Rural and Coastal Participation in Higher Education

Submitted September 2010:
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Rural and Coastal Participation in Higher Education

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Introduction

This study is designed to present an approach to understanding the problem of Rural and Coastal participation in HE in Norfolk. The problem will be discussed and then a framework provided through which this problem can then be investigated – in this first instance, through available literature. From this study, further work is proposed.

Background

What is the problem?
The Aimhigher Rural and Coastal Issues Group has identified the following issues for Aimhigher in Rural and Coastal Areas:

- Low HE participation despite satisfactory attainment.
- Geographic isolation makes it difficult to sustain Aimhigher engagement.
- Community and cultural issues require a holistic approach to WP.
- Limited access to appropriate opportunities for educational progression.
- Decline of traditional industries and increase in low skill employment.

The difference between Aimhigher partnerships operating in urban areas and in rural and coastal areas is poorly understood and rarely acknowledged in national debates. Although low attainment and low HE participation coincide in urban areas, low HE participation can be accompanied by relatively high attainment in areas of rural and coastline deprivation. (http://www.aimhighersw.ac.uk/rural.html - accessed 4th March 2010)

Therefore, the problem appears to be that rural and coastal areas should be considered as areas of particular interest with regard to participation in HE.

Why is this a problem?
Lantra (the Sector Skills Council for the environment and land-based sector) has released an East of England Research LMI Fact sheet (available at http://www.lantra.co.uk/businesses/england/east-of-england/, accessed March 2010) which states:

‘The sector has undergone great change in recent years which has lead to a higher demand for skilled staff. The skills needs that employers think are increasingly important are:

- Technical (e.g. operating machinery, fencing)
- Essential Skills (e.g. numeracy, literacy and communication)
- Computing/IT
- Environmental management and waste management
- Within management level staff business skills such as marketing sales and finance are increasingly important. As there is a high level of self employment in the sector, these skills are key.

According to the East of England ‘Economy & Labour Market Background Paper’ prepared for SFSG meeting, 13 October 2004: ‘The learning and skills infrastructure must be more responsive to customer demands if it is to help deliver a step change in learning provision in rural areas.’


Therefore participation in HE for rural and coastal students is a problem because there is perceived to be a demand for HE skills which is not being satisfactorily serviced by supply of learning provision.

Who is this a problem for?
This problem is particular to those living in rural and coastal areas in Norfolk. There are estimated to be c.851,000 people living in Norfolk (http://www.norfolkinsight.org.uk/Default.asp - accessed April 2010).
The population of the Norwich Travel to Work Area, i.e. the area of Norwich in which most people both live and work, is 376,500. 132,200 people live in the Norwich City Council area (http://www.norwich.gov.uk/site_files/pages/City_Business_The_Norwich_Economy_Population_and_Employment_Figures.html - accessed April 2010).

This suggests that there are c.474,500 people living in Norfolk who do not live and work in Norwich. This population can be regarded as "Rural and Coastal" for the purposes of this study.

In the document "A Greater Norwich, A Stronger Norfolk" (produced by Norwich City Council, 2008), an overview of rural and coastal Norfolk suggests the following:

**Rural Norfolk now**

Rural Norfolk is different from greater Norwich in almost every way. Rural Norfolk covers 2,000 square miles and staggering 300,000 people live in small settlements of less than 2,500. The remaining population live in the 21 market towns, and the county towns and of King’s Lynn and Great Yarmouth with populations of 34,564 and 47,288 respectively. More than 260,000 people work in rural Norfolk. The rural county has a strong identity, which is rooted in its historic past as an important agricultural economy dating back to the Middle Ages. Traditionally, the county has relied on jobs in agriculture, manufacturing, food processing, tourism and maritime industries as its main sources of employment.

Norfolk County Council has recognised that rural Norfolk has a “slow growing, low wage economy, which is anchored in its historic past as an important agricultural economy dating back to the Middle Ages. Traditionally, the county has relied on jobs in agriculture, manufacturing, food processing, tourism and maritime industries as its main sources of employment.

**Challenges facing rural Norfolk**

Rural Norfolk has a set of particular issues including an increasingly ageing population, significant numbers of migrant workers employed in traditionally low wage industries, significant numbers of people who suffer from rural isolation, rural poverty and low skill levels. Poor transport and digital infrastructures only serve to compound the problem of access to services. An extraordinary 59% of people living in settlements of less than 2,500 have limiting long term illnesses. Over 60% of households lack central heating. The county town King’s Lynn is the second largest economy in rural Norfolk but is not growing and Great Yarmouth has been a recognised regeneration area for some time but so far progress in reversing the acute levels of deprivation has been slow. (www.norwich.gov.uk/internet/docs/docs/Unitary.../Summary_doc.pdf - accessed April 2010)

Placing issues regarding population into a wider perspective, the following table has been extracted from a ‘Data Perspectives’ paper produced for Aimhigher by R. Woods in March 2010 (not published).

Table 1 shows the percentage of target neighbourhoods in each Area by the measures of Indices of Multiple Deprivation (IMD 2007) and of Deprivation Affecting Children Index (IDACI 2007)\(^1\).

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Total LSOAs</th>
<th>40% most deprived LSOAs nationally (IMD)</th>
<th>40% most deprived LSOAs nationally (IDACI)</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Bedfordshire &amp; Luton</td>
<td>377</td>
<td>110</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Cambridgeshire &amp; Peterborough</td>
<td>469</td>
<td>95</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Essex, Southend-on-Sea &amp; Thurrock</td>
<td>1,065</td>
<td>284</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Hertfordshire</td>
<td>683</td>
<td>79</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Norfolk</td>
<td>530</td>
<td>145</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Suffolk</td>
<td>426</td>
<td>87</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>East of England</td>
<td>3,550</td>
<td>800</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>England</td>
<td>32,482</td>
<td>12,993</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

This table demonstrates how Norfolk compares with neighbouring counties in terms of deprivation. The issue of participation in HE for people in Rural and Coastal areas is not specifically a problem for only those in deprived areas. However, considering that a greater amount of deprivation exists in Rural and Coastal regions it is considered important to take this into consideration when identifying who this project is interested in.

\(^1\) The differences between the IMD and IDACI measures illustrate why the latter is preferred within the region. The multiple factors contributing to the IMD tend to make urban areas appear more deprived in relation to rural districts.
When did this become a problem?
Aimhigher began in August 2004 and is funded by the Higher Education Funding Council for England. Aimhigher, a national programme operating at national, regional and area levels (45 area partnerships, 9 regional partners), is the outcome of two programmes being brought together – P4P and Excellence Challenge.

The Aimhigher programme aims to widen participation in higher education by raising the aspirations and developing the abilities of young people from under-represented groups. For the purpose of this project, it can be considered that the problem began at the time that Aimhigher Norfolk was established. While it is clear that the problem of Rural and Coastal participation in HE extends well beyond this date, this project will only consider this problem since the inception of the Aimhigher initiative.

Since this time, some progress has been made as the following tables (also extracted from the unpublished Woods report) indicate:

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>IDACI Decile Group</th>
<th>Beds &amp; Luton</th>
<th>Cambs &amp; Peterboro</th>
<th>Essex</th>
<th>Herts</th>
<th>Norfolk</th>
<th>Suffolk</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>0 - 10 % most deprived</td>
<td>32.0%</td>
<td>20.3%</td>
<td>30.1%</td>
<td>30.2%</td>
<td>23.7%</td>
<td>19.8%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>10-20 %</td>
<td>35.8%</td>
<td>26.0%</td>
<td>29.4%</td>
<td>37.8%</td>
<td>30.7%</td>
<td>27.0%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>20-30 %</td>
<td>35.5%</td>
<td>35.4%</td>
<td>36.8%</td>
<td>38.5%</td>
<td>38.3%</td>
<td>33.4%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>30-40 %</td>
<td>40.6%</td>
<td>39.2%</td>
<td>41.4%</td>
<td>42.5%</td>
<td>43.8%</td>
<td>37.9%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>40-50 %</td>
<td>46.1%</td>
<td>45.2%</td>
<td>47.9%</td>
<td>49.9%</td>
<td>50.4%</td>
<td>44.8%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>50-60 %</td>
<td>53.2%</td>
<td>52.9%</td>
<td>55.4%</td>
<td>53.7%</td>
<td>53.4%</td>
<td>48.7%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>60-70 %</td>
<td>58.2%</td>
<td>56.6%</td>
<td>57.4%</td>
<td>63.2%</td>
<td>54.7%</td>
<td>57.3%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>70-80 %</td>
<td>59.4%</td>
<td>61.9%</td>
<td>61.5%</td>
<td>66.1%</td>
<td>59.9%</td>
<td>57.1%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>80-90 %</td>
<td>58.1%</td>
<td>64.5%</td>
<td>65.4%</td>
<td>70.5%</td>
<td>63.8%</td>
<td>57.2%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>90 - 100 % least deprived</td>
<td>67.2%</td>
<td>72.5%</td>
<td>72.1%</td>
<td>79.1%</td>
<td>63.3%</td>
<td>64.2%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Average</td>
<td>48.8%</td>
<td>51.4%</td>
<td>51.2%</td>
<td>57.7%</td>
<td>49.6%</td>
<td>48.8%</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
Table 5: Progression from GCSE to UCAS Application (2006 – 2008)

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Geographic Area</th>
<th>Number attaining 5 A* - C GCSEs 2006</th>
<th>Number attaining 5 A* - C GCSE with E &amp; M 2006</th>
<th>Applicants aged 18 to UCAS 2008</th>
<th>% of 18 year old applicants in 2008 to students with 5 A* - C 2006</th>
<th>% of 18 year old applicants in 2008 to students with 5 A* - C with E &amp; M 2006</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Beds &amp; Luton</td>
<td>3922</td>
<td>3006</td>
<td>2338</td>
<td>60%</td>
<td>78%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Cambs &amp; Peterborough</td>
<td>4811</td>
<td>3802</td>
<td>2526</td>
<td>53%</td>
<td>66%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Essex, Southend &amp; Thurrock</td>
<td>12091</td>
<td>9237</td>
<td>5711</td>
<td>47%</td>
<td>62%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Hertfordshire</td>
<td>7816</td>
<td>6470</td>
<td>5155</td>
<td>66%</td>
<td>80%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Norfolk</td>
<td>4904</td>
<td>3938</td>
<td>2357</td>
<td>48%</td>
<td>60%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Suffolk</td>
<td>4685</td>
<td>3628</td>
<td>2389</td>
<td>51%</td>
<td>66%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>East of England</td>
<td>38229</td>
<td>30081</td>
<td>20476</td>
<td>54%</td>
<td>68%</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Over the period 2003 to 2008, applications through UCAS grew by 22.9% regionally compared to 19.6% nationally. The growth from each Area is shown in Table 6 below.

Table 6: All applicants through UCAS 2003 to 2008

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Geographic Area</th>
<th>2003</th>
<th>2008</th>
<th>% growth</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Bedfordshire &amp; Luton</td>
<td>4,133</td>
<td>4,940</td>
<td>19.5%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Cambridgeshire &amp; Peterborough</td>
<td>4,387</td>
<td>5,222</td>
<td>19.0%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Essex</td>
<td>8,931</td>
<td>10,965</td>
<td>22.8%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Hertfordshire</td>
<td>7,573</td>
<td>9,410</td>
<td>24.3%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Norfolk</td>
<td>4,050</td>
<td>5,067</td>
<td>25.1%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Suffolk</td>
<td>3,888</td>
<td>4,908</td>
<td>26.2%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>East of England</td>
<td>32,962</td>
<td>40,512</td>
<td>22.9%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>England</td>
<td>334,388</td>
<td>400,051</td>
<td>19.6%</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Table 7: Populations of East of England Areas in comparison with 2008 UCAS Applicants

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Geographic Area</th>
<th>16 – 29 June 2007</th>
<th>Total Pop. June 2007</th>
<th>% of 16 – 29 in total pop.</th>
<th>% of 2008 applicants in 16 – 29 population</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Bedfordshire</td>
<td>111,300</td>
<td>595,800</td>
<td>18.7%</td>
<td>4.4%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Cambridgeshire</td>
<td>146,400</td>
<td>760,700</td>
<td>19.2%</td>
<td>3.6%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Essex</td>
<td>283,600</td>
<td>1,688,400</td>
<td>16.8%</td>
<td>3.9%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Hertfordshire</td>
<td>179,000</td>
<td>1,066,100</td>
<td>16.8%</td>
<td>5.3%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Norfolk</td>
<td>136,900</td>
<td>840,600</td>
<td>16.3%</td>
<td>3.7%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Suffolk</td>
<td>112,700</td>
<td>709,300</td>
<td>15.9%</td>
<td>4.4%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>East of England</td>
<td>969,400</td>
<td>5,661,000</td>
<td>17.1%</td>
<td>4.2%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>England</td>
<td>9,513,100</td>
<td>51,092,000</td>
<td>18.6%</td>
<td>4.2%</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

2 Number attaining 5 A* - C GCSEs 2006: those aged 15 at the start of the final year of study (2005/06)
Consider the tables provided in this document and set out to identify the success factors and barriers to participation in higher education for rural and coastal communities in Norfolk.
Literature review

A search of relevant and recent documents was undertaken. Findings and salient points from this data have been tabled, Appendix A. These have been analysed, Appendix B. A summary of the emerging themes follows.

Themes

Infrastructure
Deprivation has been discussed as being a significant issue. Coastal resorts which have fallen out of favour, low population density in rural areas, in some cases tied housing and limited local employment opportunities provide explanations for economic deprivation. Employers in coastal and rural localities are mostly small to medium enterprises and some of the employment in the rural areas is, by nature, seasonal. Matching skills with employment and training or work experience opportunities is an important issue in maintaining employment in coastal and rural populations where there is a lower level of higher qualifications compared with the rest of the region.

Infrastructure issues can compound the problems with accessing Higher Education. The problem of the limited public transport provision is compounded by the long distances travelled and the cost of travelling as well as the cost of providing transport. It is also the case that transport timetables do not always suit the departure and arrival needs of students.

With an increasing dependence on the use of the internet in education, some coastal and rural areas in Norfolk do not have access to high speed broadband and in some areas there is a lack of mobile phone coverage.

Recent projects have been established to address the particular needs of coastal and rural residents – however, these have been short term funded. It has been suggested that people in coastal and rural areas should be treated in the same way as ethnic minorities – in order to represent their interests better.

HE Provision
Some young people do not consider that HE is necessarily beneficial or that they can achieve anything outside their local community. HE provision in rural areas has focused on access issues – local schemes to provide computer suites in buses, local access sites to college materials – though this has not included making the content of the provision more appropriate to rural learners. Further work is required to ensure learning opportunities are not prejudiced solely by where a young person lives and to support post 16 provision and planning. This is especially the case in light of the national policy to raise the participation age, which implies a wider breadth of provision will be necessary.

Good practice in overcoming barriers faced by those in rural and sparsely populated areas includes outreach and mobile provision. Addressing disadvantages in provision as well as in employability is also a key step. Furthermore, knowledge of rural/urban differences in the performance of programmes appears to be limited at national and regional level because data is not analysed against rural/urban definitions and general monitoring and evaluation arrangements do not ask whether performance varies from place to place.

Solutions
Solutions to the situation involve appropriate and relevant Information and Guidance (IAG). The targeting and marketing of IAG is less than ideal for rural-based communities. In the current economic climate of cut-backs, shortages in provision have been further exacerbated. While services tend to provide less IAG for those in rural areas, an example in Suffolk attempts to tackle this: the LEAP service, aimed at those disadvantaged by their rurality, offers support to access learning and training, information, advice and guidance for people looking for educational opportunities.

Local partnership working can help to provide educational needs. This has been recommended by central government and evidence indicates that services such as Job Centre Plus along with and initiatives such as The Prince’s Trust can collaborate to raise young people’s aspirations from an early age. Local partnership working can also be demonstrated as a means by young people can gain an entry point into national employment and skills programmes. Sharing best practice of what works will be important.
Addressing the mis-match between skills and available jobs in rural areas helps to overcome unemployment. There can also be a mis-match between perception and reality. For example, GCSE results are not always lower for rural than for urban students while, on the other hand, not all rural pupils have the same attitude regarding achievement and aspiration. This suggests that solutions may be found in a complex of reasons that include addressing cultural attitudes as well as educational aspiration and success, ideally at an early age. Co-operation between Sixth Forms and FE colleges should be encouraged and enhanced in order to extend the range of educational opportunities for students in rural and coastal areas. Virtual Learning Communities may be one way to help bridge gaps and widen prospects for young people.

Challenges
Several challenges emerge. Some of these relate to the issue of potential employment and the impact this may have on decisions regarding HE, both in terms of determining if HE is the correct path to take or not, and in terms of broader ‘life’ choices regarding career, family ties and residence (including the challenge of living away from home to study – which may be a different prospect for rural students). Establishing basic skills and Foundation Learning are important. Employer attitudes and practices in some coastal and rural locations do not broadly encourage or value higher-level qualifications which makes identifying the need for such qualifications important. Fewer employees with higher education results in fewer role models for aspiring students, whether these role models be family members or people in the local communities. The relevance of HE qualifications is less apparent. Coastal and Rural students tend to have lower aspirations than their urban counterparts (more so with males than with females.)

Rural Education Deprivation is an important issue. There are issues regarding school size and isolation in rural areas which lead to reduces opportunities for students. This is also linked to funding. Specific funding applications to HEFCE to support Aimhigher initiatives have not been successful. While the imbalance of funding between rural and urban students has been addressed to some degree, even this may not continue beyond 2011 given the current climate of austerity. In particular, funding for partnership working is important.

The influences upon students which affect their choices have been proven to be a significant factor regarding attitudes towards HE. Young people are influenced by a wide range of factors. Visits to HE campuses and in particular residential programmes have proven to be particularly influential. So too have mentoring type programmes. These types of interventions address a young person’s confidence levels regarding HE.

Developing formal and informal student networks in coastal and rural locations is also comparably more difficult than it is in urban locations. Learning groups and student networks, along side a positive school experience, nurture and encourage students to achieve their potential.

However, it should be recognised that people choose to live in rural and coastal locations and a student’s values and choices should be supported and respected.
Conceptual framework

The emerging themes provide conceptual framework through which to view this problem. These are shown in the following diagram:

1. Infrastructure: local economy, transportation, media

4. Challenges: cultural attitudes, funding, influencing student choices

3. Solutions: IAG, partnership working, skills identification, virtual learning communities

2. HE provision: attitudes, capacity

What are the issues regarding participation in HE for people in Rural and Coastal Norfolk?
Findings

Infrastructure
While some aspects of the infrastructure of coastal and rural regions cannot be reasonably addressed without significant funding and political intervention, there are some ways that issues of isolation, transport and access can be overcome. These include exploring wider options for provision and the media for provision.

HE provision
Some young people may consider that HE is not of particular relevance or benefit to them and their career. Preparation for HE provision needs to include the particular needs and cultural practices of those in sparsely populated areas more than it has so far done. Outreach and mobile provision have proven to be examples of good practice.

Solutions
Information Advice and Guidance (IAG) should be tailored when dealing with those in rural communities. IAG, when linked with provision to learning and training can help support young people’s opportunities and educational aspirations. Effective partnership working at the local level works to address needs in a concrete way. More positive outcomes are realised the earlier interventions and appropriate support are offered to young people.

Challenges
Coordinating regional skills needs with provision and life choices offers a better targeted understanding of the HE needs for those in coastal and rural communities. Identifying and securing resources that are not tied to short-term programmes will help support an infrastructure that can move towards skills and education solutions.

All students benefit from being encouraged to achieve their potential. This is particularly the case with coastal and rural students. Aspiration-building needs to continue, ideally based on local initiatives and partnerships.

Next steps

The original proposal suggested a second phase to the project that would identify underlying issues of HE engagement. However, this first phase has identified many of these issues and suggested potential solutions to some of the problems or challenges.

Further work is needed to take forward the principles of delivering coordinated approaches to IAG linked with provision, in particular through the local university, UEA, and the FE college network.

Dr S. Wilkinson & Dr K. Lane – September 2010
# Appendix A – Table of Documents

## Literature Review for Rural & Coastal

### Table of Documents

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Type of document</th>
<th>Date</th>
<th>Author, Title of document</th>
<th>Source</th>
<th>Key Themes</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>NFER's report to HEFCE</td>
<td>August 2010</td>
<td>Passy, Rowena Morris, Marian. Evaluation of AH: learner attainment and progression August 2010</td>
<td>Final Report</td>
<td>Challenges to progression included</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>- funding for FE in rural areas</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>- long distances to travel to college</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>2007</td>
<td>Fox, Robert</td>
<td>LitRev Report</td>
<td>Accessibility, Skills Needs, Educational Provision</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>Rural and Coastal Study Literature Review</td>
<td></td>
<td>- tpt issues (under Accessibility)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>- refers to several other relevant reports and presentations (Defra, LSC, Palmer, Watts&amp;Bridges, etc.)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>2004</td>
<td>Watts, Michael Bridges, David. Whose Aspirations, What Achievement?</td>
<td></td>
<td>Although this paper is not specific to rural/coastal, the authors make some relevant observations about role-models and the perception of HE’s relevance to young people’s lives.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>(referring to a 17-year old from Luton:) Imran’s social networks reinforce the belief that HE is not necessarily beneficial. It can be difficult to achieve anything outside his local community and few successful role models are recognised beyond it. (p.52)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>There is the need to address young people’s understanding of higher education, particularly their perceptions of its economic, social and academic relevance to their lives, their aspirations and their achievements (p.56)</td>
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<tr>
<td>Source</td>
<td>Date</td>
<td>Description</td>
<td>Findings/Recommendations</td>
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<td><a href="http://www.lifelonglearning.co.uk/llp/defra.pdf">http://www.lifelonglearning.co.uk/llp/defra.pdf</a></td>
<td>(3Sept10)</td>
<td>House of Commons Envt, Food &amp; Rural Affairs C’ttee. The Delivery of Education in Rural Areas: Ninth Report of Session 2002-03</td>
<td>Inter alia, see recommendation 18: that Defra establish mechanisms by which local LSCs, LEAs and providers co-ordinate their work to ensure that the educational needs of rural communities and the rural economy are being met. Particular attention should be paid to enhancing co-operations between school sixth forms and further education colleges so that students in rural areas can be provided with a wide range of educational opportunities</td>
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<tr>
<td><a href="http://www.sld.demon.co.uk/e2e.pdf">http://www.sld.demon.co.uk/e2e.pdf</a></td>
<td>(28Sept10)</td>
<td>Factors that affect rural entry to employment: low pop'n density; distances to centres of provision and placements; ltd public tpt; scarcity of larger employers - also, learners' attitudes and confidence levels re tpt and relocation add to problems of travel, placement and moving on to work or college (and are “likely to be more difficult to resolve in rural areas than in conurbations”</td>
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<td><a href="http://readingroom.lsc.gov.uk/pre2005/research/commissioned/issues-affecting-education-and-training-in-sparsely-populated-areas.pdf">http://readingroom.lsc.gov.uk/pre2005/research/commissioned/issues-affecting-education-and-training-in-sparsely-populated-areas.pdf</a></td>
<td>(28Sept10)</td>
<td>Issues affecting education and training in sparsely populated areas. LSC</td>
<td>ExecSum identifies the following under its section, “Good practice in overcoming the barriers” - collaboration and partnership - identifying need - use of ICT - Outreach and mobile provision - tpt - marketing - basic skills</td>
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<td><a href="http://www.npi.org.uk/reports/eeda.pdf">http://www.npi.org.uk/reports/eeda.pdf</a></td>
<td>(28Sept10)</td>
<td>Map of geographic variation in low income – illustrates the rural and coastal nature of Norfolk inter alia, GCSE results not lower for rural cf’d with urban</td>
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<tr>
<td>Education Guardian</td>
<td>20 April 2010</td>
<td>Newspaper article Tpt issues for students in rural areas who enrol for 14-19 diplomas (vocat'l qualific’n) - concern by many councils that cost for diploma tpt in rural areas will increase dramatically - Rural Access to Learning Group (Ralg)</td>
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<td><a href="http://www.cromerlearning.co.uk/AboutUs.htm">http://www.cromerlearning.co.uk/AboutUs.htm</a></td>
<td>(28Sept10)</td>
<td>John Morgan (0774 8641718)</td>
<td>2-year funded programme IAG; Virtual Learning Community (2003-2005)</td>
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</tr>
<tr>
<td>Publication Date</td>
<td>Authors</td>
<td>Title</td>
<td>Source</td>
<td>Relevant Text</td>
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| 2005             | Treismann, Morgan et al. | Research for Cromer Learning for Everyone Programme | [Website](http://www.l4esp.org/l4e/iaggateways.htm) (linked from above) | section 4.2, Lowered Student Aspirations at School-leaving Age. Also: 
- "[re work experience] local economy or infrastructural networks … have a marked impact on their aspirations and choices" (p.11) 
- "rural deprivation was just as significant for education and employment services, but this has been generally unacknowledged" (p.11) 
Characteristics of rurality (pp11-12) 
• lack of public transport 
• cost of public transport 
• mismatch between the time tabling of available public transport and working hours 
• distance 
• limited range of local employment opportunities 
• mismatch between the skills of potential labour force and the available jobs 
• attitudes and practices of employers in rural and urban settings, to potential employees from rural areas 
• tied housing 
• seasonal nature of many employment opportunities. 
• re rural and urban labour markets characterised by (p.12) 
• rural employment tends to be concentrated in small and medium sized firms 
• young people are influenced by a wide range of both formal and informal factors, individuals, agencies, grapevine, beliefs and values circulating through conversation, families and so on 
• informal networks are a major factor in young people moving successfully from unemployment to employment. |
| January 2001     | O’Hanlon, C. and Teggin, M. with Walker, B. | Young People Achieving their Potential in Rural Norfolk? - final report of findings into opps and barriers that y.p. in rural Norfolk experience as they make their transition from school to work and training | [Website](http://www.l4esp.org/l4e/research/Final%20Research%20Report.pdf) (linked from above) | 
| Published by: CARE, UEA Norwich ISBN 0 9539983 1 2 | | | |
May 2010 Improvement and development agency (IDeA), Tackling Worklessness - How to help people into employment in rural areas Report On average, unemployment is higher in urban than in rural, although the difference is only a few percentage points and some rural areas have relatively high levels of unemployment and fewer opportunities for skilled, well paid jobs (p.2)

Rural labour market characteristics include:

Progression out of low skilled, low paid employment is a particularly important challenge, because nearly half of those in poverty in rural areas are in working households; a greater proportion than in urban households (p.2)

Local authorities amongst others are being encouraged to take the Skills Pledge – a voluntary and public commitment made by employers to train their employees and help them gain new qualifications. Likewise, the Apprenticeships programme is being promoted as a core part of the Local Government Workforce Strategy

www.skillsplus.gov.uk/idk/core/page.do?pageId=4614136 (p.4)

Transport is typically the main barrier to the effective delivery of employment and skills support identified by those delivering in rural areas. (p.4)

Learning and Enterprise Access Points

The LEAP Project provides a unique layer of service delivery, acting as an entry point for national employment and skills programmes. The LEAP project is a unique collaboration between education providers, strategic partners and funding agencies which include University Campus Suffolk, Suffolk Learning and Skills Council, Suffolk County Council and the East of England Development Agency. The project was set up with the aim of increasing access to learning for hard to reach groups disadvantaged by the rural nature of where they live. The service offers support to access learning and training, information, advice and guidance for people looking for educational opportunities including those in work as well as the unemployed. This pathway to employment project will be delivered through a network of 13 LEAP Centres and 100 smaller LEAP Points which will be completed by March 2010. LEAP Centres also work with businesses to improve the skills of their workforce. Contact Miles Cole m.cole@ucs.ac.uk  www.leap.ac.uk (p.6)

Links provided include:

SQW (2009) The delivery of national employment and skills support to vulnerable groups in rural England. Report to the Commission for Rural Communities:

http://www.ruralcommunities.gov.uk/publications/ (p.8)
### March 2010 Stuart Burgess. Rural Advocate Report 2010 (Commission for Rural Communities)

**Website**

Lack of high speed broadband and, in many rural areas, lack of mobile phone coverage, is a significant factor – affecting local economies and services. It is also a major issue for children who live in rural areas. With social networking such a feature of youth culture, not to mention the expectation that children can access the Internet for homework purposes, lack of access can lead to frustration and exclusion.

**Employment and skills**

Although we are coming out of recession, the next 18 months will present huge challenges in rural areas. Traditional barriers to gaining employment in rural areas – inadequate public transport, and less training and guidance provision – have been reinforced by the recession which has hit jobs and apprenticeships.

Of the 573 Job Centre Plus outlets in England, around 80 are in market towns with populations of more than 10,000, but only 23 in more rural areas. Government-approved training schemes, accessed largely through Job Centre Plus, are not a viable option in rural areas.

**Key statistic**

At the end of June 2009, 40% of 16-24 year olds in rural areas were unemployed (107,000) or economically inactive (267,000).

**Recommendation**

New ways must be found to give better access to support for seeking jobs and training available through Job Centre Plus, Connexions or other mechanisms such as apprenticeship schemes. The support infrastructure should be strengthened to reach the smaller numbers of young people in villages and hamlets. This should extend into schools and the excellent initiatives such as the Prince’s Trust to raise the aspirations of young people from an early age.

Further and higher education institutions should follow the best practice examples of some of the new universities in reaching out into schools and local communities to break down the barriers of fear of the unknown.

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October 2009

Delivering national employment and skills programmes to vulnerable groups in rural England posted by CRC | 13 October 2009 at 2:59 am

Web-site Report

From website:
This report examines the delivery of a selection of national employment and skills initiatives to vulnerable groups in rural areas of England, to assess how effective Government employment and skills programmes are in meeting the needs of vulnerable rural residents in helping them into work, remain in work and progress in work. Qualitative evidence from providers indicates that uptake of Apprenticeships and Train to Gain, is relatively good in rural areas. The case studies reveal how the piloting or implementation of programmes in rural areas is being done with good awareness of rural issues, and with the development of positive practices. However, knowledge of rural/urban differences in the performance of programmes appears to be very limited at national and regional level because data is not analysed against rural/urban definitions and general monitoring and evaluation arrangements do not ask whether performance varies from place to place.

Delivering national employment and skills programmes to vulnerable groups in rural England: Needs, Barriers and Solutions (July 2009)
from Annex F: Forest Heath, Suffolk LEAP Centres.

The Forest Heath case study largely focuses on the Learning Education Action Points (LEAP) Centres and Points delivery model that deliver support to vulnerable groups in market towns across rural Suffolk. The LEAP Project provides an extra layer of service delivery, acting as an entry point for national employment and skills programmes. The LEAP project is a unique collaboration between education providers, strategic partners and funding agencies which include University Campus Suffolk, Suffolk Learning and Skills Council, Suffolk County Council and the East of England Development Agency. The project was set up with the aim of increasing access to learning for hard to reach groups disadvantaged by the rural nature of where they live. The service offers support to access learning and training, information, advice and guidance for people looking for educational opportunities including those in work as well as the unemployed. LEAP Centres also work with businesses to improve the skills of their workforce. There are two models of LEAP across Suffolk - LEAP Centres and LEAP Points.

Transport barriers.
Bus schedules are a major obstacle; buses from rural areas often don’t arrive until mid morning. The programmes can, and do, work around this but it makes it difficult for customers to enter into work experience or sustainable employment or formal education. Another issue is that the incentive effects of Educational Maintenance Allowance are much less for rural NEET due to the high costs of transport. This is a challenge for programmes such as Connexions and E2E as it can be more difficult to encourage rural young people to stay on a pathway to further/higher education.
**Email with attachments**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Date</th>
<th>Sender</th>
<th>File References</th>
</tr>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>10 May 2010</td>
<td>Sue Hatt</td>
<td>Email with attachments&lt;br&gt;Email&lt;br&gt;Steve&lt;br&gt;I understand from Hazel that you were asking about the minutes from the meetings of the Aimhigher rural and coastal group. Here they are – going back to 2006. The group was very loose and informal and was really just a coming together of practitioners facing similar challenges to share practice and try to identify solutions that worked. We never had any funding so used to rely on the host partnership to fund the meeting costs and that seemed to work OK. We certainly raised the profile of learners in rural and coastal areas up the national agenda and that was quite important to us. It certainly contributed to a change in the formula for the distribution of the AH funding.&lt;br&gt;I have also attached the proposal we submitted to Aimhigher for national funding in 2004. This wasn’t successful – but the proposal does make the case for the rural areas and might help you with your work.&lt;br&gt;I hope this helps – and would be quite happy to talk to you if I can help any further. I will be in the office on Wednesday or Friday.</td>
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<tr>
<td></td>
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<td>Attachments:&lt;br&gt;Meeting Minutes, 8June2007&lt;br&gt;Particular issues faced by partnerships in rural and coastal areas:&lt;br&gt;had not been involved in Excellence Challenge and so had limited experience of its culture and of selecting pupils for interventions,&lt;br&gt;have mixed catchment areas so that targeting within the school is more difficult than in urban areas where almost all students meet the targeting criteria,&lt;br&gt;are not in receipt of funds from the DfES but targeting within the school involves time and resources. Although most partnerships provide some funds for their target schools, some do not and it will be hard to engage schools in targeting pupils unless funds are available.&lt;br&gt;“Given the current funding imbalance between rural and urban areas, it is important to make the case for more funding for rural areas as targeting is more challenging in areas where pockets of deprivation are scattered across a large geographical area than in urban areas of uniform deprivation.”</td>
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<tr>
<th>Date</th>
<th>Author</th>
<th>File References</th>
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<tr>
<td>October 2009</td>
<td>LANTRA Research Factsheet for the East of England</td>
<td>Qualification levels&lt;br&gt;Workers within this sector are often highly skilled and experienced but can lack formal qualifications:&lt;br&gt;- 65% have qualifications of level 2 and above and the East of England average is 72%&lt;br&gt;- 13% have no formal qualifications and the East of England average is 9% (p.2)</td>
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</tbody>
</table>
**FACE Conference**  
(Forum for Access and Continuing Education),  
“Which Way Now to Widen Participation: Lifelong Learning, Economy and Society”  
30 June – 2 July 2010

**Conference paper**  
Rob Gresham and Chris Jackson, Aimhigher Hampshire and Isle of Wight.  
“Sustaining Aimhigher Associates: the challenges of mentoring in school”

**During presentation, one of the two said that she felt that “learners [on the Isle of Wight] require larger intervention to compensate for the isolation and spill-on effects of isolation”**

| Email (a response from one of the group to whom SW wrote on 6 May 2010) | 6 May 2010 | Tony Acland | Email | From: “Tony Acland”  
Date: 6 May 2010 14:47:32 BST  
To: “Dr Steven Wilkinson”  
Cc: “Lawrence Taylor”  
Subject: RE: AH Rural and Coastal Project
|---|---|---|---|
| Dear Steven  
I am delighted to learn that you are conducting this, much needed, research and I will be willing to help in any way we can.  
You seem to have captured the key issues already and, at present, I cannot think of any key research or data to forward.  
My only comments (aside from updating that we now have only 42 partnerships) is to emphasise that there has always been a debate within the Aimhigher rural and coastal network about the different, as well as common, issues for coastal as opposed to rural. Lawrie Taylor (former SE Regional Director and still a friend of Aimhigher in retirement) gave an excellent presentation at a network meeting on ‘Coastal’ challenges on the Isle of Wight three years ago. I have not got a copy to hand, but I am including Lawrie into this email in case he has kept a copy or wishes to add something more to the debate.  
The only other point to add is that a major stimulus for the network meeting was to campaign to obtain a fairer distribution of funding for rural and coastal areas. So-called budget ‘smoothing’ had been used for four years to prevent the formerly well funded Excellence in Cities and later Clusters losing out once the Hefce funding formula was applied. But Hefce removed this ‘smoothing’ for 2008/11 period and rural and coastal areas benefited despite the overall 12% decrease in Aimhigher funding. Sussex benefited most (percentage wise) with Hampshire and Isle of Wight second. Since this change, the stimulus for the network disappeared and, of course, our driving force, Sue Hatt, was no longer a regional director (great pity). So, we have not found a strong enough reason to meet again, although your work could lead to this i.e. for helping you and later dissemination of findings etc.  
With best wishes  
Tony Acland  
Director  
Aimhigher(Hampshire & Isle of Wight) |
| Conversation; member-checked via email | May 2010 | SW spoke to Hazel Watt, AH Cumbria | Different situations for each rural and coastal situation  
- some coastal areas had been seaside resorts, now out of favour; this leaves behind deprivation  
- people don’t want to leave deprived or geographically remote  
- campus visits and, if poss., residential would make a difference |
|---|---|---|---|
| Email from Hazel Watt, 10 May 2010, attachment | No date given, but 2005 or 2006? (mention made of raising HE experience of 18-30 yr olds by 2006) | Maggie Mason. Aspirations and attitudes in a rural school (attachment in Hazel’s email named the file as “MMU research Attitudes in a Rural School”) | Presentation on project in rural Cumbria to raise aspiration and attainment, specifically to increase the percentage of those aged 18-30 who experience HE. Findings include:  
- do not assume that all rural pupils have the same attitudes  
- in this school targeting events only for those without family experience of HE could exclude some pupils who could benefit, especially boys |
| Email from Hazel Watt, 10 May 2010, attachment | No date but “methodology built on research presented by S.Uttley at MMU in January 2004” | No name attached to the document. Aspirations of Young people in a Rural School | This 8-page document on work in Cumbria appears related to the P’pt (above). Its Findings included:  
Whereas locally born pupils were marginally more likely to aspire to Higher Education (49% compared to 45%), this masked very large differences for boys and girls. 93% of local girls aspired to HE whereas only 22% of local boys did so.  
A significantly different pattern in aspirations was seen for boys and girls, with large numbers of local boys expecting to go directly into work after GCSE’s, with or without training  
Among its Conclusions and Recommendations:  
It should not be assumed that all of the pupils living in a rural area have rural backgrounds or commitments, but those who have should be supported in their values and choices. Targeting events at those without parental experience in HE will result in significant numbers of pupils (the girls) being selected who would have attended HE regardless of the intervention. Excluding pupils whose siblings have attended HE would exclude many who were as unlikely to progress as those with no family experience. |
### Abstract:
The article argues that rurality has a cultural identity which cuts across other social divisions in society and that using the anthropological definition of ethnic to describe rural people may well represent their interests better. The value of education again appeared to be tightly linked to the interviewee's experience at school; those that had had a successful, enjoyable time at school were more likely to accept formal education as inherently 'good' (p.513)

Despite this reminder not to assume that all rural people share the same habitus, there are shared elements of rural life which bind people together in ways not yet fully recognised in much of the policy debate. While the politicians in the developed economies consider their response to rural need, the level of dissatisfaction in much of the countryside continues to grow. To date the provision of post-compulsory education—offering the potential to raise social and human capital—in rural areas has been all about access (making it easier, local schemes to provide computer suites in buses and local access sites to college materials) rather than considering a content more appropriate to rural learners. As a director at the Learning and Skills Council put it 'we are simply delivering an urban curriculum in the countryside'. (p.516)

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**Table**

|---|---|---|---|

**Martyn Richards Research. Suffolk 14-19 Strategy: Study in Association with Aimhigher Suffolk into Higher Education Rejectors. April 2009.**

/16 Without appearing to be strongly influenced by parents, some young people exhibited a dependence on their surroundings, often expressed as a desire to stay at, or near, home.
/17 Over sixty per cent of our kids come in on buses; even travelling to school for some of them is an arduous task. So thinking about going to live in London for three years is quite a difficult prospect for some of them. (Education professional)
and see references to CAR on page 35
Part 6.1.7 Need to experience work (starts on page 31):
/35 Nearly all our young sample owned and ran a car:
You described somebody rationalizing, Well can I pay it back….? People don’t think like that. three thousand pounds? I can buy a really nice car for that. It’s to do with aspirations when they’re younger. (Education professional)
As well as solving the often major issue in Suffolk of getting around, the car is a symbol of maturity and independence. Yet whilst still living at home, its symbolism includes the statement of that young person’s presence in the family home: Yes I’m still here, but I look after myself now. It’s a big step, but hasn’t completely severed the apron strings. N.B.: no references are given in this report |
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<th>On-Line Journal</th>
<th>1999 - 2010</th>
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<td><a href="http://www.staffs.ac.uk/journal/voltwelveone/articleone.htm">www.staffs.ac.uk/journal/voltwelveone/articleone.htm</a></td>
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- A range of WP issues discussed. Including
  - Impact of mentoring – issue 1
  - Dealing with disadvantage – issues 2
  - Dilemmas and Tensions – issue 9 – including addressing disadvantage re provision, employability,
  - Student living arrangements – issue 10
  - Role modelling – issue 12

<table>
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<th>(from Lorraine Sturman)</th>
<th>August 2010</th>
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<tr>
<td>Rural Exit Report (Paper 7) - written by the outgoing DfE Rural Adviser, Jim Tirrell</td>
<td>(a paper provided for the 14-19 Strategy Group for information only)</td>
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- Paper for the 14-19 Strategy Group.
- Key issues:
  - there is a universal desire to continue with partnership working, coupled with concerns about prospects for the future because of expected cuts to funding
  - evidence exists of a change in culture as a result of the 14-19 reforms, with providers much more aware and professionally focussed on meeting the learning needs of all young people and concerned about their future progression
  - the continuing challenge of providing equality of access to an appropriate range of learning opportunities in many rural areas
  - higher costs of transport and making provision available, in areas where generally base-line funding levels are at their lowest
  - a concern that the “Coalition” policies will stay based on an urban model, where the emergence of providers with different “status” could theoretically enhance choice, as compared to the impact in many rural areas, where ease of access to the local provider is likely to remain the deciding factor for the majority of learners
  - Recommendations for further action include:
    - support for partnership working in rural areas should be seen as a priority for future funding
    - further work is required to ensure that learning opportunities are not seriously prejudiced solely by where a young person lives
    - continue to stress the importance of coherence between provision development, universal and targeted support of learners and the strategic planning/promotion of post-16 provision in future policy statements
    - there is an urgency to confirm the future direction for “Foundation Learning” which is seen as a critical area for development in many rural LAs
Appendix B - Analysis of Literature

Free Text Analysis

The table below sets out the approach to analysing the free text. Each ‘free text’ question is analysed separately. There are 4 columns.  
Code – each response or part of a response is coded.  
Concept – the concept of the response (a generalised statement of meaning) is then given  
Context – an example or examples of this concept is given to demonstrate the context of the statement  
Occurrence – this provides an indication of how many times the concept has been counted in the response set.

Open-Ended Response

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<th>Concept</th>
<th>Context</th>
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<td>AI</td>
<td>Accessibility Issues</td>
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<td>Outreach and mobile provision</td>
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<td>BSI</td>
<td>Basic Skills Important</td>
<td>basic skills</td>
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<td>CAD</td>
<td>Coastal Area Deprivation</td>
<td>seaside resorts, now out of favour;</td>
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<tr>
<td>Code</td>
<td>Description</td>
<td>Notes</td>
<td>Impact</td>
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<td>CREM</td>
<td>Coastal &amp; Rural Ethnic Minority</td>
<td>may well represent their interests better</td>
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<td>EA&amp;P</td>
<td>Employer Attitudes and Practices</td>
<td>to potential employees from rural areas</td>
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<td>EPI</td>
<td>Education Provision Issues</td>
<td>Educational Provision</td>
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<td>FRAC</td>
<td>Funding in Rural Areas Challenge</td>
<td>funding for FE in rural areas</td>
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<td>HECI</td>
<td>HE Confidence Important</td>
<td>and confidence levels</td>
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<td>young people’s understanding of higher education</td>
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<td>HE Role Models</td>
<td>role-models and the perception of HE’s relevance</td>
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<td>Information Advice and Guidance</td>
<td>marketing, IAG</td>
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<td>IUI</td>
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<td>use of ICT</td>
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<td>Identifying Need Important</td>
<td>identifying need</td>
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<td>ISNI</td>
<td>Informal Student Networks Important</td>
<td>informal networks are a major factor</td>
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<td>ISI</td>
<td>Influence on Students Important</td>
<td>young people are influenced by a wide range of … factors</td>
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<td>LAHI</td>
<td>Living Away from Home Issues</td>
<td>going to live in London for three years is quite a difficult prospect</td>
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<td>Learning Group Access Concerns</td>
<td>Rural Access to Learning Group</td>
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<td>LHSB</td>
<td>Lack of High Speed Broadband</td>
<td>Lack of high speed broadband</td>
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<td>LLEO</td>
<td>Limited Local Employment Opportunities</td>
<td>limited range of local employment opportunities</td>
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<td>Lack of Mobile Phone Coverage</td>
<td>lack of mobile phone coverage</td>
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<td>LPD</td>
<td>Low Population Density</td>
<td>low popul’n density;</td>
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<td>LPT</td>
<td>Limited Public transport</td>
<td>ltd public tpt</td>
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<td>LPW</td>
<td>Local Partnership Working</td>
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<td>Lowered Student Aspirations at School-leaving Age</td>
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<tr>
<td>LTDC</td>
<td>Long Travel Distance Challenge</td>
<td>long distances to travel to college</td>
<td>3</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Code</td>
<td>Description</td>
<td>Details</td>
<td>Source(s)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>------</td>
<td>-------------</td>
<td>---------</td>
<td>-----------</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>MAL</td>
<td>Male Aspirations are Lower</td>
<td>whereas only 22% of local boys did so</td>
<td>1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>MSWE</td>
<td>Matching Skills With Employment</td>
<td>mismatch between the skills of potential labour</td>
<td>2</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>PSEI</td>
<td>Positive School Experience Important</td>
<td>more likely to accept formal education</td>
<td>1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>PRRL</td>
<td>Preference for Remote and Rural Living</td>
<td>people don’t want to leave deprived or geographically remote</td>
<td>1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>REDS</td>
<td>Rural Education Deprivation Significant</td>
<td>rural deprivation was just as significant for education</td>
<td>1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>RES</td>
<td>Rural Employers are SME</td>
<td>concentrated in small and medium sized firms</td>
<td>2</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>SAC</td>
<td>Student Attainment is Comparable</td>
<td>GCSE results not lower for rural</td>
<td>1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>SAV</td>
<td>Students Attitudes Vary</td>
<td>do not assume that all rural pupils have the same attitudes</td>
<td>2</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>SBP</td>
<td>Sharing Best Practice</td>
<td>identify and share good practice as it emerges</td>
<td>1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>SOC</td>
<td>School/College Co-operation</td>
<td>enhancing co-operations between school sixth forms FE colleges</td>
<td>1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>SCSR</td>
<td>Student Choices Should be Respected</td>
<td>supported in their values and choices</td>
<td>3</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>SNRE</td>
<td>Seasonal Nature of Rural Employment</td>
<td>seasonal nature of many employment opportunities</td>
<td>1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>SNI</td>
<td>Skills Needs Issues</td>
<td>Skills Needs</td>
<td>2</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>SSS</td>
<td>School Size Significant</td>
<td>Small size, capacity and relative isolation of some rural schools</td>
<td>1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>STFI</td>
<td>Short Term Funding Issue</td>
<td>2-year funded programme</td>
<td>1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>TCC</td>
<td>Transport Costs Concerns</td>
<td>cost for diploma tpt in rural areas will increase dramatically</td>
<td>3</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>THI</td>
<td>Tied Housing Issue</td>
<td>tied housing</td>
<td>1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>TTP</td>
<td>Transport Timetabling Problematic</td>
<td>mismatch between the time tabling</td>
<td>2</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>VLCS</td>
<td>Virtual Learning Community Successful</td>
<td>Virtual Learning Community (2003-2005)</td>
<td>1</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
Challenges to progression included
- funding for FE in rural areas FRAC
- long distances to travel to college LTDC

Accessibility, AI Skills Needs, SNI Educational Provision EPI
- tpt issues (under Accessibility)
- refers to several other relevant reports and presentations (Defra, LSC, Palmer, Watts&Bridges, etc.)

Although this paper is not specific to rural/coastal, the authors make some relevant to young people's lives. HERM (referring to a 17-year old from Luton:)

Imran's social networks reinforce the belief that HE is not necessarily beneficial. It can be difficult to achieve anything outside his local community AI and few successful role models are recognised beyond it. HERM (p.52)

There is the need to address young people's understanding of higher education, particularly their perceptions of its economic, social and academic relevance to their lives, their aspirations and their achievements (p.56) HERI

Inter alia, see recommendation 18: that Defra establish mechanisms by which local LSCs, LEAs and providers co-ordinate their work to ensure that the educational needs of rural communities and the rural economy are being met. LPW

Particular attention should be paid to enhancing co-operations between school sixth forms and further education colleges SCC so that students in rural areas can be provided with a wide range of educational opportunities

Factors that affect rural entry to employment:
- low popul'n density: LPD distances to centres of provision LTDC and placements; ltd public tpt; LPT scarcity of larger employers LPD
- also, learners’ attitudes HERI and confidence HECI levels re tpt and relocation add to problems of travel, placement and moving on to work or college (and are “likely to be more difficult to resolve in rural areas than in conurbations”

ExecSum identifies the following under its section, “Good practice in overcoming the barriers”
- collaboration and partnership LPW
- identifying need INI
- use of ICT IUI
- Outreach and mobile provision API
- tpt LPT
- marketing IAG
- basic skills BSI

Map of geographic variation in low income – illustrates the rural and coastal nature of Norfolk Inter alia, GCSE results not lower for rural cf'd with urban SAC
Tpt issues for students in rural areas who enrol for 14-19 diplomas (vocat'l qualific'n) LPT
- concern by many councils that cost for diploma tpt in rural areas will increase dramatically TCC
- Rural Access to Learning Group (Ralg) LGAC

2-year funded programme STFI
IAG; IAG

Virtual Learning Community (2003-2005) VLCS
(tel chat, SW with JMorgan) - Coordination of information
section 4.2, Lowered Student Aspirations at School-leaving Age LSA
Also:
- "[re work experience] local economy or infrastructural networks … have a marked impact on their aspirations and choices" HERM (p.11)
- "rural deprivation was just as significant for education and employment services, but this has been generally unacknowledged" REDS (p.11)

Characteristics of rurality (pp11-12)
- lack of public transport LPT
- cost of public transport TCC
- mismatch between the time tabling of available public transport and working hours TTP
- distance LTDC
- limited range of local employment opportunities LLEO
- mismatch between the skills of potential labour force and the available jobs MSWE
- attitudes and practices of employers in rural and urban settings, to potential employees from rural areas EA&P
- tied housing THI
- seasonal nature of many employment opportunities. SNRE
- re rural and urban labour markets characterised by (p.12)
  - rural employment tends to be concentrated in small and medium sized firms RES
  - young people are influenced by a wide range of both formal and informal factors, individuals, agencies, grapevine, beliefs and values circulating through conversation, families and so on ISI
  - informal networks are a major factor in young people moving successfully from unemployment to employment. INEI

On average, unemployment is higher in urban than in rural, although the difference is only a few percentage points and some rural areas have relatively high levels of unemployment and fewer opportunities for skilled, well paid jobs (p.2) MSWE

Rural labour market characteristics include:
Progression out of low skilled, low paid employment is a particularly important challenge, because nearly half of those in poverty in rural areas are in working households; a greater
Local authorities amongst others are being encouraged to take the Skills Pledge – a voluntary and public commitment made by employers to train their employees and help them gain new qualifications. Likewise, the Apprenticeships programme is being promoted as a core part of the Local Government Workforce Strategy. Transport is typically the main barrier to the effective delivery of employment and skills support identified by those delivering in rural areas.

Learning and Enterprise Access Points
The LEAP Project provides a unique layer of service delivery, acting as an entry point for national employment and skills programmes. The LEAP project is a unique collaboration between education providers, strategic partners and funding agencies which include University Campus Suffolk, Suffolk Learning and Skills Council, Suffolk County Council and the East of England Development Agency. The project was set up with the aim of increasing access to learning for hard to reach groups disadvantaged by the rural nature of where they live. The service offers support to access learning and training, information, advice and guidance for people looking for educational opportunities including those in work as well as the unemployed. This pathway to employment project will be delivered through a network of 13 LEAP Centres and 100 smaller LEAP Points which will be completed by March 2010.

Lack of high speed broadband and, in many rural areas, lack of mobile phone coverage, is a significant factor – affecting local economies and services. It is also a major issue for children who live in rural areas. With social networking such a feature of youth culture, not to mention the expectation that children can access the Internet for homework purposes, lack of access can lead to frustration and exclusion.

Employment and skills
Although we are coming out of recession, the next 18 months will present huge challenges in rural areas. Traditional barriers to gaining employment in rural areas - inadequate public transport and less training and guidance provision - have been reinforced by the recession which has hit jobs and apprenticeships.

Of the 573 Job Centre Plus outlets in England, around 80 are in market towns with populations of more than 10,000, but only 23 in more rural areas. Government-approved training schemes, accessed largely through Job Centre Plus, are not a viable option in rural areas.

Key statistic:
At the end of June 2009, 40% of 16-24 year olds in rural areas were unemployed (107,000) or economically inactive (267,000).

Recommendation
New ways must be found to give better access to support for seeking jobs and training available through Job Centre Plus, Connexions or other mechanisms such as apprenticeship schemes. The support infrastructure should be strengthened to reach the smaller numbers of young people in villages and hamlets. This should extend into schools and the excellent initiatives such as the Prince's Trust to raise the aspirations of young people from an early age.

Further and higher education institutions should follow the best practice examples of some of the new universities in reaching out into schools and local communities to break down the barriers of fear of the unknown.

From website: This report examines the delivery of a selection of national employment and skills initiatives to vulnerable groups in rural areas of England, to assess how effective Government employment and skills programmes are in meeting the needs of vulnerable rural residents in helping them into work, remain in work and progress in work.
evidence from providers indicates that uptake of Apprenticeships and Train to Gain, is relatively good in rural areas. The case studies reveal how the piloting or implementation of programmes in rural areas is being done with good awareness of rural issues, and with the development of positive practices. However, knowledge of rural/urban differences in the performance of programmes appears to be very limited at national and regional level because data is not analysed against rural/urban definitions and general monitoring and evaluation arrangements do not ask whether performance varies from place to place. EPI

LEAP Centres.
The Forest Heath case study largely focuses on the Learning Education Action Points (LEAP) Centres and Points delivery model that deliver support to vulnerable groups in market towns across rural Suffolk. The LEAP Project provides an extra layer of service delivery, acting as an entry point for national employment and skills programmes. The LEAP project is a unique collaboration between education providers, strategic partners and funding agencies which include University Campus Suffolk, Suffolk Learning and Skills Council, Suffolk County Council and the East of England Development Agency. The project was set up with the aim of increasing access to learning for hard to reach groups disadvantaged by the rural nature of where they live. The service offers support to access learning and training, information, advice and guidance for people looking for educational opportunities including those in work as well as the unemployed. LEAP Centres also work with businesses to improve the skills of their workforce. There are two models of LEAP across Suffolk - LEAP Centres and LEAP Points. IAG

Transport barriers.
Bus schedules are a major obstacle: buses from rural areas often don't arrive until mid morning. TTP The programmes can, and do, work around this but it makes it difficult for customers to enter into work experience or sustainable employment or formal education. Another issue is that the incentive effects of Educational Maintenance Allowance are much less for rural NEET due to the high costs of transport. TCC This is a challenge for programmes such as Connexions and E2E as it can be more difficult to encourage rural young people to stay on a pathway to further/ higher education.

Steve - I understand from Hazel that you were asking about the minutes from the meetings of the Aimhigher rural and coastal group. Here they are – going back to 2006. The group was very loose and informal and was really just a coming together of practitioners facing similar challenges to share practice and try to identify solutions that worked. We never had any funding so used to rely on the host partnership to fund the meeting costs and that seemed to work OK. We certainly raised the profile of learners in rural and coastal areas up the national agenda and that was quite important to us. It certainly contributed to a change in the formula for the distribution of the AH funding. ISI
I hope this helps – and would be quite happy to talk to you if I can help any further. I will be in the office on Wednesday or Friday.
Best wishes
Sue

Attachments:
Meeting Minutes, 8June2007
Particular issues faced by partnerships in rural and coastal areas:
- had not been involved in Excellence Challenge and so had limited experience of its culture and of selecting pupils for interventions. ISI
- have mixed catchment areas so that targeting within the school is more difficult than in urban areas where almost all students meet the targeting criteria
are not in receipt of funds from the DfES but targeting within the school involves time and resources. Although most partnerships provide some funds for their target schools, some do not and it will be hard to engage schools in targeting pupils unless funds are available. FRAC

"Given the current funding imbalance between rural and urban areas, it is important to make the case for more funding for rural areas as targeting is more challenging in areas where pockets of deprivation are scattered across a large geographical area than in urban areas of uniform deprivation." FRAC

Qualification levels
Workers within this sector are often highly skilled and experienced but can lack formal qualifications:
- 65% have qualifications of level 2 and above and the East of England average is 72%
- 13% have no formal qualifications and the East of England average is 9% (p.2) SNI

During presentation, one of the two said that she felt that "learners [on the Isle of Wight] require larger intervention to compensate for the isolation and spill-on effects" of isolation AI

From: “Tony.Acland”
Date: 6 May 2010 14:47:32 BST
To: “Dr Steven Wilkinson”
Subject: RE: AH Rural and Coastal Project

Dear Steven - I am delighted to learn that you are conducting this, much needed, research and I will be willing to help in any way we can.

You seem to have captured the key issues already and, at present, I cannot think of any key research or data to forward.
My only comments (aside from updating that we now have only 42 partnerships) is to emphasise that there has always been a debate within the Aimhigher rural and coastal network about the different, as well as common, issues for coastal as opposed to rural. Lawrie Taylor (former SE Regional Director and still a friend of Aimhigher in retirement) gave an excellent presentation at a network meeting on ‘Coastal’ challenges on the Isle of Wight three years ago. I have not got a copy to hand, but I am including Lawrie into this email in case he has kept a copy or wishes to add something more to the debate.
The only other point to add is that a major stimulus for the network meeting was to campaign to obtain a fairer distribution of funding for rural and coastal areas. So-called budget ‘smoothing’ had been used for four years to prevent the formerly well funded Excellence in Cities and later Clusters losing out once the Hefce funding formula was applied. But Hefce removed this ‘smoothing’ for 2008/11 period and rural and coastal areas benefited despite the overall 12% decrease in Aimhigher funding, Sussex benefited most (percentage wise) with Hampshire and Isle of Wight second. Since this change, the stimulus for the network disappeared and, of course, our driving force, Sue Hatt, was no longer a regional director (great pity). So, we have not found a strong enough reason to meet again, although your work could lead to this i.e. for helping you and later dissemination of findings etc. FRAC

With best wishes
Tony Acland
Director
Aimhigher (Hampshire & Isle of Wight)

Different situations for each rural and coastal situation
- some coastal areas had been seaside resorts, now out of favour; this leaves behind deprivation CAD
- people don’t want to leave deprived or geographically remote PRRL
- campus visits and, if poss., residential would make a difference ISI

Presentation on project in rural Cumbria to raise aspiration and attainment, specifically to increase the percentage of those aged 18-30 who experience HE. Findings include:
- do not assume that all rural pupils have the same attitudes SAV
- in this school targeting events only for those without family experience of HE could exclude some pupils who could benefit, especially boys ISI
This 8-page document on work in Cumbria appears related to the P'pt (above). Its Findings included:

Whereas locally born pupils were marginally more likely to aspire to Higher Education (49% compared to 45%), this masked very large differences for boys and girls. 93% of local girls aspired to HE whereas only 22% of local boys did so.

MAL

A significantly different pattern in aspirations was seen for boys and girls, with large numbers of local boys expecting to go directly into work after GCSE's, with or without training.

LSA

Among its Conclusions and Recommendations:

Targeting events at those without parental experience in HE will result in significant numbers of pupils (the girls) being selected who would have attended HE regardless of the intervention.

SCSR

Excluding pupils whose siblings have attended HE would exclude many who were as unlikely to progress as those with no family experience.

ISI

Abstract:  The article argues that rurality has a cultural identity which cuts across other social divisions in society and that using the anthropological definition of ethnic to describe rural population may be more appropriate.

CREM

The value of education again appeared to be tightly linked to the interviewee's experience at school; those that had had a successful, enjoyable time at school were more likely to accept formal education as inherently good.

PSEI

Article ends with:

Despite this reminder not to assume that all rural people share the same values, there are shared elements of rural life which bind people together in ways not yet fully recognised in much of the policy debate. While the politicians in the developed economies consider their response to rural need, the level of dissatisfaction in much of the countryside continues to grow. To date, the provision of post-compulsory education — offering the potential to raise social and human capital — has been all about access, making it easier, local schemes to provide computer suites in buses and local access sites to college materials. As a director at the Learning and Skills Council put it: we are simply delivering an urban curriculum in the countryside.

IUI

- paper for the 14-19 Strategy Group - nothing on HE

Qualitative findings are in section 6; part 6.1.2 Parents (starts on page 15):

16 Without appearing to be strongly influenced by parents, some young people exhibited a dependence on their surroundings, often expressing a desire to stay at, or near, home.

SCSR

17 Over sixty per cent of our kids come in on buses; even travelling to school for some of them is an arduous task. (Education professional)

LAHI

and see references to CAR on page 35

Part 6.1.7 Need to experience work (starts on page 31):

18 Without appearing to be strongly influenced by parents, some young people exhibited a dependence on their surroundings, often expressing a desire to stay at, or near, home. (Education professional)
Nearly all our young sample owned and ran a car:

You described somebody rationalizing, Well can I pay it back…? People don’t think like that. three thousand pounds? I can buy a really nice car for that. It’s to do with aspirations when they’re younger. (Education professional) SAV

As well as solving the often major issue in Suffolk of getting around, the car is a symbol of maturity and independence. Yet whilst still living at home, its symbolism includes the statement of that young person’s presence in the family home: Yes I’m still here, but I look after myself now. It’s a big step, but hasn’t completely severed the apron strings. SCSR

N.B.: no references are given in this report

Table of projects and contacts, support networks and journals
A range of WP issues discussed. Including
Impact of mentoring – issue 1 ISI
Dealing with disadvantage – issues 2
Dilemmas and Tensions – issue 9 – including addressing disadvantage re provision, employability, API
Student living arrangements – issue 10 LAHI
Role modelling – issue 12 HERM

Key issues:
- there is a universal desire to continue with partnership working, coupled with concerns about prospects for the future because of expected cuts to funding
- evidence exists of a change in culture as a result of the 14-19 reforms, with providers much more aware and professionally focussed on meeting the learning needs of all young people and concerned about their future progression
- the continuing challenge of providing equality of access to an appropriate range of learning opportunities in many rural areas
- higher costs of transport and making provision available, in areas where generally base-line funding levels are at their lowest
- a concern that the “Coalition” policies will stay based on an urban model, where the emergence of providers with different “status” could theoretically enhance choice, as compared to the impact in many rural areas, where ease of access to the local provider is likely to remain the deciding factor for the majority of learners

Recommendations for further action include:
- support for partnership working in rural areas should be seen as a priority for future funding LPW
- further work is required to ensure that learning opportunities are not seriously prejudiced solely by where a young person lives EPI
- continue to stress the importance of coherence between provision development, universal and targeted support of learners and the strategic planning/promotion of post-16 provision in future policy statements INI
- there is an urgency to confirm the future direction for “Foundation Learning” which is seen as a critical area for development in many rural Las BSI
Points made by Tirrell include:
- Small size, capacity and relative isolation of some rural schools SSS
- emerging as a (possibly the) critical issue LPW
- capacity to engage with the planning and management processes required for effective collaborative working LPW
- Perceived levels of achievement suppressing motivation to change LSA

Emerging challenges as understanding and engagement increases
- the impact of Raising the Participation Age and the breadth of provision that will need to be commissioned API
- linking with integrated youth support and the role of third-sector providers API

Priorities for rural support include:
- identify and share good practice as it emerges – strategic management and delivery SBP
- monitor outcomes from rural capital projects + guidance on the development and management of rural “skills centres” BSI
- guidance with transport planning – sharing strategies and practice + linking coordinators LPT