



CRC 11/09

20 April 2009

Commission for Rural Communities appoints new Chief Executive

Sarah McAdam, currently Area Director, London Central, HM Courts Service, has been appointed the new Chief Executive of the Commission for Rural Communities (CRC). She will be taking up her post in August 2009.

Chairman of the Commission for Rural Communities Dr. Stuart Burgess said: "I am delighted with Sarah McAdam's appointment as the CRC's new Chief Executive. Sarah brings a wealth of experience from her background in the public sector. Her leadership will be invaluable as we continue to represent the interests of rural communities at the highest levels in government; facing up to fresh challenges, not least the recession and building towards a post-recession future."

Sarah McAdam added: "I am looking forward very much to joining the CRC, and building on the excellent work to date to ensure rural communities' needs are reflected in policies nationally, regionally and locally. I am relishing the opportunity to provide direction and leadership as the organisation seeks to reduce economic and social disadvantage in rural England and look forward to working with colleagues both within the CRC and externally."

Gill Payne currently an Executive Director of the CRC will be Chief Executive until Sarah McAdam arrives.

ENDS

For further information contact Chris Wynne-Davies on 01242 534070

Notes to editors:

1 Biographical details:

Sarah McAdam began her career in local government in the 1980s, providing advice and support to homeless people, private tenants and owner-occupiers. After managing a team responding to harassment and unlawful eviction and then a Housing Aid Centre, Sarah joined the Housing Association Tenants Ombudsman Service, investigating complaints of maladministration on the part of social landlords.

In 1996, Sarah entered the civil service as an inspector of magistrates' courts committees. In this capacity, she visited magistrates' courts across England and Wales assessing and reporting on such issues as leadership, strategic planning, quality of service and resource management. She was also responsible for the development and distribution of national good practice in relation to corporate governance.

In August 2000, Sarah was seconded to the multi-agency team which supported Lord Justice Auld in his independent review of the criminal courts of England & Wales. When the Auld report was published in 2001, Sarah joined the policy team responsible for implementation of one of its key recommendations – the creation of a single agency with responsibility for all courts within England and Wales.

Having been appointed as Private Secretary to the Lord Chief Justice in 2001, Sarah managed the team which provided strategic, policy and operational support to Lord Woolf and the senior judiciary during a period of significant constitutional reform. Then in 2005, when HM Courts Service was created, Sarah became one of the new agency's Area Directors. In the past four years, she has led an expanding Area through significant structural and business process change.

She is currently responsible for the Crown and Magistrates' Courts of Central and South London, managing a £31 million budget and a staff charge of over 700. She plays an active role on the London Criminal Justice Board, working with other agencies to develop and implement strategies designed to improve performance, quality of service and public confidence in the criminal justice system.

2 The CRC was established in April 2005 and became an independent body on 1 October 2006 following the enactment of the Natural Environment and Rural Communities Act 2006. The role of the CRC is to provide well-informed, independent advice to government and ensure that policies reflect the real needs and circumstances of people living and working in rural England. We give particular focus to tackling disadvantage and economic underperformance.

We have three key functions:

- Advocate: the voice for rural people, business and communities;
- Expert adviser: providing evidence-based, objective advice to government and others; and
- Independent watchdog: monitoring and reporting on the delivery of policies nationally, regionally and locally.

Further information about the CRC and its work can be found at: www.ruralcommunities.gov.uk