

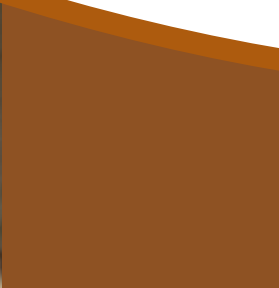


Rural Community Network  
SUPPORTING RURAL COMMUNITIES

# Annual Conference and AGM 2009

## *A Changing Sector in Challenging Times*

Friday 25 September, 10am to 4pm  
Millbrook Hotel, Ballynahinch, Co Down



# Introduction

Our 18th Annual Conference is held against the backdrop of a continuing recession. Resentment remains high for most people who have witnessed the seemingly bottomless pit of money made available to bail out the banks whilst, at the same time, being constantly informed that efficiencies will have to be found and, unfortunately, cuts will have to be made in public sector spending.

The community and voluntary sector will not escape the collateral damage caused by new policy directions implemented in recessionary times. There is a major challenge to examine how we do our work. As times and circumstances change, is what we do at present still the best way to do our business? Whilst there may be areas of our work that we fundamentally will not change - are there areas which can be amended or cast aside and others where new opportunities must be grasped? These are challenging questions for the sector to ask - but ask we must. No longer is it acceptable to adopt a practice and stance which claims that we should always be here just because we always have been. The sector must be responsive to change - indeed the sector should be a key driver for change in such a way that enhances the services to our members, our users and, ultimately, our rural communities.

As the rural community infrastructure enters a critical phase in a change process, the Annual Conference is a timely reminder that we are not on our own during this journey. Several organisations at regional, sub-regional and local level have embarked on a change programme and these journeys will be highlighted by the various speakers within the Conference. The event will also afford us the space to reflect on all our change experiences and give critical assistance and impetus in the continual development of a rural community development networking infrastructure that will not only meet current and future challenges but will create and seize opportunities that may arise from them.

We look forward to welcoming you.

# Programme

10am	Tea/coffee/registration at Millbrook Hotel
10.30am	Welcome and Annual General Meeting <i>Key contributions on theme from:</i>
11.30am	Seamus McAleavey, NICVA
12noon	Rural Community Network
12.15pm	East Down Rural Community Network
12.30pm	Lunch
1.30pm	Workshops and plenary session
3.30pm	Dr Malcolm McKibben, Permanent Secretary, Department of Agriculture and Rural Development
4pm	Conference close

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## Conference Fee

	<b>Non Members</b>	<b>Members</b>
Community organisations and individuals	£20	£10
Regional voluntary organisations/business sector	£35	£25
Statutory bodies	£60	£50

*Please note 48 hours notice of cancellation is required otherwise the full fee will be charged.*

Cheque enclosed       Please invoice

Delegate name: \_\_\_\_\_

Organisation: \_\_\_\_\_

Address: \_\_\_\_\_

Address: \_\_\_\_\_ County: \_\_\_\_\_

Postcode: \_\_\_\_\_ Tel No: \_\_\_\_\_

Email: \_\_\_\_\_

Any special requirements: \_\_\_\_\_

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**To book your place, return the booking form by Friday 18 September 2009 to Rural Community Network, 38a Oldtown Street, Cookstown, BT80 8EF.**

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