

## The value of the CRC

*"I would like to thank you for your work in raising the profile of rural England and for the advice you have provided. It is important that policy issues are looked at through the rural lens and CRC plays a crucial role in advocating this".*

**Right Honourable Gordon Brown MP, Prime Minister**

*"I have been impressed by the care taken by the Commission for Rural Communities in producing definitive in-depth research and analysis on the pressures and challenges faced by our changing countryside.*

*Rural voices often struggle to be heard in the corridors of power, whilst impacts on the ground can surprise even the best intentioned policy. I strongly encourage you to take part in the Rural Experience - to get out of your office and under the skin of rural England".*

**Philip Dunne MP, Chair of the All Party Group on Rural Services**

*"When writing my report for the Prime Minister on affordable rural housing I worked closely throughout with the Commission for Rural Communities and found their evidence-based analysis and contacts across government extremely valuable. I wholeheartedly support the CRC's new 'Rural Experience' initiative and would urge anyone interested in bringing about positive change in the countryside to sign up".*

**Matthew Taylor MP, author 'Living Working Countryside'**



### Commission for Rural Communities

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Commission for  
Rural Communities

Tackling rural disadvantage

**The Rural Experience**

*“The Rural Experience will enable both senior executives and non-executives from the public and voluntary sectors to experience what life is really like for rural communities. As I travel around rural England I’m always amazed at the determination, drive and creativity of rural people to come up with solutions to difficult issues like affordable rural housing, rural services or climate change. The idea behind the Rural Experience is to share this knowledge and insight with those in positions of power or influence so that they in turn can use their organisations, networks and experience to make a real difference to the lives of rural people”.*

Dr Stuart Burgess, Rural Advocate and Chairman of the Commission for Rural Communities



**The Rural Experience is an exciting new initiative to inspire senior people from government, public funded organisations and the voluntary sector to make a positive contribution to rural communities.**

The Rural Experience will invite participants to join a small influential group to experience rural challenges at first hand. The benefits to you and your organisation will include:

- providing a new insight into rural issues;
- sharing rural good practice and creative solutions to rural problems;
- rural proofing issues such as education, health, transport and crime to ensure these are taken into account in government policy; and
- being part of a powerful personal experience which will bring about positive change.

**The Rural Experience includes:**

- a tailored briefing on key rural issues for your organisation;
- a one-day visit to experience rural issues at first hand;
- high level networking;
- personal debriefing within a month from CRC staff;
- invitations to future CRC briefing events; and
- meeting inspirational people in your field.

**Further information**

Contact the Rural Experience organiser Nick Milton

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**The Commission for Rural Communities**

CRC is the policy advisor to government on tackling disadvantage in rural areas. CRC's role is to provide well-informed, independent advice to government and ensure that policies reflect the real needs of people living and working in rural England.

The organisation has three key functions:

- Rural advocate: the voice for rural people, businesses and communities
- Expert advisor: giving evidence-based, objective advice to government and others
- Independent watchdog: monitoring and reporting on the delivery of policies nationally, regionally and locally

**Did you know...**

9.6 million people (20% of the population) live in rural England.

Nearly one in five rural households live below the Government's official 'poverty line'.

Since 1999 employment in agriculture has fallen by about 7%. In contrast employment in knowledge-based industries has risen by 22%.

Over half of agricultural land now receives payments to produce environmental benefits.

The 'credit crunch' and the increasing cost of fuel and food prices means that rural people are now paying more than £1000 a year extra to maintain the same standard of living.

**Experience the solutions first hand with the Commission for Rural Communities**