

From: David Inman
Subject: Rural /Market Towns Group - Bingham - Rushcliffe area .
Date: 9 July 2020 at 11:11
To: Info Info@bingham-tc.gov.uk

Dear Sharon,

I hope you are keeping well.

I refer to our correspondence a few months about the Rural Market Towns Grouping. As you will have appreciated we approached Towns on the basis of one per District area across England (where the District involved has rural areas). You kindly indicated to us you would try to get it to a meeting in April but then unfortunately we had this awful situation.

There is now an opportunity given the current situation that allows the Town Council to try our services and evaluate without any fee. We remain really keen for Bingham to join the RMTG, initially on that basis.

We feel the phrase Rural Market Town has current relevance and importance across England. It is a term that collectively identifies a series of Towns that have evolved in a historic way across the Country and it allows those Towns who still on a day to day basis continue to inter react with their surrounding rural area to argue their important collective case. We attach the article about the Group.

Currently we have formed a Group of 80 + Town Council members. We are looking to double that. We unfortunately have no Town representative from the wider area of Rushcliffe at this time and it would really good to involve Bingham. We do need an accurate cross section across England . .

We appreciate the work and difficulties that Town Councils have as a result of the COVID crisis. The towns deserve every congratulation for doing all they have done, and continue to do, for their communities and the people who live in them, during these dreadful times.

We are however also aware of the economic consequences that are already occurring and that further and yet more threatening situations are inevitable. It is really vital that at this time Market Towns across England establish and present their particular collective view and case. It is really important this is a cross national view and we want all areas involved in it. This group is uniquely equipped as the vehicle to take matters forward as we are a special Interest Group of the Local Government Association and we are individually as the RSN arguing the collective rural case across England.

This is not a membership packed full of obligations. We plan to make being a member a reasonably easy task and member authorities can do as much or as little as they are able to at any one time.

We feel:-

- The COVID situation has proved that people in rural areas can become very isolated very quickly. The last material consideration of any overall focus on Rural Towns and Areas by Government was twenty years ago in the year 2000.

We are pressing the Government for action for social and economic reasons.

- The Lockdown situation proved the obvious - that broadband is now as essential as Electricity and Fuel. We will continue to press the rural case very hard. All rural areas and rural towns need to have reliable and fast broadband connection otherwise the consequences will be severe. It is over simplistic for Government and the industry to say all towns now have good broadband and mobile phone coverage – there are rural town areas that clearly still do not.
- Stronger sustainable transport Links to Market Towns from surrounding locations are absolutely key for rural areas as the rural population average age is increasing at a faster rate than with the population in other areas of the country and services to Market Towns are the lifeline for many people.
- We feel the government underplays the potential of the rural economy in a rapidly changing era. Specific focus on rural towns and rural areas could be potentially a win- win situation both for rurally based residents and the national economy. We want to see rural England receiving specific thought and attention through a Rural Strategy rather than just being rolled up into overall national consideration, which as we all know is too often is urban centric.

You may recall that there was a small subscription (£130 p.a.) involved for clearly there is a need for the group to have continuity. We appreciate at this time however that may not be particularly appetising given the unforeseen expenditure that the COVID based work has occasioned councils.

The larger the Grouping the more respect it will undoubtedly receive through the coming choppy waters. Please could your Council therefore please consider the following:-

- *We are happy for Bingham T.C.. to come into the Rural Market Towns Group now until Thursday 1st of April 2021 without charge.*
- *The Council will consider before that date whether it wishes to continue (or not) its membership on a paid basis referred to for the 21/22 financial year based on its assessment of the value of membership in 2020 and notify us of its decision around the time of the New Year.*

*Can you please let us know by the 14th August whether or not Bingham are prepared to proceed on such a basis. **Please come back whatever the decision. We do need to know where the Council stands on this one.** We do however need support at this time and we do think it is in your Town's interest to be involved so that a strong collective voice can emerge on a cross national basis at this critical time.*

We look forward to hearing from you,

Yours Sincerely,

David.

David Inman
Director of [Rural Services Network](#)
Mob: (Best Number to Reach me on)

Tel:
Email:

The RSN is calling on the Government to develop a Rural Strategy to ensure that rural areas are properly considered. Too often policies are designed for urban areas and the result is that rural communities miss out on the benefits or experience unintended consequences from policies which are poorly thought through from a rural perspective.

[Sign up to support our call for action and find out more by visiting our website.](#)

The Rural Services Network seeks to provide a voice for rural communities by representing rural services, networking between rural service organisations and establishing and broadcasting best practice in rural service provision. It comprises SPARSE Rural, the Rural Assembly, the wider Rural Services Partnership and the RSN Community Group. The organisation works with Rural England, a stand-alone Community Interest Company research group.

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