



Yorkshire Rural Support Network.

PROPOSED BUSINESS PLAN FOR April 2010 to September 2011

Yorkshire Rural Support Network has been established for over 15 years and has built up a strong network of organisations which are dedicated to helping rural and farming communities. These include public sector, voluntary sector and charitable organisations and joint working between the sectors is actively encouraged through the Network.

The aims of the network are as follows:

- Raise public awareness of issues associated with stress and provide information on the sources of support available.
- Help reduce the level of rural distress.
- Promote health and well being in rural areas.
- Signpost those suffering from stress towards help.
- Support members in the delivery of services aimed at reducing distress through partnership working and an extended knowledge base.
- Encourage a positive attitude to changes in both health and business.
- To bring Network members together to exchange resources, contacts and information and provide practical support.

The objectives of the network are detailed below, with proposed business activity for the period April 2010 to September 2011 grouped under each objective

1.0 Objective: Arrange Network meetings on a regular basis to share information and good practice, to inform members of matters of current concern through presentations and invited speakers, and to progress the work of the Network.

1.1 6 Network meetings to be organised each year (bi-monthly) with relevant speakers whether they be Network members or from other organisations.

In 2010 this is likely to include speakers from:

- Y & H Regional Forum, Business Link Yorkshire, North Yorkshire & York PCT, Commission for Rural Communities and The Carnegie Trust.
- A Review of Network Activities from September 2009 – August 2010 to be given at the September 2010 Annual General Network Meeting.

Lead: The YRSN coordinator, with support from the YRSN steering group

1.2 Engage and extend network links in West and South Yorkshire. YRSN to work closer with Rural Action Yorkshire to develop South Yorkshire engagement.

Lead: Hugh Baker, with support from the YRSN coordinator.

2.0 Be a vehicle for Network members to have a collective voice drawing attention to issues facing farming and rural communities.

2.1 Incorporating an information sharing slot on each Network Meeting Agenda and articulating messages from other members unable to attend Meetings.

2.2 Project a positive attitude to changes in both health and business issues.

Lead: The YRSN chair, with support from the YRSN coordinator.

2.3 Engaging with The Regional Forum and Rural Action Yorkshire to gather evidence to help to inform/influence policy makers and to make specific responses through the PR Manager at YAS by raising awareness of support, rather than giving a view.

Lead: Helen Waddington, with support from the YRSN coordinator.

2.4 Look to appoint a patron within the business plan period, to represent and promote the network with regional/national players.

Lead: YRSN chair, with support from the YRSN steering group.

3.0 Provide a forum for public sector organisations to gather perspectives on rural issues.

3.1 To ensure that the Public Sector is represented on the Network membership and liaise with appropriate personnel, regularly updating contacts where there are any changes in key personnel. The Network should work in a targeted way with Government Office, Yorkshire Forward and the PCTs and keep in touch with The Rural Affairs Forum through the Yorkshire Food & Farming Forum (run from the RAC offices in Harrogate). Better links to be made with The Environment Agency as their initiatives will have a big impact on many in rural communities.

Particular areas of responsibility for the business plan period are as follows:

Rural Affairs Forum:	Leslie Morley
Public Sector:	Helen Ovens
Food and Farming Forum:	Kate Dale
Environment Agency:	Sally Conner and Kate Dale

4.0 Provide a database of organisations concerned with rural health and well being.

4.1 This to be reviewed **quarterly** and **Steering Group members** to offer contact details where appropriate. **Network members** to ensure contact details are up to date, on an on-going basis.

4.2 Make reference to the Change4Life initiative and engage with its personnel.

Lead: YRSN coordinator.

4.3 Ensure the network engages with debt management organisations effectively during the recession and its aftermath.

Lead: Helen Waddington.

5.0 Produce resource material, and maintain a website dedicated to promoting sources of help for rural and farming communities.

5.1 Leaflets to be kept updated and their use to be targeted to specific outlets where most appropriate, with maximum coverage. An electronic version of the leaflet to be available for download from the website.

Lead: YRSN coordinator, with support from the YRSN steering group.

5.2 Targeted information dissemination re rural support help. During the period, a focus will be made on Library Services, and NFU offices and through Network members.

- County Library service to be contacted with a view to carrying leaflets on mobile library transport to reach isolated rural communities.
- All Regional NFU offices have been e-mailed with YRSN details (Network resume and electronic version of YRSN leaflet and some paper leaflets where requested) and feedback has been recorded to establish level of support.

Lead: YRSN coordinator.

5.3 Review the re-printing of 'credit card' type help cards, depending on demand from the network.

Lead: YRSN coordinator, with support from the YRSN steering group.

5.4 Presentations given to the Network to be available on the YRSN weblink.

Lead: YRSN coordinator.

5.6 'Fit for Farming' health booklet to be launched in 2010 at Thirsk Auction Mart and Young Farmers County Rally in June 2010 as a result of collaborative working with several Network members and the regional office for the DOH as well as farmer focus groups.

Lead: YRSN coordinator, with support from the YRSN steering group and other network members.

6.0 Run rural events to promote the Network, to provide information on issues in the farming and rural community concerned with stress and to raise awareness of sources of help.

6.1 Support Network Members with events and encourage them to publicise YRSN at independent events to widen coverage of information available.

Lead: YRSN coordinator, with support from the YRSN steering group and other network members.

6.2 In 2010 two further YRSN branded Succession Events are being held in Ryedale and South Yorkshire with ongoing support from HSE and the Churches Regional Commission Farm Business Support & Development Programme.

Lead: YRSN coordinator, with support from other network members.

6.3 Legacy activity from 2010 Succession Planning events: to run more themed and targeted sessions for the farming community. Topics to be taken from 2009/2010 Succession Planning event feedback, but will include tenant and landlord issues.

Lead: YRSN coordinator, with support from the YRSN steering group and other network members.

6.4 The Health & Safety Executive Safety and Health Awareness Days to be held at York and Skipton Marts, with YRSN information available, with the CRC FBS&D Project present running health checks for those attending. There may also be additional HSE events where joint working is appropriate.

Lead: YRSN coordinator, with support from other network members.

7.0 Have a YRSN presence at rural shows and events.

7.1 The Network Coordinator to attend appropriate events personally and ensure representation through Network Members at other relevant events with publicity and information available. YRSN Files have been produced for member's use at Shows.

Lead: YRSN coordinator.

7.2 Provide YRSN resource material for network members to use on their stands at the Great Yorkshire Show.

Lead: YRSN coordinator.

8.0 Hold a Public Biennial Conference to report on the work of the Network and address matters of current concern.

8.1 A Conference to be held in September 2011 on a rural health theme.

Lead: **Steering Group** to decide in the first 6 months of the year (i.e. by June) on a date and topic. **Network members** to have input; **the coordinator** to organise a venue, speakers, catering and liaise with the appropriate personnel in the facilitation of the conference.

9.0 Funds to be sought on an ongoing basis to ensure the Network aims are fulfilled.

9.1 **Steering Group** to address funding at least 18 months prior to the end of the current funding. This should be a standing item on the Steering Group Agenda from September 2010.

The business plan to be reviewed by the Steering Group on behalf of Network members after the 2010 September YRSN Annual General Meeting.