



Frontline agencies in partnership

Homeless Link Rural Homelessness Project

Supporting homelessness agencies to deliver services in rural areas

Homeless Link is developing a new project focussing on agencies working in rural areas, recognising the specific difficulties they face. The aim of the project is: to identify the support needs of agencies working with homeless people in rural areas; identifying good practice examples of how the barriers to working with homeless people have been overcome; and to use this information to better support rural homelessness agencies across England.

What is the project about?

The initial stage of this project is a mapping exercise identifying:

- the barriers rural agencies face in delivering services to homeless clients
- the ways in which agencies have worked to overcome those barriers
- the support rural agencies would require from infrastructure organisations.

The mapping exercise will inform the development of a good practice resource to:

- provide knowledge, expertise and support to rural homelessness agencies
- help local generic infrastructure organisations in rural areas provide appropriate advice and support
- assist homelessness agencies in forming partnerships with frontline agencies in other sectors.

What will we be doing?

Consultation and survey

- In January and early February, we are consulting with agencies working in rural areas to identify the key issues they face.
- This consultation process will then inform the development of a survey, which will be sent out to organisations working with homeless people in rural areas across England.
- **Benefits for agencies:** The results of the survey will provide an evidence base of the needs of homelessness agencies in rural areas. It is hoped that this will be a useful resource, not only for the development of targeted

support for agencies, but also to help agencies make a case for resources more generally.

Identifying good practice

- The survey and consultation process will be used to identify agencies that have developed innovative solutions to the difficulties of providing homelessness services in rural areas.
- We will be conducting interviews with these agencies about how they have developed their services, improved partnerships, developed resources etc.
- **Benefits for agencies:** Participating agencies will have the chance to showcase the work that they do and share their learning nationally through Homeless Link's website and our good practice team. This will help agencies across England to develop the support that they offer to homeless people in rural areas.

Do you work with homeless people in a rural area?

If you would like to be involved in the consultation process, or would be prepared to complete a short questionnaire about your experience of working with homeless people, we would like to hear from you.

In recognition of the fact that many agencies in rural areas do not exclusively support homeless people, we are keeping participation open to all agencies who provide advice, support, or housing to homeless people, independently of whether this is the only group they work with. The project is also aimed at agencies based in urban areas, but who offer support to people in rural areas. For a further definition of rural please see the note below.

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Definition of rural

Any settlement under 10,000 would be considered rural. However, rurality also depends on population density. The official rural definition looks at both the size of settlements and how sparsely populated an area is. Using this definition 73 Local Authorities (LAs) are defined as more than 80% rural. We will be focussing on homelessness agencies working in these LAs, but we welcome any agencies working

in other rural areas to participate in the study. A list of the authorities considered rural are included below for reference.

Rural-80 local authorities: districts with at least 80 percent of their population in rural settlements and larger market towns.

Derbyshire Dales	East Midlands
East Lindsey	East Midlands
Melton	East Midlands
Rutland	East Midlands
South Holland	East Midlands
Derbyshire Dales	East Midlands
East Lindsey	East Midlands
Melton	East Midlands
Rutland	East Midlands
South Holland	East Midlands
North Kesteven	East Midlands
Harborough	East Midlands
Daventry	East Midlands
South Northamptonshire	East Midlands
West Lindsey	East Midlands
Breckland	East of England
East Cambridgeshire	East of England
Forest Heath	East of England
Maldon	East of England
North Norfolk	East of England
Breckland	East of England
Mid Bedfordshire	East of England
Suffolk Coastal	East of England
South Cambridgeshire	East of England
Fenland	East of England
South Norfolk	East of England
Babergh	East of England
Mid Suffolk	East of England
Huntingdonshire	East of England
Alnwick	North East
Berwick-upon-Tweed	North East
Castle Morpeth	North East
Derwentside	North East
Tynedale	North East
Allerdale	North West
Copeland	North West
Eden	North West
South Lakeland	North West

Ribble Valley	North West
Congleton	North West
Chichester	South East
Mid Sussex	South East
Isle of Wight	South East
West Oxfordshire	South East
Wealden	South East
South Oxfordshire	South East
Caradon	South West
Carrick	South West
Cotswold	South West
Isles of Scilly	South West
Kennet	South West
Mendip	South West
Mid Devon	South West
North Cornwall	South West
North Dorset	South West
Penwith	South West
Restormel	South West
Torrige	South West
West Devon	South West
West Somerset	South West
Purbeck	South West
Teignbridge	South West
West Dorset	South West
Forest of Dean	South West
South Hams	South West
North Shropshire	West Midlands
Oswestry	West Midlands
South Shropshire	West Midlands
Bridgnorth	West Midlands
Wychavon	West Midlands
Stratford-on-Avon	West Midlands
Hambleton	Yorkshire and The Humber
Richmondshire	Yorkshire and The Humber
Ryedale	Yorkshire and The Humber
Selby	Yorkshire and The Humber
Craven	Yorkshire and The Humber

Source:

www.defra.gov.uk/rural/ruralstats/rural-defn/LAClassification_datasetregions.xls