



RURAL COMMUNITIES FOCUS GROUP

Tenants & Residents Resource Centre (TRRC)

Tuesday 6th December 2011

Present:

Vivien Binks	SLHD Community Engagement Officer (minutes)
Melanie Swanwick	Rural Network Co-ordinator, Rural Action Yorkshire
Lesley Gilfedder	Rural Tenant, Austerfield
Tracy Mann	DMBC Wellbeing Officer

Apologies

Jennifer Wordsworth	Rural Tenant, Tickhill
Norman Hayes	Tenant, Balby
Marie Lane	Rural Resident, Branton
Bob Snashall	Rural Tenant, Thorne

1. Welcome & Introductions

Vivien welcomed the group, thanked everyone for their attendance and explained Housekeeping procedures.

2. Minutes of the Meeting

Vivien asked Lesley Gilfedder to read the Minutes of the last meeting to check for accuracy. Lesley confirmed that these were a true and accurate record of the previous meeting.

3. Matters Arising

Lesley Gilfedder queried when a member of staff from DMBC Planning Department Emergency Planning Flood Wardens team will be attending the Rural Focus Group meeting. Vivien confirmed that she had arranged for a member of that team to attend early in the New Year.

Lesley advised that she had been most interested in the presentation given by Peter Jones, SLHD Financial Inclusion Officer, at the previous meeting and had since joined the Danum Credit Union.

4. Melanie Swanwick - Rural Network Co-ordinator, Rural Action Yorkshire

Melanie introduced herself and explained her job role. Rural Action Yorkshire belongs under the national umbrella of Action for Communities in Rural England (ACRE). ACRE advocate on behalf of Rural communities and work with the Dept for Environment, Food & Rural Affairs. (DEFRA) on Government priorities which are Rural Housing & Planning, Transport, Facilities and Services, Fuel Poverty, Energy Generation and Rural Broadband.

She then gave an update on some of the projects that Rural Action Yorkshire was supporting, including Thurnscoe, Sprotborough Library Action Group, Thorne & Moorends Regeneration Group and Norton Energy Community Ltd.

Melanie advised that the new Localism Act will ensure that people in Rural areas have more responsibility for spending statutory money. This in turn should break down barriers between Rural areas and community groups. Lesley Gilfedder made further enquiries, as she had very little knowledge of the new Localism Act and its' implications for Rural communities. Melanie is to visit a Rural Focus Group meeting early in the New Year, to give a presentation on the Impact of the Localism Bill in Rural areas.

5. Vivien Binks – Consultation on SLHD Compensation & Goodwill Policy

Vivien Binks introduced St Leger Homes of Doncaster Compensation & Goodwill Policy. This relates to any customer, tenant or resident who receives a poor service, and outlines their rights and potential entitlements where service levels do not meet service standards. Compensation can be given as a financial reimbursement up to the value of £250, or a goodwill gesture such as a letter of apology, gift voucher, bunch of flowers or box of chocolates, depending on the nature of the complaint. Vivien then advised that claims over the value of £250 are dealt with by St Leger Homes of Doncaster Insurance Team.

As the document is quite lengthy, it was suggested that members read this in their own time, and then feedback comments before Friday 9th December.

6. Any Other Business

Lesley Gilfedder explained to the group that she had spoken with Melanie Swanwick about the possible closure of Bawtry Library at the last meeting. A group of 50 volunteers has been established to continue the running of the Library in the future, and Melanie had delivered training to them on Managing a Community Building. Melanie advised that Rural Action Yorkshire also deliver training on the following subject areas:

- Setting up a Community Plan / Parish Plan
- Social Media and Marketing of Community Groups
- Keep Warm, Stay Well – energy efficiency
- Committee Skills
- Inside Parliament

Melanie added that the Bawtry Library group had a strong core of local business people, who were actively looking for business opportunities. Consideration was currently being given to the addition of a community-run Café, Tourist Information point and support with researching family trees.

Further information on the closure of local libraries can be found on the following Website:

www.savedoncasterlibraries.wordpress.com

7. Date & Time of Next Meeting

Tuesday 7th February 2012 10.30am
Tenants & Residents Resource Centre.