

Delivering Services in Bedfordshire's Rural Areas
Thursday 8th July 2010, 2-5pm
Bedfordshire and Luton Mind, The Old Fire Station 10 Bedford Street
Amphill MK45 2NB

Mini-conference organised by BRCC, Mind and Voices for All

Public and voluntary sector organisations alike face challenges in delivering services in rural areas. Because settlements are smaller, it often costs more per head to deliver services locally (this is generally known as the 'rural premium'). Where services are delivered in more central locations, people often require their own transport in order to access them. Awareness of services is also generally lower in rural areas.

Many villages in Bedfordshire fall within the top 5% most deprived nationally with regards to geographical barriers to services, yet in some of these areas over 10% of households do not have their own vehicle. People in these households will largely be those most in need of our services.

It is clear that these issues will become more pressing in the current financial climate: the only realistic way of improving services to rural areas will be for providers to collaborate more closely. This might include making joint funding bids; delivering services jointly in order to seek efficiencies; sharing information, intelligence and contacts; and/or developing multi-use facilities.

BRCC, Mind and Voices for All are organising a mini-conference on Thursday 8th July 2-5pm at the Old Fire Station in Amphill to discuss these issues and how service providers might address them collaboratively. 20 places are available on a first-come, first-served basis, 1 place per organisation.

Please respond to Jon Boswell, The Smithy, the Village, Old Warden, Biggleswade SG18 9HQ. Tel: 01767 626460. Email jonb@bedsrcc.org.uk