

## **Chairman's Update: 11<sup>th</sup> July 2007**

We have decided a monthly update is sufficient exposure to the chairman's ramblings so watch out around this time each month.

### **Rural Board**

I have experienced my first Rural Board (27<sup>th</sup> June) which was very useful as there were papers on 'new' areas of activity affecting our forum. I picked up on the 'City Regions' agenda, now adopted by Yorkshire Forward, as an economic model which has issues for rural areas. The RAF Steering Group has agreed we will make it the major topic for our 25th September full RAF meeting, which will be held in York. We will try to have two speakers; one for and one raising concerns, followed by a Q&A session.

### **First RAF Steering Group meeting**

The first meeting of the new Steering Group (SG) took place this week. It is a totally new structure so a bit disjointed as we got to know each other. Minutes will be posted on the website so you will have chance to see full debates - please email any views. What I tried to do was have an exchange on various topics and am hoping the members will continue to progress detail by email discussions. This is only way to manage time constraints as one could have half a day on many many subjects and I am trying to distill a limited number of targeted areas which RAF can select for concentrated activity and action. We cannot have repeats of national or regional major strategy discussions and we must keep reminding ourselves we are trying to get a 'customer' view which we can then try to represent to appropriate top down policy makers or change money deliverers.

### **Climate Change Agenda**

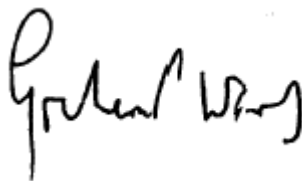
The SG also continued discussion on the climate change agenda. I have had a number of discussions since the full RAF meeting following your 'instruction' to do something at village level and I put to the SG the concept that we concentrate on adaptation rather than mitigation. They agreed it was not the RAF's remit to lecture on being a better citizen; rather we should raise questions of possible adaptation changes, which, if discussed, may lead to future actions and maybe also behavioral change.

Basically, we know that we shall have more extreme weather events; heavy rain in short periods, high winds, vegetation change, so how do our villages see reacting to this? This is very topical of course because we have had extreme rainfall and have not coped. Perhaps 'they' may have been better prepared if grass roots concerns and knowledge had been known and incorporated alongside the 'experts' evidence based on what appears to be a number of separate agendas. To this end we hope to look at a pilot 'village climate change adaptation audit'. In case of rivers and flooding it would take in a number of villages down a river catchment from the moors through the upper valley, along the lowland meanders and out to the sea. Try to exchange views so those at top and bottom understood what their actions might do to others. We would look at trees and which might need replacement and so on. We are going away to build and refine and hope to have something solid to launch by late autumn. Your views are welcome.....

**Liaison with RAF members**

I will continue my information visits with various RAF members in July. In June I have met with the Women's Institute and the East Riding and Northern Lincolnshire Local Council Association. I also met Stuart Burgess the Commission for Rural Communities Rural Advocate whilst he was visiting East Yorkshire. For July I am already booked to see WIRE (Women in Rural Enterprise) and Sirius (a rural business start up group in East Yorkshire) and need to talk to the Church about their role in rural and use of churches as wider community assets across the week. Any volunteers? Anyone else want to brief me?

Regards

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read 'Graham Wray'. The signature is written in a cursive style with a large initial 'G'.