



# YORKSHIRE RURAL COMMUNITY COUNCIL

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Peter Stockton  
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Yorebridge House  
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2 October 2006

Dear Mr Stockton,

## Craven Rural Housing Enabler

Having reviewed the current budget for the above position, my records show that the funding committed by the Yorkshire Dales National Parks for 2005/2006 was not invoiced. I enclose a copy of the email from yourself confirming the commitment of £2,000.00 dated November 2004 for your information.

I have enclosed the invoice for 2005/2006 for the sum of £2,000.00 and an invoice for the current year, 2006/2007, again for the sum of £2,000.00.

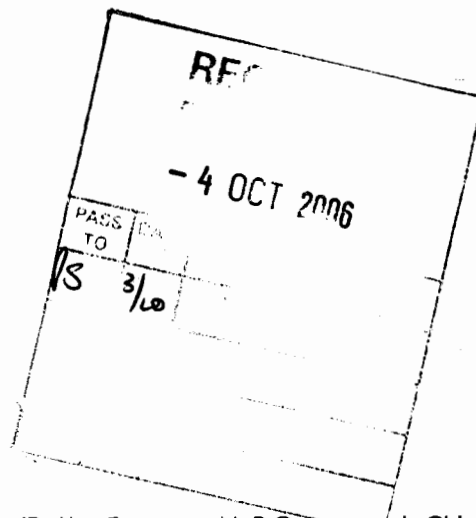
Please accept my apologies for the oversight. This was due to staff changes in the finance department with a period of temporary cover.

Thank you for your continued support for the Rural Housing Enabler and should you require any additional information or have any questions, then do not hesitate to contact me.

Yours sincerely

Susan Edwards  
Head of Finance and Administration

Enc



## YORKSHIRE DALES NATIONAL PARK AUTHORITY

28<sup>th</sup> November 2006**FINANCIAL SUPPORT FOR THE CRAVEN RURAL HOUSING ENABLER****Purpose of the Report**

To seek Members' views on a request for financial assistance from the Yorkshire Rural Communities Council (YRCC), towards the cost of funding the Craven Rural Housing Enabler (CRHE).

**Strategic Planning Framework**

The information and recommendation(s) contained in this report are consistent with the Authority's statutory purposes and its approved strategic planning framework:

- ***National Park Management Plan***

Community and Culture Aim - "Thriving communities in the Yorkshire Dales will continue to develop their strong cultural heritage. Services for Yorkshire Dales National Park communities will be available and accessible. These communities will take an active role in shaping their own sustainable and prosperous future and will recognise and take responsibility for the impact they have."

- ***Best Value Performance Plan***

"Promote sustainable development within the National Park as the basis for the long-term social and economic well-being of local communities ...".

**Background**

At its meeting on 27th January 2004, the National Park Authority resolved to contribute £2,000 to support the work of the Craven Rural Housing Enabler, in carrying out housing needs surveys during 2004/05. Extracts from both the Chief Executive's report and Minutes of that meeting are attached at **Appendix 1**.

On 4 October 2006, the Authority received a letter from YRCC, the parent body for the CRHE, requesting further contributions of £2,000 for 2005/06 and 2006/07. A copy of that letter is attached at **Appendix 2**.

A subsequent email dated 19 October requested that the Authority contribute £3,000 for 2007/08. This email contains information of a 'personal' nature and, therefore, is circulated as a 'private' report (Agenda Item 19).

The initial report and minutes, from 2004, indicate that the Authority only approved one year's contribution to the CRHE. No request was made for further assistance for 2005/06 or 2006/07.

The YRCC's letter suggests that it had intended to ask for money after 2004, but omitted to do so. However, in the absence of any request, the National Park Authority made no budgetary provision for this purpose beyond that made in 2004/05. This raises the question of whether the Authority should make a retrospective contribution to the YRCC. The initial contribution was made specifically to support the CRHE in producing housing needs surveys. These are important to the Authority's handling of affordable housing schemes. However, Craven District Council has subsequently used consultants to produce such surveys, so circumstances have changed. Therefore it is recommended that retrospective payments are not approved.

The CRHE still has a potentially useful role in helping Parish Councils and others in bringing forward affordable housing schemes. Since 2004, planning permission has been attained, and work has commenced, on a scheme for eight affordable houses in Grassington. This development was facilitated by the CRHE. The CRHE has also been working with other communities on schemes that have not yet reached the planning application stage.

Following discussions with Richmondshire District Council, agreement has been reached on the provision of support for its new RHE. This will be in the form of office accommodation at Yoredale. South Lakeland District Council do not employ a RHE covering the National Park.

### **Financial Implications**

Members will be aware of the difficult financial position facing the NPA for 2007/08 and beyond so there is a question of whether this application for assistance should be considered by the Finance & Resources Committee when it discusses the whole of the 2007/08 budget. Nonetheless this is a policy matter and the Authority may wish to indicate or instruct the Finance & Resources Committee as to the action required.

### **RECOMMENDATION**

1. That Members confirm that no retrospective payments be made for the 2005/06 and 2006/07 financial years.
2. Members' views on the funding request for 2007/08 are sought.

DAVID BUTTERWORTH  
CHIEF EXECUTIVE

7<sup>th</sup> November 2006

**National Park Authority Meeting: 27th January 2004****Chief Executive's Report****Craven Rural Housing Enabler**

I have recently received a letter from the Craven Housing Scheme, a part of Foundation Housing, requesting a contribution towards the Post of the Craven Rural Housing Enabler.

Some members will be aware that this post, currently funded by Craven District Council and the Countryside Agency, carries out housing needs surveys in the parishes of Craven in order to assist with the provision of affordable housing. Recent surveys have been undertaken at Grassington, Embsay, Burnsall and Austwick.

From April 2004 the Countryside Agency are reducing their funding for the post from a half to a third leaving a shortfall of approximately £4K per year. Craven Housing is seeking contributions from other bodies, one of whom is the National Park Authority.

Members will be aware that the provision of housing is a statutory function of the District Councils. Nonetheless it is believed that a contribution of £2K, from the National Park Authority for the 2004/05 financial year, would be appropriate. Any future contribution would be assessed in light of the Authority's financial situation and the continued value of the Post to the Authority's objectives.

Members may recall that in considering a paper entitled 'Response to Parish Council Petition' at their meeting in March 2003 it was resolved that: 'wherever possible, within its remit, the Authority will facilitate affordable housing.' Through its recent financial support for the Upper Dales Housing Equity Scheme the Authority has shown its determination to fulfil its responsibilities in relation to this important area. Arguably, financial support for this post has even more justification. The information that is provided by the Craven Housing Enabler is required by this Authority for planning purposes. Without accurate, up to date information on affordable housing needs, from a reliable source, we will experience a range of difficulties.

Moreover, as a planning authority, we need to go beyond simply adopting affordable housing policies. There is an expectation from developers, housing associations, Parish Council, residents and government to back our policies up with sound evidence. This post provides such evidence.

**Recommendation**

That Members commit £2k for the 2004/05 financial year as a contribution towards the funding of the Craven Rural Housing Enabler.

## **National Park Authority Meeting: 27th January 2004**

### **Minutes**

#### **1112. REPORT OF THE CHIEF EXECUTIVE**

CONSIDERED –

The report of the Chief Executive.

Members' commented that other areas of the Park might welcome similar support to that proposed for the post of Craven Rural Housing Enabler. The Chief responded that whilst the recommendation before members was in response to a specific request, he was prepared to speak the other District Councils.

**RESOLVED –**

That:

£2k be committed for the 2004/2005 financial year as a contribution towards the funding of the Craven Rural Housing Enabler and the Chief Executive speak to other District Councils within the Authority area on housing provision;