



The Rural 100: positive ways that rural communities can contribute to reducing climate change

Introduction:

“We need to be both pro-growth and pro-climate at the same time. Our current big agenda is ‘greening up the up-turn’. We cannot just leave this to the utility companies to manage. Energy and climate change has to be fair to people and we are mindful that we need public consent and fairness in taking forward our efforts.”

Ed Miliband, Secretary of State, Department of Energy and Climate Change, 25 November 2008

The CRC wishes to commission a piece of work with a creative partner on a project that promotes and stimulates the positive contribution which rural areas and rural communities can make to reducing climate change.

Rather than a ‘research and report’ approach the CRC wishes to undertake a strong advocacy (user friendly operational approach) to using accessible messages and existing good practice. The aim of the piece of work will promote and stimulate the positive contribution that rural areas and rural communities can make to reducing climate change.

Furthermore, we would need to be seen to be adding value to the roles of the Department of Energy and Climate Change (DECC)¹ and the Department for the Environment, Food and Rural Affairs (Defra)². We know that some rural communities (e.g. Ashton Hayes, Transition Towns, Slow Food Towns) are doing some very imaginative work. However many other rural communities are doing very little and are unaware of what is possible.

Background:

The Commission for Rural Communities has a duty to ensure that policies and delivery reflect the needs of people living and working in rural England, with a particular focus on tackling disadvantage. The Commission for Rural Communities has three key functions, as rural advocate, expert adviser and independent watchdog.

The Commission for Rural Communities (CRC) is focused upon both tackling rural disadvantage and also on realising the future potential of rural England.

Rural areas have great potential to make a positive contribution to climate change mitigation and adaptation but the story is not yet well told nor accessible to the majority of people. The breadth of the agenda ranges from the value of the uplands in terms of carbon storage and water catchments to local sustainable energy generation projects and to new transport services. The higher targets now established for the reduction of carbon emissions have also not yet been translated into the real issues and opportunities which rural areas might face in achieving the new levels.

¹ The Government recently committed to raising its CO₂ target from 60% to 80% by 2050 DECC, 20 October 2008

² Ways to tackle climate change. Defra and Action on CO₂ 2007

We wish to provide some creative thinking around the ways in which communities can find innovative and reliable ways to both reduce their carbon footprints and contribute positively and confidently to mitigating climate change. A creative campaign title will need to be determined which captures the energy and engagement which we look to inspire.

Aims of the project:

First and foremost we are inviting agencies/organisations to provide creative and innovative thought leadership to develop a range of accessible informative products. For example the initiatives around 'Change the World for a Fiver' have generated considerable interest including over 1 million book sales based upon their positive tone and approach. Through this process we would expect the successful partner:

- To capture good practice of what rural communities can do and present it in an inspiring way.
- To provide a strong sense of 'you can make a difference' by presenting this good practice back to rural communities.
- To raise a general awareness that rural communities can make a positive contribution to climate change and that there are consequential benefits.
- To raise a general awareness of the scale of the issues and that they need a collaborative response to make a real difference.
- To strongly associate the brand of the Commission for Rural Communities as an advocate of the positive contribution which rural communities can make.
- To identify and develop new champions of this agenda e.g. in schools and colleges.
- To provide an accessible new tool for communities to measure their carbon impact and the need to act.

The scope of the project:

The climate change agenda in rural areas is broad and includes:

- Energy generation and efficient use of energy
- Land management and food production.
- Travel, transport and accessibility.
- Waste generation and management
- Sustainable place design.

Approach

The Commission for Rural Communities would appoint a creative partner organisation which can provide:

- An ability to synthesise the key agenda messages in a clear and persuasive manner.
- A track record in designing a creative strategy to engage people/communities/businesses in local action.
- An ability to design a creative strategy which actively engages key stakeholders – and in particular Government.
- An ability to implement the creative strategy through appropriate media, e.g. publications/website/broadcast.
- An ability to produce creative products which can generate revenue.
- Evidence of delivering impact through such an approach.

Timetable:

It is anticipated that this Expression of interest will be offered as a formal contract by competitive tender. The expression of interest will help to select the most suitably qualified creative partner.

- **Expression of Interest:** Issued 1 December 2008- closing on 18 December.
- **Successful agencies shortlisted to go through to full tendering:** notification by 19 December 2008

Following short listing, a selection of organisations will be invited to compete for a full tender. This will be issued by the CRC on 22 December. The CRC's full tender documents will set out a detailed timetable. However, by responding to this expression of interest we would expect responders to plan on the basis of returning full tender submissions by lunchtime 21 January 2009. The project is anticipated to be completed in April/May 2009.

Expressions of interest should be submitted in writing to the address below by 18 December 2008. Further information is available from: www.ruralcommunities.gov.uk
john.coleman@ruralcommunities.gov.uk

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Commission for Rural Communities

Expressions of Interest

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Further Information

Expressions of interest do not guarantee inclusion on the shortlist for invitation to tender. The information that contractors provide on the enclosed form will be used in drawing up a shortlist, usually of between 3-6 organisations depending on the nature of the project and extent of expertise amongst potential contractors. We intend to commission the project described here. Inevitably, however, the detailed content of individual projects may vary prior to tendering, and the project may change. The enclosed organisational details form asks for information about the expertise and experience of potential tenderers which will, in part, allow us to develop shortlists for this project.

The Formal Tendering Process (following Expressions of Interest)

Invitations to tender

Formal invitations to tenders (which will follow Expressions of Interest) will include:

- the specification of the project outlining the objectives, relevant details and what contractors are expected to provide in the tender;
- the standard contract conditions;
- the date for receipt of tenders;
- the expected timing for the announcement of the award.
- Three weeks is the usual period for submitting tenders, although for urgent projects that period may be shortened.

Tender documents and their assessments

A tender assessment panel will examine the tenders. The panel will look at the appropriateness, quality and cost of contractors' proposals, and they will take into account:

- understanding of the issues being addressed;
- familiarity with previous relevant projects
- the experience of the project team
- the proposed costs

Interviews may be held to assist with this assessment. Normally these will involve the tenderer making a short presentation and discussing the proposals more fully, including responding to the questions of the interviewing panel.

Awarding contracts

The assessment of tenders normally results in the selection of a preferred tender, although the Commission is not bound to accept any tender. All tenderers are informed of the outcome. The successful tenderer then agrees a programme of work with the Commissions for inclusion in the formal contract.

Commission for Rural Communities Expression of Interest Form

Project Title:

Name:	Position:
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Organisation:

Address:	
Postcode:	

Telephone:	
Email	
Fax:	
Web Page:	

Previously contracted to the Countryside Agency or Commission for Rural Communities	Yes/no
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Project Title:

Experience relevant to project:

Please provide details of up to two recent relevant projects and client contact details, for reference:

Sent completed forms to: The Sustainable Rural Communities Team (attn John Coleman),
Commission for Rural Communities, John Dower House, Crescent Place,
Cheltenham GL50 3RA **Telephone** 01242 534042

If space is insufficient you may send supporting pages, for example, a small amount of information or material about you and/or your organisation. Please keep such extra material to a minimum. Our assessment of the expressions of interest will be based primarily on the information included on this form and wordy expressions of interest will not be viewed as a sign of an ability to report concisely.