

**WHAT MORE CAN RURAL COMMUNITIES DO TO RAISE AWARENESS OF THEIR NEEDS AND INCREASE THEIR INFLUENCE ON POLICY MAKERS?**

- Record more information about their projects and activities
- Increase awareness of, and share best practice
- Promote and share Good News stories (including the personal)
- Celebrate the areas
- Bring rural communities together more
- Have a united front – make common cause
- Abolish the ‘box’ of Communities First – most rural areas need this type of support
- We need an independent voice to represent rural CF areas in/ to WAG; to facilitate the gathering of the rural voice from consultation in rural communities
- Expand/ improve the evidence base
- Make sure we are reaching everyone – the single parents, the elderly etc.
- Develop options and solutions to address issues – not simply a ‘wish list’ but sensible ideas about how to take things forward
- Identify and support new rural leaders – not the ‘usual’ suspects
- Empower residents through community development
- Take responsibility for making change to the community

**WHAT MORE CAN POLICY MAKERS DO TO RESPOND TO THE NEEDS OF RURAL COMMUNITIES?**

- Identification of need in rural areas needs a more flexible mechanism
- Use statistics carefully and use the right indicators
- Deep rural areas need to be individually analysed and weighted accordingly
- One size does not fit all
- Bend their spending towards Communities First rural areas
- We need a quality not a quantity approach
- Take on board allowing communities to take risks (eg under LEADER II)
- Try to understand the world north of Brecon more
- Create more opportunities to listen to rural communities – eg a rural ‘parliament’
- Policy makers need to invest time in consulting with people and understanding the areas’ issues, including the geographic issues and logistics
- Need for better joining up and hearing people talk to each other – exchange of practice
- Need a two way consultation approach – engagement and listening
- Need for honesty in feedback and no jargon