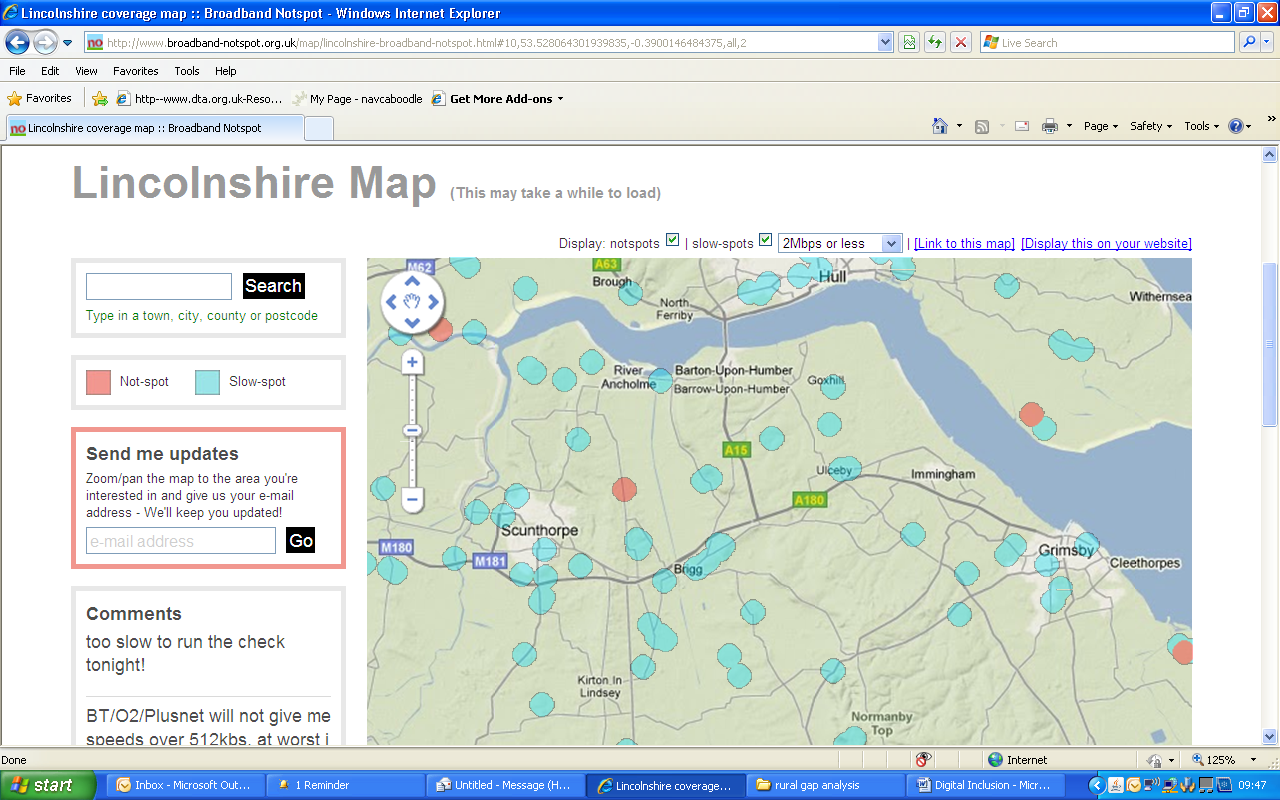
* *businesses have relocated to villages and market towns from urban areas for business owners and employees to enjoy a better quality of life;*
* *people have moved out of cities on the basis they can work from home, continue to access public services and shop online; and*
* *rural manufacturers and retailers have tapped into worldwide markets,*

*generating new sales.*

*Broadband has helped to slow down a migration from rural to urban areas and brought new jobs and businesses into rural areas. Economically active rural residents have supported local shops and schools, helping to safeguard rural services.*

Commission for Rural Communities, 2009, Mind the Gap: Digital England – a rural perspective

The “Not-spot” website (<http://www.broadband-notspot.org.uk>) allows people to report and map areas with no broadband access (not spots) and areas with slow access. The map below shows the reports in North and North East Lincolnshire, the blue spots being areas with slower than 2Mbps.



With the increasing importance of broadband both to economic and social wellbeing and the emergence of new and previously unforeseen uses of the technology, being left without adequate access will further disadvantage already disadvantaged and isolated communities. The roll out of next generation access (the *Digital Britain* report proposed that this should cover 90% of households by 2017).

The Government’s 2010 report, “*An assessment and practical guidance on next*

*generation access (NGA) risk in the UK*”, identifies areas which are at risk of not digital exclusion. These it says are primarily defined by deprivation and distance. In Northern Lincolnshire it primarily identifies the smaller and more isolated villages, (Garthorpe, Luddington, Eastoft, Elsham, Worlaby, Bonby, Saxby All Saints, South Ferriby, East Halton, North Killingholme, South Killingholme, Thornton Curtis, Ulceby, Howsham and Cadney) being at risk of low levels of service even at 95% roll out.

1. **Deprivation issues**

The countryside suffers from the misconception that on the whole they are better off in economic and well-being indicators. Nationally more than 900,000 rural households - one in five - are classed as in income poverty and the percentage of rural population living under the poverty line is rising. Poverty in rural areas is more dispersed than in urban areas and national statistics for what constitutes poverty don’t take into account the higher costs which some rural communities incur. So while very few of the most areas nationally are rural the proportion of people in rural areas who live in poverty is higher.

Income poverty in rural areas can result from low wages, low pensions, or lack of employment. Work is sometimes not sufficient to exit poverty because of low pay and low number of hours worked. The average full time wage is somewhat lower in rural areas and with changes to rural industry and demands wages are increasingly becoming reduced for rural workers and redundancy is becoming more frequent. What’s more, half of the rural households in Britain live below the official poverty line; these are households where someone is in work. A quarter of rural households living in poverty are pensioners on the basic state pension. There are additional costs linked to life in rural areas, including low incomes, inability to access services and higher costs of living. People experiencing poverty are further disadvantaged by the extra costs of transport in accessing essential services and the costs of heating older, less fuel efficient homes.

While for the most part the rural areas of Northern Lincolnshire are more prosperous than the urban areas, there are areas of deprivation. Particularly in the towns of Barton and Immingham, both of which have areas of deprivation equal to those in the larger towns within the counties.

The Index of Multiple Deprivation lists 5 areas of rural North Lincolnshire as being in the 30% most deprived areas nationally: the Teanby Drive, De Lacy Way, Stovin Crescent area of Winterton; the Keadby area of North Axholme ward and the Caistor Road Estate, Providence Crescent/Baysgarth Park, and Maltkiln Road areas of Barton. Additonally it also indicates that Bridge Street/Bigby Street/Market Place area of Brigg is is in the 30% mosxt income deprived areas and also suffers from high levels of health and disability issues and is in the 10% most deprived of education, skills and training.

**Affordable Housing**

The information in this section comes from the work of the Humber and Wolds Rural Community Council Rural Housing Enabler and the Affordable Rural Housing Report from Fordham Research for North Lincolnshire Council (2009).

In North Lincolnshire the annual need for affordable housing has been calculated at 493 homes (Fordham Research, 2009, p. 68).

*“Crowle and Ealand has the highest number of households in need (110), representing 13.5% of all households in need in rural North Lincolnshire, followed by Winterton and Broughton. ...Kirmington and Croxton contained the highest proportion of households in need (7.5% of households in this parish were in need), followed by East Butterwick (6.1% of households).* (Fordham Research, 2009, p.68).

In North East Lincolnshire, with its smaller rural area, there is little social housing, particularly in the smaller villages. What social housing there is, is concentrated in Laceby and Stallingborough. Surveys carried out by the Humber and Wolds Rural Community Council Rural Housing Enabler for Northern Lincolnshire indicate that there is currently a need for 73 new affordable homes in the North East Lincolnshire region. There are however additional challenges with building affordable new homes taking time and sometimes being prevented by additional factors such as flood risk or challenges in identifying suitable building locations.

**Solutions**

*The Humber and Wolds Rural Community Council Rural Housing Enabler project works with local authority planning and housing strategy teams, local developers, landowners, housing associations and parish councils to identify areas of housing need and potential sites where small developments of affordable housing for rent or sale can be built.*

*To date, the Rural Housing Enabler Project has achieved success in several villages, 77 homes have now been built in Epworth, Westwoodside, Goxhill, Owston Ferry, Kirton-in-Lindsey, Ulceby, Laceby, Hibaldstow, West Butterwick and Wroot, with several more potential schemes in the pipeline.*

(Humber and Wolds Rural Community Council, 2007)

**Fuel Poverty**

*“The average annual cost of heating a three-bedroom semi-detached house in October [2009] was £1,164 on gas mains, £1,758 using oil and £1,789 with LPG, according to National Energy Action (NEA),...rural households are twice as likely to be in fuel poverty - where 10 per cent or more of income goes on energy bills - than those in urban areas.*

*Households that use heating oil have to buy it upfront and in large quantities. The minimum amount is usually 500 litres, currently at a price of about 40p per litre - that is £200.”* (Atherton, 2010)

Rural areas of Northern Lincolnshire are affected by fuel poverty as there are substantial areas are without mains gas and/or have solid walled properties which are harder to heat.

Axholme North Ward in North Lincolnshire is in the top 5% of rural areas that experience the most fuel poverty in the Country (Commission for Rural Communities). This is a consequence of a mixture of lower incomes, having a high proportion of properties which are off mains gas (Centre for Sustainable Energy) and over 50% of properties with solid walls (Centre for Sustainable Energy, 2010).

Likewise in North East Lincolnshire the southern part of Wolds Ward, (the villages of Wold Newton, East and West Ravendale, Beelsby and Hatcliffe) have over 76% of solid walled properties (Centre for Sustainable Energy, 2010) and are off mains gas (Centre for Sustainable Energy).

Being off the mains gas and having solid walled properties make energy more expensive to source and the need to heat the property for longer to feel any warmth.

While there are plans for biomass plants and combined heat and power schemes little seems to have been put into place for domestic use in the most isolated and fuel poor rural areas. Domestic biomass is expensive to install but may result in some savings, this would however be on a long term basis. Anecdotally, the number of homes in Northern Lincolnshire, having wood burning stoves installed is on the increase due to increases in the cost of heating with oil.

The new feed in tariffs[[1]](#footnote-1) may present opportunities for installation of renewable energy sources (including solar photovoltaic, solar thermal, and wind generation) in isolated areas, but the start up costs ( a 2kWp solar PV system will cost between £8,000 and £14,000[[2]](#footnote-2)) are high, making it outside the range of the those households most in need.

***Biomass***

*“Costs for a standalone [wood burning] stove are around £3,000 including installation. A typical automatically fed boiler for an average home costs around £9,000 including installation and installing a suitable flue. Manually fed log systems are slightly cheaper.*

*Savings in CO2 emissions are significant - up to 9.6 tonnes per year when a wood boiler replaces a solid (coal) fired system.*

*Fuel savings are less significant, and if you replace a gas heating system with a wood burning system you may end up paying more for your fuel. But if you replace solid or electricity you could save between £170 and £410 per year.”*

<http://www.energysavingtrust.org.uk/Generate-your-own-energy/Wood-fuelled-heating>

**Solutions**

* North Lincolnshire Council worked with Community Energy Solutions to install air source heat pumps in homes in North Axholme ward to reduce heating bills
* In Alkborough a local resident has organised a “bulk buy” scheme for heating oil for over 20 years. There are now over 100 households involved in the scheme, saving on average £20-30 per delivery, with 4 or 5 deliveries a year.

**4. Current Economic Picture**

**Unemployment**

Rates of unemployment for the UK rose dramatically between January 2008 and January 2009 and continue to rise. Unemployment is still lower in rural areas than in urban ones but, in line with the trend, it has approximately doubled in all rural wards. The national rate is 7.8, none of the rural wards have a rate exceeding this, Immingham comes closest with a rate of 7.2.

Within North Lincolnshire unemployment remains highest in Barton (rate 5.8), Burringham and Gunness (rate 5.2) and Axholme North (5.1) Wards, in North East Lincolnshire in Immingham Ward (7.2).

The table in appendix 3 shows the number of Job Seekers Allowance claimants by ward, for January 2007 to 2010.

What these figures do not show is the number of workers who have not lost their jobs but who may have had their hours or rates of pay cut. Anecdotally with additional strains placed on rural businesses there has been an increase in the number of rural employees who have had their hours and wages cut, this has a further effect on issues such as fuel poverty and challenges in sustainability for rural shops and businesses. This is further demonstrated through numbers of people approaching local agencies for advice and support in starting their own business has increased, many of them seeing this as a last resort.

**Rural Business Picture**

Considerable work has gone into ensuring that the area retains and attracts large employers, particularly along the Humber Bank, in order to retain diverse and sustainable economy there needs to be a diverse range of businesses and skills to support these businesses.

Large, international corporations are more prone to move to another area or country where costs are lower, or to jettison branches far from the centre when times are hard, whereas smaller local businesses may be more committed to the local picture.

The latest Office of National Statistics business demography show business “births” and “deaths” for 2008, and shows authority wide figures. The businesses are predominantly small, employing less four people and this is borne out by the fact that most are not VAT registered. Below is the count of active businesses in 2008, (Office for National Statistics, 2009):

|  |  |  |  |  |  |
| --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- |
|  | **Employment** | **Band** | **Size** |  |  |
|  | **0 – 4** | **5 - 9** | **10 - 19** | **20 +** | **Total** |
| North East Lincolnshire UA | 4,200 | 680 | 335 | 265 | 5,480 |
| North Lincolnshire UA | 4,080 | 670 | 315 | 285 | 5,350 |

Births of new enterprises in 2008

|  |  |  |  |  |  |
| --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- |
| North East Lincolnshire UA | 1,050 | 45 | 10 | 5 | 1,110 |
| North Lincolnshire UA | 505 | 40 | 5 | 5 | 555 |

Sadly numbers of business “deaths” follow a similar pattern:

|  |  |  |  |  |  |
| --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- |
| North East Lincolnshire UA | 975 | 60 | 20 | 5 | 1,060 |
| North Lincolnshire UA | 475 | 35 | 10 | 5 | 525 |

The five year survival rate for businesses in the region is:

|  |  |  |
| --- | --- | --- |
| North East Lincolnshire UA |  | 46.1 |
| North Lincolnshire UA |  | 48.3 |

While the national rate is 46.6.

There are something like 4,500 (numbers are approximate because the statistics were published approximately a year ago) rural business either registered for VAT or PAYE. These are predominantly (more than 75%) small, employing four workers or fewer. The main sectors in which these operate are; agriculture, construction and property and business services.

There is also a small but growing network of social enterprises across the area, co-ordinated by CERT at Immingham. These are working in a range of sectors including: environmental, health and social care; cultural industries; training and learning; community publishing; performing arts; catering; employment; and sports.

Both small businesses and social enterprises are proving to be relatively resilient to the current economic situation, although there are examples of rural businesses including shops and pubs closing, there are a number of potential areas for development and diversification:

* Environmental businesses – working in micro-generation (see fuel poverty above) or to improve energy efficiency.
* Supplying the new larger industries within the Humber Bank Development (this could include supporting in the initial construction.)
* Changes in the way public services are delivered is leading to opportunities to tender to provide local authority and NHS services in rural areas.
* Changes in adult social care including personalised budget holding will hold out opportunities for local services employing local people, but if moves are not made then these may be taken by larger organisations, these could be opportunities to establish social enterprises or networks of local self employed workers, and opportunities for existing rural businesses/community groups e.g. local pubs, cafes etc. to branch out into providing services including meals for older people.
* At present levels of rural tourism in Northern Lincolnshire are low, there may be scope to develop tourist attractions and tourist related businesses.

**5. Skills**

North Lincolnshire Council have commissioned a piece of research which will cover the skills gaps for the key business sectors, which is currently underway, the consideration of the rural needs have been factored into this document which should enable a greater awareness of what the future rural skills needs will be.

It should be remembered that people from rural areas travel further to work than their urban counterparts and many will work in urban areas and some in other local authority areas, so the skills needed by rural businesses in Northern Lincolnshire will not necessarily be fitted by the skills of the local workforce, this should be considered and support and guidance offered to educational establishments to further support the development of “home grown talent”.

A major area of employment and of development is the port and refineries along the Humber Bank. Historically there have been difficulties in retaining skilled electrical / mechanical engineering staff partly due to direct competition between the port, the refineries, Humber Bank factories, and also offshore facilities; this includes retention of apprentices and trainees. These businesses often solve this issue by bringing in outside workers and consultants, whose employment neither benefits residents nor the local economy. Both local authorities are however seeking to ensure that the skills needs of employees is considered and plan for such future needs through working with local educational outlets, some work is currently being done through local schools to ensure that curriculums can lend themselves to skill up young talent and meet the skills needs.

**3. Local Priorities**

There are in the region of 70 communities, villages, smaller settlements and market towns across the rural areas of northern Lincolnshire. The issues for each community will be different and it would be impossible to list all the local priorities for each community. The information in this section comes from two distinct sources: firstly those identified by this study and secondly community priorities derived from sources such as parish/community plans; participatory appraisals; contacts with local parish councils and village/parish websites and newsletters.

**North East Lincolnshire**

There is only one Parish Plan in North East Lincolnshire, which is for the Healing Parish, it is however a number of years old.

The following summary information derives from this report and an identification of the themes of greatest concern according to geographical area.

**Humberston**

* Ageing population, 33% of residents are of a pensionable age
* Needs 14 new affordable houses

**Immingham ward**

* High rate of unemployment - 7.2%
* 26.2% non car owning households (2001, mainly in Immingham itself)

**Waltham**

* Needs 20 new affordable houses
* Waltham and Brigsley were rated 7,424 LSOA most isolated from services out of 32,482 in Index of Multiple deprivation in 2007

**Wolds Ward**

* Ageing populations – Aylesby 36%, East & West Ravendale (inc Wold Newton & Hawerby cum Beesby) 38%.
* Only Healing and Laceby have a shop or post office, some smaller villages have no pub or village hall either therefore access to services is a challenge
* 11 affordable houses needed in Laceby.
* Southern villages – high levels of fuel poverty fuel poverty (old solid walled properties, no gas running to properties.)
* Southern villages (North East Lincs. L SOA 023f ranked 12,900 out of 32,482 in Index of Multiple deprivation) the main factors in this are isolation from services (1,176 out of 32,482 in Index of Multiple deprivation),and high rate of crime, this was identified in 2007.

**North Lincolnshire**

**Axholme North**

* Low level of car ownership (26% of households do not own a car)

**Northern Parishes**

* “Top” 5% for rural fuel poverty
* SOA rank 350 out of 32,482 for access to services

**Crowle and Ealand**

* In need of 83 new affordable homes

**Barton**

* Parts of Barton in “top” 25% for deprivation (SOA NL 001F), including: highest rural teenage pregnancy rate in North Lincolnshire; highest rural unemployment rate 5.8; low level of car ownership

**Brigg & Wolds**

* There are pockets of economic deprivation in Brigg.
* The villages of Elsham, Melton Ross, Saxby All Saints, Horkstow, Worlaby and Wrawby have no village shop or post office, making access to services a challenge.

**Broughton and Appleby**

* There is an ageing population in Appleby, approximately a third of the population are of retirement age.

**Burton and Winterton**

* There are parts of Winterton in “top” 25% for deprivation (SOA NL 003B)
* There is a need for 43 new affordable homes in Winterton

**Ferry**

* New Holland has a low level of car ownership (22.22% of households were without a car in 2001). L SOA 002A is ranked 11,642 out of 32,482 in Index of Multiple deprivation) the main factors in this are isolation from services and low level of skills.
* Significant numbers of affordable houses needed in Barrow upon Humber, Croxton, Kirmington, Goxhill, New Holland.
* South Killingholme has a large number of community owned assets which are all in need of repair, this costs falls to the Parish Council who currently have no funding to support in repairs.

**Ridge**

* 35% of the population of East Butterwick are of over 60.
* 36 affordable houses are need in Hibaldstow, 23 in Kirton in Lindsey and 20 in Scawby.

**Community Priorities**

The following priorities identified derive from consultation sources which enable the community to identify areas they would seek to change/ improve. The summary infromation highlights what the priorities according to the most up to date information, in some instances this can however be some years old and views may have changed.

*“A Community Led Plan, formerly known as a Parish Plan, is a step by step structured process of creating a vision for the future of your community or neighbourhood. The process and outcomes are owned by the whole community; each and every citizen can participate in improving the quality of life within their locality.*

*The vision covers the social, cultural, economic and environmental wellbeing of the community and all those who live and work there, thus it is not just about land use planning, although that will no doubt be an issue to discuss. Because it is led by local people, a wide range of issues are addressed in ways that are meaningful to the community itself. This can include; housing needs, transport, youth provision, community facilities and the environment to name but a few. This forms a blueprint for use by Town/Parish Councils and other local bodies, as well as providing evidence for funding bids to enable the actions identified to be completed.”*

(Humber and Wolds Rural Community Council)

A comparatively low number of communities have community or parish plans. In North Lincolnshire these are;

* Alkborough and Walcott,
* Broughton,
* Burton on Stather,
* Kirton in Lindsey,
* Ulceby and
* Winterton;

For North East Lincolnshire a community led plan exists for Healing.

There are currently six new community plans being developed across North Lincolnshire. These plans contain much of the information being sought out in this study and if more villages had prepared plans and the plans were regularly refreshed then information about rural communities and their needs would be easily to hand and prioritised. However, while they are very good at identifying immediate issues for communities it would appear that they could be more linked into local strategic and planning structures to further empower communities to activate change and development.

A number of key themes and common issues feature in community plans:

* **Children and young people** - this is couched in a number of different ways, but is the most common theme and is identified by nearly all communities. Some, such as Garthorpe and Waltham, have a lack of facilities and are trying to establish playing fields and playgrounds, others identify issues with anti-social behaviour from young people and are working to divert young people into more positive activities. Two parish councils in North East Lincolnshire are working to establish youth councils to engage young people in their areas. The number of applications to the Leader fund for play facilities bears this out.
* **Traffic/parking** – right across the area villages feel that their character and quality of life is being affected by traffic issues (some of which are contributed to by local residents). In Eastoft the residents are worried by the threat of large lorries going through the village with heavy loads as part of the construction of wind farms in the area. In Waltham the village is disturbed by the volume of “commuter” traffic using the village as a rat run. In addition, in Burton on Stather and in North East Lincolnshire there are a number of villages affected by illegal or antisocial parking, on verges and pavements and outside schools. Near the Humber Bank villages such as Ulceby and South Killingholme are affected by lorries servicing the local industries. This issue has been tackled by the community in a very proactive way with an agreement being drawn up to lessen the impact of noise and pollution to residents during key times within the day. This has proven to be welcomed by local residents and has had a positive impact on the relationship with local industry and village occupants.
* **Flooding** – the heavy rains in 2007 caused problems all over the country, this too had an impact on Northern Lincolnshire. The participatory appraisals carried out by VANL at that time captured some of the issues. Villages such as South Ferriby, Goxhill and Hibaldstow were all affected by flooding in 2007 and residents were worried that ways of managing excess water in the past have been lost, and South Ferriby is preparing a Flood Contingency plan. Areas across the Trent bank in North Lincolnshire were severly effected and Goxhill residents researched the areas of flooding in 2007, which they then matched up to the traditional drainage system and presented their evidence to North Lincolnshire Council who were then able to act on the information. The threat and impact of flooding has a large impact on residents in North Lincolnshire with additional insurance costs and the ongoing threat of clean up costs. Whilst work is underway to support in tackling the flood threat this has been slow and unforthcoming.
* **Transport –** residents want public transport including appropriate (with ability to access key facilities and neighbouring villages) bus routes and times e.g. access to supermarkets – *Alkborough Parish Plan.*
* **Preserving the Rural Environment –** ensuring that communities remain “rural” is of high importance to most rural communities. It can be more expensive and difficult to live in rural areas due to lack of local services, but there are also advantages to living in smaller, quieter communities and these are valued by residents and lie behind concerns about issues such as traffic and parking and extend to other aspects of rural life, for instance the Alkborough parish plan would like any new development to be “in keeping”.
* **Local Jobs –** people from rural communities often travel long distances to work, which adds to the costs of living in rural areas and leads to young people moving away. This was identified in the Winterton community plan – identifies the need for enterprise opportunities and job opportunities for young people.
* **Community Facilities –** communities value their community owned facilities and are keen to build new village halls and improve/extend existing ones from Great Coates to Garthorpe, these can be seen as assets and potential venues for services to be provided in new and different ways.

1. **Conclusions**

The issues in this report should be seen as a whole picture, pieces in the jigsaw of the community, with each issue impacting on its neighbours, for instance loss of jobs will lead to deprivation, fuel poverty, isolation due to lack of transport because the car has become too expensive to run and ill health. This demonstrates that solutions cannot be seen in isolation either.

An example of this may be that supporting an individual to become self employed to provide care to neighbours in need of care, not only are the care needs met and a job created but also links made within the community and the costs and carbon footprint of the care reduced by using someone local.

Rural communities are often used to being self reliant and resilient. Isolated but close knit populations are used to supporting each other and finding their own solutions and this spirit must be built upon and supported.

There are many examples of this, a small group of friends bulk buying heating oil has grown and involves over 100 households, saving money on heating bills, but also supporting local “good causes” by members making a small donation for each order.

1. **Priorities & Northern Lincolnshire Actions**

The Humber Rural Partnership identified six top priorities, to mirror the priorities the gap analysis has sought to explore how Northern Lincolnshire could meet the priorities and feed into the Humber Rural Partnership’s work. Listed below are the proposed actiivities for Northern Lincolnshire:

|  |  |
| --- | --- |
| **Humber Rural Partnership Priority** | **Proposed Northern Lincolnshire Actions** |
| Access to Services in Rural Areas | * Need to develop/encourage/enable innovative solutions to delivering local services i.e. shops/post offices, e.g. part time/mobile/using other community facilities like village halls/pubs including exploring better /multiple use of existing community facilities * Actions needed to reduce numbers of closures |
| Rural Transport Connectivity | * Need to develop existing flexible /demand responsive schemes such as dial a ride and phone a ride * Exploring links to facilities funded under LEADER programme and other relevant projects * Ensuring rural communities needs are reflected in LTP3 consultation and in future timetabling |
| Rural Business Development | * Explore links to new industries e.g. South bank biomass plant, including feeder and spin off possibilities for rural businesses, domestic installation of renewable energy micro generation * Establish links with local agricultural colleges |
| Rural Proofing | * Key strategies and action plans should be routinely rural proofed, this may include a need for training of appropriate officers and partnership members to ensure that rural issues and mitigation of additional concerns is considered * Parish/Community plans would give improved understanding of rural areas, but must include strategic linkages e.g. to neighbourhood management structures and priorities, community resilience programmes and the LSPs and their theme boards. |
| Local Food & Sustainable Rural  Tourism | * Promotion of the Northern Lincolnshire rural food directory and the businesses in it. * Further development and publicity of existing and further tourist attractions in Northern Lincolnshire |
| Rural  Social Enterprise | * Social enterprise and enterprise support agencies need to actively explore the opportunities for work with the health sector, to look at new localised ways to deliver care in rural communities, which promote local enterprise and employment opportunities and which include links to other sectors such as digital media |

Based on information gathered through the Northern Lincolnshire Rural Gap Analysis, it is recognised that there are some priorities which require further emphasis for Northern Lincolnshire. The following activity, rationale and actions are identified as being required:

|  |  |  |
| --- | --- | --- |
| **Priority** | **Rationale** | **Actions** |
| Business support | A large proportion of the rural employers in northern Lincolnshire are small businesses and numbers of people wanting to establish these businesses has increased due to the recession | * Increased and focussed support for small business start ups both financial and practical (training in basic skills necessary to run businesses and mentoring) * Targeted support for small businesses such as village shops/pubs etc to enable them to survive and provide essential services, such as support to diversify their services or make their offer more attractive |

1. **Appendices**

**Appendix 1**

**LIST OF CONSULTEES**

Justin Atkin, ABP Immingham, and Chairperson One Voice - Immingham

Penny Bee, Senior Regeneration Officer, North Lincolnshire Council

John Bennett, Principal Economic Research & Policy Officer, Economic Development, North Lincolnshire Council

David Broadmeadow, Rural Housing Enabler, Humber and Wolds Rural Community Council

Dominic Chapman, Policy & Research Analyst, Humber Economic Partnership Ltd

Paul Crompton, LEADER Co-ordinator, North Lincolnshire Council

Jamie Dunn, North East Lincolnshire Council

Mrs Judith Harrison, Parish Clerk, Burton upon Stather Parish Council

Peter Hirschfeld, Community Led Planning, Humber and Wolds Rural Community Council

Eric Hope, BusinessLink

Neil King, Director, Community Economic Regeneration Team (CERT)

Jane Kitching, Enterprise Coach, (Immingham), E- Factor

Lesley Leach, Clerk to Waltham Parish Council

Vince Mancini, Community Cohesion Officer, North Lincolnshire Council

Paul Nevin, Social Enterprise Advisor, Business Link Yorkshire

Kathy Nunn, Clerk to Healing, Stallingborough, Habrough, Humberston, Great Coates and New Waltham Parish Councils

Kristian Reed, Co-ordinator, ‘Who Cares’, North Lincolnshire Local Involvement Network

Chris Sowerbutts, Project Manager, Community Energy Solutions - Yorkshire & Humber

Karry Stones, North East Lincolnshire LINk, Assistant Coordinator

Ann Tate, Hull and Humber Chamber of Commerce

Carol Thornton, Voluntary Action North Lincolnshire

Winteringham – Parish Council and Resources Commissioning Body

Jeanette Woollard, Clerk to Brigg Town Council

**Appendix 2**

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**Appendix 3**



**Appendix 4**

**Workshop Notes from Rural Conference 22/3/10**







**Appendix 5**

**Top Rural Employers in North Lincolnshire**



**Appendix 6**



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1. <http://www.energysavingtrust.org.uk/Generate-your-own-energy/Sell-your-own-energy/Feed-in-Tariff-Clean-Energy-Cashback-scheme> [↑](#footnote-ref-1)
2. <http://www.energysavingtrust.org.uk/Generate-your-own-energy/Solar-electricity#costs> [↑](#footnote-ref-2)