



## A Rural Parliament for Scotland

Tuesday May 29 2012  
Holyrood Hotel, Edinburgh

# A Rural Parliament for Scotland

Seminar

Tuesday May 29, 2012

Holyrood Hotel Edinburgh

“unity gives power... if all rural communities were united, came together, inspired each other and communicated to policy makers and each other in the future, that would be a good way forward for Scotland.”

RICHARD LOCHHEAD MSP,  
CABINET SECRETARY FOR RURAL AFFAIRS AND THE ENVIRONMENT

## Full Report

Compiled and edited by Vanessa Halhead

Sound recording and transcription by 3rd Horizons

# A Rural Parliament for Scotland

Report of Seminar

Vanessa Halhead  
Rural Parliament Adviser

July 2012

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# Introduction

This report has been compiled as a full and accurate record of the seminar which took place in Edinburgh on May 29, 2012. The event was an important milestone in the process of assessing the merits of establishing a Rural Parliament for Scotland.

The proposal to develop a Rural Parliament in Scotland is a commitment in the 2011-12 Programme for Government, to ensure the voice of rural Scotland is heard and to enable rural communities to engage more effectively with Government.

A 'Rural Parliament' is a process that takes place over a two-year period, culminating in a high profile event, bringing together all sectors of rural society and interests to highlight rural issues and to discuss rural priorities with each other and with Government. It is not a formal part of government, nor is it a parliament in the sense of a legislative or decision making body. It is a 'bottom-up' process of involvement and debate between the people of rural Scotland and policy makers, to enable better understanding, improved policy and action to address rural issues. The concept of a Rural Parliament was first developed in Sweden and subsequently inspired similar initiatives in other European countries.

At present, Scotland does not have a single mechanism for enabling a collective rural voice, inclusive of all interests and geographical areas. There are few opportunities for the collective interests of rural communities to be raised, debated and communicated to Government. The lack of such a mechanism often results in issues being addressed sectorally or geographically, with no clear process for gaining a comprehensive, grass-roots view of rural issues. The evidence from other parts of Europe has revealed the benefits to rural areas of their Rural Parliaments in achieving this.

This initial seminar was designed to test the concept of a Rural Parliament with representatives of rural Scotland and to discuss possible models, opportunities and barriers to success. Delegates heard about examples from four European countries where rural parliaments have been established and bring recognised benefits to their rural communities: Sweden, Estonia, The Netherlands and Slovenia.

The seminar was organised by the Scottish Government and was attended by over 100 delegates from across rural Scotland drawn from rural communities, community networks, third sector organisations, representative bodies and local and national government.

Richard Lochhead MSP, Cabinet Secretary for Rural Affairs and the Environment addressed conference. He made clear his view that the event was being held in a spirit of genuine open inquiry and remained interested and supportive of the initiative, if there was an appetite from delegates to develop the idea.

This report documents the seminar in full, as a record for all who were present and for those who were not, but have an interest in the possibility of a Rural Parliament for Scotland. It has been compiled from the sound recordings, speakers texts, work group reports and transcripts of the panel discussions. It also includes a summary of the post-seminar evaluation survey and proposals for the next steps.

The Scottish Government wishes to extend its thanks to all who have been involved in and assisted this discussion so far.

## The process so far

The Scottish Government initiated the process to examine the relevance of a Rural Parliament model for Scotland. So far this has involved:

- commissioning a report from the Rural Policy Centre of the Scottish Agricultural College, to look at the models and achievements of Rural Parliaments in other countries,
- contracting an adviser, Vanessa Halhead, with experience of both the European Rural Movements and their Rural Parliaments and of rural development in Scotland to advise and assist in the work,
- inviting a range of rural stakeholder organisations to discuss the proposal, from which an interim steering group formed to draft a vision statement for the Rural Parliament, and provide guidance and support to organise the initial seminar,
- organising the seminar on May 29, 2012 to discuss the opportunities that a Rural Parliament may present for Scotland,
- undertaking a post-seminar on-line survey of the participants to establish responses to the event and to the proposal for a Rural Parliament,
- holding a steering group meeting to assess the outputs from the seminar and survey and agree the next steps,
- commissioning a short consultative study, from the Rural Policy Centre of the Scottish Agricultural College, to identify options for progressing the Rural Parliament, to inform a stakeholder group meeting.

## Follow up and next steps

### Seminar evaluation survey

An on-line survey was carried out with the seminar delegates following the event. 62 responses were received. The main findings were as follows:

71% found the morning and afternoon sessions very useful or useful

58% think there should be a Rural Parliament

34% don't know, are undecided or responded 'Other'

8% think there should not be a Rural Parliament

43% would like to be kept up to date with developments

59% said they wanted to be actively involved

More detail on the individual comments received can be found in Section 4 of this report or in the full survey report on the Scottish National Rural Network website: [www.ruralgateway.org.uk](http://www.ruralgateway.org.uk)

### Follow up meeting

A follow up meeting of members of the interim Steering Group and others involved in organising the seminar was held on June 20, 2012 to consider the outputs of the seminar and survey, and to decide on the next steps.

It was agreed that, overall, the idea of a Scottish Rural Parliament was well received by the seminar delegates. While recognising that great care was now required in constructing clear guiding principles, good governance and effective processes, delegates were certainly persuaded by the potential benefits a Scottish Rural Parliament could bring.

It was agreed therefore that the results of the seminar and survey had given a legitimacy and mandate to progress with the development of a Rural Parliament for Scotland. The questions that now need to be addressed include the model of Rural Parliament we want in Scotland, the process required to deliver this, and how that process will be implemented. The aim is to organise the inaugural Rural Parliament in September 2013, as a pilot.

The next steps were agreed as:

- To complete, publish and disseminate the reports of the seminar and follow up survey,
- To contract a limited piece of work, to provide focus and analysis of the options for progressing the Rural Parliament, to inform a stakeholder group meeting,
- To arrange a stakeholder workshop, to take place on August 21, 2012 to take decisions on the governance and implementation process of the Rural Parliament, with a view to commencing work in September.

### Scottish Rural Parliament Interim Steering Group:

|                  |  |
|------------------|--|
| Angus Hardie     | Scottish Community Alliance                  |
| Rob Gowans       | Scottish Youth Parliament                    |
| Norman MacAskill | Scottish Council for Voluntary Organisations |
| Jon Hollingdale  | Community Woodlands Association              |
| Jennifer Wallace | Carnegie UK                                  |
| Sarah Skerratt   | Rural Policy Centre                          |
| Vanessa Halhead  | Rural Parliament Adviser                     |
| Alistair Prior   | Scottish Government                          |
| Graham Kay       | Scottish Government                          |

July 2012

# Acknowledgements

Many people have contributed to this seminar, and to the process that has lead up to it, including:

- The delegates to the seminar (full list provided in Appendix E) for giving of their time and knowledge to contribute to the event.
- Colleagues from Sweden, The Netherlands, Estonia, Slovenia, Germany, England and Northern Ireland, who generously contributed their knowledge and time to assist Scotland in the initial stages of this work, and participated in the initial study and the seminar.
- Members of the steering group and stakeholder group (full list provided in Appendix D) who have provided their time, advice and practical input into steering the work and developing the seminar.
- The Rural Parliament Adviser , Vanessa Halhead, who has worked closely with the Scottish Government and the steering group to develop the understanding, European connections and practical implementation of the work so far.
- The Seminar Chair, Willy Roe, who brought his extensive knowledge of rural Scotland and of policy and government, to provide advice and facilitation of the seminar.
- Robert Rae of 3<sup>rd</sup> Horizons, who managed the work group facilitation process and the technical team responsible for the sound recordings and transcriptions.
- The facilitators and scribes (listed in Appendix C) who managed the work groups and documented their outputs, as set out in this report.

## Useful Links

### Reports

|  |   |
|--|---|
| A Rural Parliament for Scotland Seminar Full Report        | <a href="https://www.ruralgateway.org.uk/en/rural-parliament">https://www.ruralgateway.org.uk/en/rural-parliament</a>               |
| A Rural Parliament for Scotland Seminar Summary Report     | <a href="https://www.ruralgateway.org.uk/en/rural-parliament">https://www.ruralgateway.org.uk/en/rural-parliament</a>               |
| Seminar Evaluation Report                                  | <a href="https://www.ruralgateway.org.uk/en/rural-parliament">https://www.ruralgateway.org.uk/en/rural-parliament</a>               |
| Rural Parliaments in Europe                                | <a href="http://www.sac.ac.uk/downloads/120336/thriving_communities">http://www.sac.ac.uk/downloads/120336/thriving_communities</a> |
| Rural Parliament Next Steps Study                          | <a href="http://www.sac.ac.uk/downloads/120336/thriving_communities">http://www.sac.ac.uk/downloads/120336/thriving_communities</a> |
| A Rural Parliament for Scotland Next Steps Workshop Report | <a href="https://www.ruralgateway.org.uk/en/rural-parliament">https://www.ruralgateway.org.uk/en/rural-parliament</a>               |
| The Rural Movements of Europe                              | <a href="http://www.ruralcommunities.eu/library.asp">http://www.ruralcommunities.eu/library.asp</a>                                 |
| Rural Scotland in Focus                                    | <a href="http://www.sac.ac.uk/downloads/120336/thriving_communities">http://www.sac.ac.uk/downloads/120336/thriving_communities</a> |

### Websites

|   |   |
|---|---|
| European Rural Community Association (ERCA)       | <a href="http://www.ruralcommunities.eu/">http://www.ruralcommunities.eu/</a>                     |
| Partnership for Rural Europe (PREPARE)            | <a href="http://www.preparenetwork.org">http://www.preparenetwork.org</a>                         |
| Swedish Village Movement – Hela Sverige skal leva | <a href="http://helasverige.se/">http://helasverige.se/</a>                                       |
| Dutch Association of Small Towns and Villages     | <a href="http://www.lvkk.nl/">http://www.lvkk.nl/</a>   |
| Estonian Village Movement – Kodukant              | <a href="http://www.kodukant.ee/">http://www.kodukant.ee/</a>                                     |
| Slovenian Rural Development Network               | <a href="http://www.drustvo-podezelje.si/index.php">http://www.drustvo-podezelje.si/index.php</a> |

## Seminar Briefing

Prior to the seminar, delegates were provided with the following briefing as a starting point for discussion at the event. This briefing was compiled by the interim Steering Group.

### A RURAL PARLIAMENT FOR SCOTLAND

What's it all about?

The creation of a Rural Parliament for Scotland is a unique opportunity to enable a stronger, more coherent voice for Scotland's rural communities. It is inspired by the success of the Rural Parliaments in other European nations.

A successful Scottish Rural Parliament must be firmly rooted in Scotland's rural communities, developed by and for the people who live and work in rural Scotland.

It is supported by the Scottish Government to enable more effective engagement with Scotland's rural communities.

The seminar on May 29, 2012, will be the first opportunity for representatives from across rural Scotland to hear directly from the European Rural Parliaments and to discuss the opportunities that this initiative may present for Scotland. The event will be attended by representatives from rural communities, rural networks and NGOs, local and national government. This is an evolutionary process, nothing has been decided and all views and ideas will be welcomed.

What is a Rural Parliament?

A 'Rural Parliament' is not a formal part of government, nor is it a parliament in the sense of a legislative or decision making body. It is a 'bottom-up' process of involvement and debate between the people of rural Scotland and policy makers to enable better understanding, improved policy and action to address rural issues.

It is a process which takes place over a two-year period, culminating in a high profile event, the Rural Parliament, which brings together all sectors of rural society and interests to highlight rural issues and to discuss rural priorities with each other and with Government.

It is focussed on achieving practical and policy-based outcomes relevant to the challenges and opportunities facing rural people. These outcomes are monitored and further developed in the period between Rural Parliaments.

It has been proposed that a Scottish Rural Parliament should be:

- open to and inclusive of all who live and work in rural Scotland,
- led by rural communities in co-operation with Government,

- a forum for those who live and work in rural Scotland to discuss and debate issues of common concern and to share good practice, knowledge and inspiration,
- an opportunity to celebrate and showcase the richness, diversity and success of Scotland's rural communities,
- dedicated to identifying and promoting changes in policy and practice that will benefit Scotland's rural communities and achieving a coherent and influential rural voice,
- part of a continuing process of engagement between Scotland's rural communities.

Why do we need it?

Scotland does not have a single mechanism for enabling a collective rural voice, inclusive of all interests and geographical areas. There are few opportunities for the collective interests of rural communities to be raised, debated and communicated to Government. The lack of such a mechanism often results in issues being addressed sectorally or geographically, with no clear process for gaining a comprehensive, grass-roots view of rural issues. The evidence from other parts of Europe has revealed the benefits to rural areas of their Rural Parliaments in achieving this.

There has been a remarkable growth in rural community development activity across Scotland. The Rural Parliament will give recognition of the scale and value of this community sector and greater capacity for it to influence rural policies and support at regional and national levels.

All rural communities face similar challenges and opportunities, and the Rural Parliament will provide the opportunity for communities across Scotland to come together for mutual benefit.

It is hoped that the proposed biennial gatherings of the Parliament will be just one element in the growth and development of a process of increased engagement and connection between Scotland's rural communities.

# Report of the Seminar

This section documents the full text of the seminar drawn from the sound recordings, speakers presentations and work group reporting templates. As such it provides a complete and accurate record of the day.

## Impressions of a Scottish Rural Parliament

Introduction to the first group session

Willy Roe – Chair of the Seminar

The day began with an opportunity for participants to explore, in groups, their initial thoughts on the proposal. This was an opportunity for delegates to meet and share their first thoughts on arriving. The outputs from this short session were not recorded.

The Seminar Chair introduced the session:

Thank you for coming to this significant seminar about the possibility of a Scottish Rural Parliament. We are going to start today's business in the way that might be typical of a really well-functioning Scottish Rural Parliament, so it's your voices we are going to start with. For the first 15 minutes we invite you to discuss what a Scottish Rural Parliament might mean to you. There are no right answers and no wrong answers. It's about what's on your mind - Why have I come today? What am I hoping this might lead to?

## Welcome and introduction to the day

Willy Roe – Chair of the Seminar

Welcome to all. Today we have a very diverse audience of participants from communities and organisations from every part of rural Scotland, also including organisations that aim to serve rural Scotland, from the Scottish Government and local government.

We are joined today by guests from Sweden, The Netherlands, Estonia, Slovenia, Germany, England and Northern Ireland. Many countries in Europe have been doing something like this for many years, and the organisers were inspired by the lessons gained from other parts of Europe. We want to try to tap into and learn from their experiences, so we can adapt and consider what they have done in the context of where Scotland might wish to go.

The opportunity created today is unique in recent times. It is an opportunity to consider whether we want to enable rural communities in Scotland to have a stronger and more influential voice in what happens in rural Scotland. But it is not only about having a voice in relation to policies, services, etc. It is also an opportunity for rural Scotland to celebrate itself, its achievements, its capabilities and its future.

The idea is that a successful Scottish Rural Parliament, if that were to come about, would be firmly rooted in Scotland's rural communities. An issue which many of us who live in rural Scotland feel quite strongly about. How often do we hear that a particular policy or programme was decided by people who live in

urban Scotland, without necessarily having the experience of what it is like to live and work and travel in rural and island Scotland.

The seminar is supported by the Scottish Government, who want to enable more effective engagement with Scotland's rural communities. We will be hearing from Richard Lochhead about this.

The name Scottish Rural Parliament is something we have talked about, and wondered if it is the right name. There will be a chance later to express opinions about this.

This is us taking an opportunity today to look to the future. There are no right or wrong answers, nothing has been decided, everything is open for your views to be heard and for your voices to be influential in the shape of what follows. Today, and in days and weeks that follow, you have the opportunity to imagine what a rural parliament could be like and could do for Scotland. Imagine it at its best, what would you want it to achieve and be like? Equally to imagine how it would need to operate, how it would need to be organised, for you and your community to feel it was really relevant and valued.

Imagine 25 years on. What happened in May 2012? 120 people from rural Scotland came together – and what this recorded was that this was decisively the starting point of a new era for rural Scotland. This is why you have been invited today. This is a day when we want your voice to be heard – for you to be the creators of a Scottish Rural Parliament.

## Introduction to the European speakers

Vanessa Halhead – Adviser to the Scottish Government on the Rural Parliament  
Director of the European Rural Community Association

It gives me great pleasure to introduce our European speakers, and to thank them for making the journey to join us here in Edinburgh, to support us and give the benefit of their experience, to assist with the important discussion that will be taking place here.

It is not the first time that some of them have been in Scotland to share their experiences of rural development and organising rural parliaments and village movements, as we have tried to grapple with this issue in Scotland since 2002.

I would like to say a little about the organisations which these speakers represent. All of these rural parliaments are part of rural movements, of the style you are going to hear about today. From research I carried out in 2004, and subsequent work to build a European network for the rural movements, we are now aware of such organisations in 23 European nations. They vary in style, but are essentially all aiming for the same thing – to be inclusive networks for rural people, to empower them to address their own development and to form working partnerships with government and other organisations in support of this.

These are all civil society or non-government organisations. The most fully developed are very bottom-up, combining strong networks of local community associations, in the case of Sweden about 5000 are involved, along with partner NGOs representing the full range of rural interests. They are very inclusive.

Many of them now incorporate rural parliaments as an essential part of the process. In organising the event today, we have taken our lead from the model and learning presented by these rural movements.

I have been lucky to work with the speakers and their organisations for about 20 years. During that time I have attended 8 Swedish Rural Parliaments, 4 Estonian and 2 Dutch. In the work we have done over the last 10 years, to promote the model of the rural movements in Scotland, we have also encouraged many Scots to attend the rural parliaments, especially in Sweden. Some of those people are present today. In all cases, people have returned fired with enthusiasm about the rural parliament model.

We are now delighted to have 4 rural movements here today, to explain the rural parliament process as a model for promoting the interests of the rural areas. The 4 examples represented here today, span the most established to the most recent Rural Parliaments. The Swedish Rural Parliament is the original and most highly developed Rural Parliament, attracting over 1000 rural people, rural NGOs, Government Ministers and politicians, every 2 years. The Estonian Rural Parliament was modelled on the Swedish, and is an event that captures the real heart and soul of the rural people. The Netherlands was also modelled on the Swedish example, is more recent, but is also now becoming a real force within the Dutch political process. The Slovenian Rural Parliament is very new, and just starting out. It is notable that the Prime Ministers or national Presidents attend many of these Rural Parliaments, and all have a significant influence in their countries.

Yesterday, there was a meeting of the European Rural Community Association ERCA – the network for the rural movements – at which we took the first steps in the process of developing a European Rural Parliament, following the model of the national Rural Parliaments, to give a stronger voice for the rural people of Europe in Brussels, which is as important as the national level in determining the rural policy affecting all our lives.

I am delighted to present our European speakers:

- from The Netherlands - Bert Broekuis and Koos Mirck from the Dutch Association of Small Towns and Villages. Bert is also the Chairman of the European Rural Community Association (ERCA),
- from Slovenia - Goran Šoster, President of the Slovenian Rural Development Network (not to be confused with the National Rural Networks). Goran is also Coordinator of the pan-European network – PREPARE, which has done excellent work supporting the development of rural partnerships in the recent and future accession countries,
- from Estonia - Liina Saar, Chairperson of the Estonian Village Movement – Kodukant, a wonderful bottom-up, exuberant rural movement,
- from Sweden - Staffan Bond, General Manager of the Swedish Village Movement – ‘All Sweden shall live’, one of the earliest, biggest and most successful rural movements.

Other resource people for the discussion, present today, are:

- from Germany – Prof. Kurt Krambach, who is helping to establish a German village movement,
- from England – Professor Michael Dower, of the University of Gloucester, and the long-term co-ordinator of the PREPARE Programme,
- Tom Burston and Elizabeth Rowark – representing the English initiative to start a rural parliament,
- from Northern Ireland - Michael Hughes, CEO of their Rural Community Network, the equivalent of a rural movement within the UK.

Within the UK we also had, and in some places still do have, rural movements: Action with Communities in Rural England (ACRE), Wales Rural Forum, and in Scotland, until 1999, Rural Forum Scotland and Highlands and Islands Forum.

## Experience and lessons from abroad

### The Dutch Rural Parliament - Plattelands Parlement

Bert Broekhuis - Chair of the Dutch Rural Parliament – Plattelands Parlement  
Chair of the European Rural Community Association

Koos Mirck - Manager of the Dutch Association of Small Towns and Villages

The Dutch name, Plattelands Parlement reflects the fact that the Netherlands is a flat country. It is also a densely populated country, with the rural population density varying from 200 to 1000 per km<sup>2</sup>. So the countryside and towns and villages are very close.

The Internet and education are very important for information and interactive communication, which helps to bridge the differences between urban and rural.

The administration in The Netherlands is on three levels: national, provincial (12) municipal (420). This is reflected in the structures of the Dutch Rural Movement, The Association of Small Towns and Villages – Landelijke Vereniging voor Klein Kernen (LVKK), the hosting organisation for the Dutch Rural Parliament.

The origin of Dutch Rural Parliament was inspiration from Sweden, and we are still learning how to do it.

The principal values of the Rural Parliament are:

1. Direct contact between politicians and the inhabitants from the countryside
2. Support for the innovative movement in our democracy in a fast changing world

This enables a better understanding between the thinking of politicians and rural people, in which there has always been a gap. The Rural Parliament is one of the methods for closing this gap.

The objectives of the Rural Parliament are:

- to raise the voice of the inhabitants of the countryside (they determine the themes),
- to influence policy,
- to exchange best practices; to inspire,
- to enable networking.

Rural people are well educated with good ideas, it is important for politicians to know these ideas. The Rural Parliament helps to determine what is important, in the opinion of rural people, to discuss with politicians, to influence policy and provide the right information about what is going on in the countryside. This is not only about agriculture, which accounts for only 8% of the rural economy, but about the other key sectors, which are increasing all the time in the countryside, especially the service industry and innovative companies. These are as important for the national economy as is the Port of Rotterdam. The countryside is more than you can see, and for the national economy it is critical to understand what it can contribute. The informal network is an important outcome established through the Rural Parliament, linking all sectors and areas.

## The Dutch Association of Small Towns and Villages (LVKK)

LVKK is the Dutch rural movement that supports the Rural Parliament. It is very important that there is a support structure for the rural inhabitants at each of the levels of government: municipal, provincial and national. LVKK is organised to enable this at 3 levels: village, provincial and national. In 2400 small villages, people organise themselves, inspired by the desire to have a good village. This takes the form of village councils, committees and other grassroots organisations. These community level organisations are supported by the provincial and national organisations of LVKK. At European level, LVKK is a member of the European Rural Community Association (ERCA).

## The Dutch Rural Parliament

The Dutch Rural Parliament has now been held four times: in 2005, 2007, 2009 and 2011. In the intervening years between the national Rural Parliaments, Provincial Rural Parliaments are organised by the grassroots people, in order to speak with the provincial authorities. These feed into the national Rural Parliaments.

The first Rural Parliament in 2005, consisted of a market place promoting the countryside and discussions. It engendered quite a negative feeling, anti-politicians and the urban perspective, with the view that they don't understand us.

In the second and third Rural Parliaments in 2007 and 2009, it was decided to change the process to show politicians the power of the rural people. This was done through demonstrating good practices, through a market place, field visits and discussions. For instance, organising health care etc. to suit the specific needs of a local area, and providing concrete examples to show how local communities solved problems, some of which may have been created by poor policy. This worked well, and good practice case studies will be part of all future Rural Parliaments, as they are so inspiring.

The fourth Rural Parliament, in 2011, was different again. Three main themes were chosen, through the Provincial Rural Parliaments. These were:

1. Population decline
2. Sustainable villages
3. Strengthening the power of inhabitants

The aim was to give rural people the space to formulate their solutions to their problems, to enable the people to do the work and the government to participate.

The three themes were prepared by committees, which included academics, and well known and respected experts on the themes. These committees talked for six months with people and communities from around The Netherlands, with practical experience on the ground of the themes. The results of all the discussion and research were published as consultative documents for the Rural Parliament.

It is important to stress that the Rural Parliament is a grassroots process, organised from the bottom up. It is a process which includes generation of issues, ideas and strategic advice, and monitors the progress of that advice through national and local government.

The Rural Parliament is organised by 3 main partners – The Dutch Association of Small Towns and Villages LVKK (the lead body), KNHM a private rural charity, and the National Rural Network. The work is overseen by a steering group, working groups and the thematic advisory committees.

The Rural Parliament is a 1-day event.

The budget for the Rural Parliament has varied from € 120,000 (2005) to € 280,000 (2011).

The funding comes from:

- National Government (EL&I) € 125,000
- Partner KNHM € 85,000
- Other partners together € 70,000

There is no entry fee for delegates.

Attendance at the Rural Parliaments is in the region of 350 people. Approximately 350 also participate at each of the Provincial Rural Parliaments.

The day of the Rural Parliament comprises:

- Presentations of good practices
- Workshops and discussion on the themes and advice to Government
- Discussion with politicians
- Conclusions

Following the Rural Parliament the main activities are:

- Conclusions are submitted to the Chairperson of the Dutch Parliament
- Conclusions are submitted to the Secretary of State
- Talks with Members of Parliament are held twice a year to monitor what actions have been taken on the advice of the Rural Parliament

The main results of the Rural Parliaments have been:

First and second:

- Recognition by Government that problems and solutions may be different in the countryside, and that some policies have a different effect in rural areas
- After the second a “Countryside Check” or rural proofing of policies was implemented by Government.

Third:

- LVKK is now often used as advisor on new laws and initiatives
- Better relations between politicians and rural inhabitants

Fourth:

- Concrete advice to Government concerning civilian initiatives on the themes of declining population; sustainable villages and civilian initiatives
- Monitoring is already showing results from the advice given
- Initiative of parliamentarians to support LVKK and the Dutch Rural Parliament with funding for four years (2012-2015)

## Recommendations to Scotland

### Lessons for success

- Focus on opportunities; not on problems
- Give wide attention to good practices; these examples inspire people, and look for technical ways to share such experiences through the internet etc.
- Support the bottom-up process; direct attention to the active rural people, who are professionals on their own situation
- Give support to the input of the villagers in the process - reinforce their identity, this gives drive to do the right thing and responsibility to co-operate together
- Start the idea-making process and feed this process with people with practical knowledge, there are so many ideas and creative people
- Take care of the follow-up programming and the process behind it
- Monitor the outputs as a part of the cycle.

### What to avoid

- Prevent the so-called Calimero-effect: the accent on always complaining about the situation "They are big, and I am small, and this is just not fair".
- Protect the independence of the Rural Parliament process and don't allow influence from the political process

As in every country we have different cultures and every democracy has its own face, that face is also a print of your own. As culture is a living creator, so democracy is a living creator of how societies are living. To take care of your own democracy, take care for the future and for the happiness of your own people – that is the message of the Rural Parliament that I want to give you today.

## The Slovenian Rural Parliament – Slovenski Podezelski Parlament

Goran Šoster - President of the Slovenian Rural Development Network  
Co-ordinator of the PREPARE network

Congratulations for the first step to the Rural Parliament. Slovenia is awarding Scotland 12 points for this step!

### The Slovenian Rural Development Network (SRDN)

The SRDN is the organisation responsible for the Slovenian Rural Parliament. The SRDN was established in 2002. It is a network of 27 Local Action Groups (from the total 33 Slovenian LAGs). It also has individual and NGO members. It represents a broad local bottom up voice and acts as a bridge between local and national levels. It is a voluntary NGO with 2 employees. A significant amount of the work is done through volunteers. It combines a range of activities for co-operation, projects and services.

NB. The SRDN is distinct from the Slovenian National Network for Rural Development NRN

The main impulses behind the development of the SRDN were:

- 2001 the PREPARE Network began a process with the Ministry of Agriculture on initiatives to improve the standard of democracy and raise the voice from the rural areas
- 2005 Stockholm meeting “Do we need a European Rural Parliament”
- The Swedish Rural Parliament in Lycksele 2008 and Sunne 2010 was a key inspiration
- 2008 starting the LEADER programme in Slovenia, as a bottom-up programme
- 2009 transformation of SRDN from expert pool into Rural Network
- 2010 involvement of SRDN in the Slovenian National Rural Network for Rural Development influencing the Rural Development Programme at national level.

Slovenia is a small country. It achieved its independence in 1991. It is a young democracy, and from that perspective, the unification of 27 LAGs is already a good result for democracy.

It is important to work on the local level – make it live and be active.

What makes the SRDN visible in the country:

- Publishing the statements about RD policy, created within:
  - PREPARE Network
  - Round tables
- Organising events (focused on the membership needs – recently LEADER oriented)
- Active participation in the process of creation (suggestions to the Ministry of Agriculture) and implementation of RD policy (through the Monitoring Committee) 2004-2006 and 2007-2013
- Connecting local initiatives, individuals + LAGs, to articulate the voice of rural areas at a national level

The Slovenian Rural Parliament

The context and objectives of the Slovenian Rural Parliament:

- Main objectives:
  - influencing rural development policy and harmonising it
  - raising the importance of rural areas in the wider context
- Opening the space for meeting of the voice from bottom up with the voice from above and from the sides (experts)
- Enabling dialogue among all stakeholders in rural area (individuals, NGOs, universities, institutes, syndicates, lobbies, authorities, political parties, government, deputies, farmers, various associations)

Management and organisation of the Slovenian Rural Parliament:

- The umbrella of the Slovenian Rural Parliament is the NRN for RD in the frame of the Ministry of Agriculture (involvement of the main stakeholders in RD)
- SRDN is the main driving force of SRP and brought the idea from European experience
- Ministry of Agriculture takes care of the procedures in the process of preparation (public procurements, ensuring participation of the highest state representatives, outsourcing the services)

NB. None of these is the ‘owner’ of the Rural Parliament, it is critically important that the Rural Parliament remains a neutral space for dialogue.

#### Funding of the Slovenian Rural Parliament:

- The Slovenian Rural Parliament is an EVENT
  1. SRP in 2011 (1 day event, 150 participants / invitations)
  2. SRP in 2012 (2 days event, 300 - 400 participants / open)
- The budget of SRP is modest, approx. €50,000 including voluntary input
- Main sources:
  - Ministry of Agriculture (Programme of NRN for RD, financed from the national budget and from EU Technical Assistance 70 – 80%)
  - PREPARE Network (approx. 5 - 10%)
  - Voluntary input (hard to quantify)

#### Main elements of the Slovenian Rural Parliament:

- Exchange of experience and opinions (lectures and discussions)
- Recommendations to the Rural Development policy (conclusions)
- Publicity is very important
- Promotion of rural area through celebration (1. SRP – 20th anniversary of Republic Slovenia, 2.SRP 10th anniversary of SRDN)
- Exhibition of local initiatives – to make people proud of their local initiatives and make politicians and others aware of what local people are really doing
- Exhibition of local food and products
- Cultural programme, celebrating the rural traditions

#### Guests include:

- The President of Republic of Slovenia, who stayed for half a day
- Politicians from all parties
- Academics
- LEADER office
- Foreign guests from rural initiatives and movements
- Sectoral interests – land use, environment, etc.
- Youth
- Local communities
- Individuals
- Press

#### Outcomes:

- Achievement 1 (the tool):
  - Important niche of the modern state: participative democracy complementing the parliamentary and direct democracy in the field of rural development
- Achievement 2 (the contents):
  - Recommendations to the policy makers
    - The need for the common vision of Slovenian rural area
    - Urgent continuous support to local initiatives (LEADER) and diversification of local economies
    - Improvement of the system of cooperative societies

#### Conclusions:

- Continue with the Rural Parliament as permanent process of participative democracy (plural dialogue of different stakeholders)
- Each stakeholder should fulfil his role in society, not only blame others
- Enable coexistence of diverse interests in rural areas, shaping policy together through dialogue rather than conflict
- Looking for agreements about the rural area in:
  - relationship between economy and ecology
  - relationship between actors in the food chain
  - relationship between different users of rural area
  - relationship between the generations
  - relationship between tradition and progress
  - relationship between urban and rural life styles
  - relationship between authorities, experts and citizens
  - relationship between professional and voluntary inputs

#### Lessons from the first Rural Parliament:

- Decisive:
  - the important role of the driving force of the Rural Parliament (long term interest of the Slovenian Rural Development Network)
  - good will of the national authorities to support the initiative
  - good will of stakeholders to attend
- Strong point:
  - achieving dialogue between political, professional, voluntary interests and raising the standards of modern democracy
  - positive promotional aspects of the Rural Parliament for a stronger rural identity
  - long term influence on the quality of life in rural areas
- Weak point:
  - assuring long term financial support

#### Recommendations to Scotland:

- Structure of the Rural Parliament:
  - The Rural Parliament as an open event enabling a broad platform and independence – a neutral position in favour of rural space
- Preparation phase of the Rural Parliament:
  - Combination of 3 levels (organising and financing): governmental, voluntary and expert
  - Involve as many stakeholders as possible from the very beginning of the process
- Implementation phase
  - Ensure the presence of the broadest possible audience, stakeholders, opinion makers, politicians and media
  - Let people raise their voice and assist them to formulate common positions and recommendations for rural development policy.

Go for it – find your own way!!

## The Estonian Rural Parliament – Maapäev

Liina Saar - Chair of the Board of the Estonian Village Movement - Kodukant

### Estonia

Some basic facts about Estonia: We have a total population of 1,36 million. The country is divided into 15 counties, 226 municipalities, 193 parishes, 33 cities, 4435 villages and 179 settlements. About 26% of the population is rural. 51% of the land is covered in forest.

### Kodukant

Kodukant, the village movement in Estonia, is an association of non-governmental organisations, structured at 3 levels:

- 1 National Association made up of the County Associations and 6 other NGOs
- 15 independent County Associations, one in each Estonian county
- Village Associations.

Formed officially on 9 October 1997, it now has about 5000 members. Kodukant embodies the spirit and values of the villages and is driven by a passion to retain rural life and traditions. It is a voice and market place for rural people and a uniting force for the many dispersed rural communities. It is politically neutral.

The movement Kodukant started in late 1991, when some enthusiasts of country life from Estonia established contact with the national village initiative in Sweden, "All Sweden Shall Live".

### Estonian Rural Parliament

Since 1996, Kodukant has sponsored Rural Parliaments of Estonian Villages (Maapäev) to bring together village members, organisations, and local and national representatives with the aim of discussing collaboratively and seeking for solutions to issues facing rural development. The outcome of the workshops will be presented to local and national authorities, other organisations and to the general public.

The Rural Parliament of Estonian Villages is held every two years, at the end of summer and in the country. We have never wanted to have the Rural Parliament in a big town. The hosting County Association will make the decision about the place that they think might be worth introducing.

The main organisers have been the Kodukant Team and Board in cooperation with the County Association which has applied for the right to organise the event. In addition, volunteers, local government and County Government are involved.

About 400 village members and representatives, NGO leaders, government representatives, international partners and experts in the field of rural development are usually expected to attend the Rural Parliament of Estonian Villages. The President of Estonia attends each Rural Parliament.

There have been 9 Rural Parliaments since 1996. At the first one, the decision to form Kodukant as an organisation was taken. The next Rural Parliament of Estonian Villages will be on August 2013 in West-Estonia, Saaremaa.

### The aim

The main idea and aim of the Rural Parliament is to evaluate the achievements of rural people and Kodukant, discuss the development needs and direction for Kodukant for the next period; make suggestions to the Estonian Parliament, Ministries and local governments about rural development.

People come to seek solutions to their burning rural problems, meet other rural people and organisations and to get new ideas.

### Themes and methodology

The preparation for the next Rural Parliament starts soon after the previous Rural Parliament is over and the new host announced. The last and the next organisers have a meeting to deliver all the good ideas and speak about problems that had come up. Members of Kodukant Team and Board meet the organisers and put down the draft programme of the next Rural Parliament and the size of the Rural Parliament team. In the team we have 5-12 people and every person is responsible for the particular field. The Head of the Team is responsible overall coordination.

The themes are suggested by the Board according to the problems raised by members between two Parliaments (at General Assemblies, training, meetings, etc.). But also it depends on our strategy. The strategy is revised every year and the tasks that need to be dealt with are proposed for the Rural Parliament. Then basic ideas are sent to the members to discuss and finally the themes will be confirmed at the General Assembly (usually in autumn a year before the Rural Parliament). At the beginning of summer the summaries of the discussions are delivered to the moderators for preparations of the hand outs on the themes to be forwarded to the Rural Parliament workgroups. Usually 4-5 themes are chosen for discussion.

Themes discussed have included: healthy local food, activating local communities, environment, entrepreneurship, life-long learning, rural youth, sustainable development, services in the villages, developing social capital, community-based tourism in the village, "engines" of village movement, managing community houses (halls), LEADER, preserving national heritage, village elders, advocacy etc.

The methodology of the workgroups is to handle the topic from four different perspectives:

- what the village can manage themselves
- what can be done in cooperation with local authorities
- what to ask the Government and Parliament
- what are the possibilities for the EU

The main discussions take place in the working groups on the second day of the Rural Parliament. These are held in different villages around the main venue. There is a key speaker (introducing Kodukant projects and strategy on the topic) for every group and a moderator for the discussion. The moderator and the Kodukant key-person put down all the ideas and summarise the work by the next morning. They also choose the most important arguments for the declaration. There is democratic voting on priorities for implementing over the next two years.

### Organisation

The invited participants include: about 20 representatives from each of the member organisations (15 County Associations, decided by themselves according to the topics under discussion).

The Rural Parliament usually last for 3 days (the first and the last being shorter)

Day 1 = warm up

Day 2 = working day

Day 3 = decision day

On the first day the delegates of the counties arrive at a village of the host county about noon. The hosts show them around, introduce their projects and they have lunch together. In the afternoon they arrive together at the venue of the Rural Parliament and “check in”. The opening ceremony is at about 5.00pm. The first day usually ends with the “(Holy) Communion” and an evening entertainment (performances of local artists).

The second day is the day of working in different villages in theme groups. Workgroups are usually over by 5.00pm. At the end of the day there might be some competition between the counties, exhibitions, dancing, culture, local buffet and party. The moderators though have to prepare their summaries.

The third day starts with summarising the work group’s ideas and approving the decisions (the declaration). Sometimes we have a forum with politicians on this morning and a Handicrafts Fair. During the closing ceremony the current hosting County Association and County Government together hand the right over to the next hosting County Association.

#### Funding

The average cost in recent years has been about €103,000. This usually comes from a number of sources: The Rural Economy Research Centre, The National Foundation of Civil Society, Estonian Ministry of Agriculture, Estonian Ministry of the Interior, Directorate-General for Agriculture and Rural Development (EC), County Government, Municipality, Local Initiative Programme, Local Entrepreneurs, PREPARE, LEADER. But behind the relatively modest funding is a huge amount of voluntary work in organising the event at local and national levels.

#### Village of the Year

The Estonian Village Movement Kodukant has organised the contest Village of the Year since 2005. There are usually 15 nominees (one from each county) – excellent villages or village regions full of energy and strong sense of identity of place. The Village of the Year has to be an example of positive development and good cooperation; enterprising, active, well maintained, known at county or national level. The work of the jury is led by the Speaker of the Estonian Parliament who also announces the winner at the opening of the Rural Parliament. The winner gets a financial prize and its name is put down in the honours book of Kodukant.

#### Results

The declaration of the previous Rural Parliament is always reviewed at the opening of the next Rural Parliament. The Board reports on achievements, projects that have been carried out and activities done to implement the last decisions. Following each Rural Parliament, summaries of the workshops are published and sent to the participants. All Estonian Members of Parliament and the Ministries of Agriculture, Internal Affairs, Education and Science, Economy etc. and all funders are given publications with the decisions of the Rural Parliament. Several common meetings are planned to introduce them and jointly find the ways to implement them (co-projects, financing projects, taking part in the work of different committees etc.) Contributions at the international (EU) level are also made regarding EU policies, through the European networks and other channels. Kodukant also turns decisions into projects to be implemented at their own hand.

The IX Rural Parliament in figures:

- 290 representatives from 15 counties, 39 foreign guests, 68 volunteers, 23 special guests from Estonia, 16 children and 36 organisers – all in all 472 people
- Budget: total €103,000 - €81,000 in project grants, €22,000 direct support.
- A team of 20 people made the biggest BREAD VILLAGE at the Rural Parliament history, size 90 cm x 440 cm.

Recommendations to Scotland

- Pick the right place and the duration
- Discuss all the themes before the Rural Parliament (web site, forums, meetings)
- Report on achievements
- Workshops are a good tool for people to express opinions and share ideas
- Workshops moderators should be trained before and have an overview of previous activities and what we want to achieve
- Decisions you make for the declaration should be real and give ideas for the next projects/period
- Involve key persons, policy makers
- Involve the young people from the beginning, find them activities

Successful Rural Parliament and bright ideas!

## The Swedish Rural Parliament - Landsbygdsriksdagen

Staffan Bond - General Manager of Hela Sverige ska leva

The Swedish Rural Parliament

The Swedish Rural Parliament is a nation-wide event, held every second year. The first one was held in 1989. The main organiser is the Swedish village movement "Hela Sverige ska leva" HSSL – All Sweden shall live. Co-organisers are usually the regional parts of our association and the municipality hosting the event. The National Rural Network and others support the event. The Swedish Rural Parliament is an important meeting-place for those interested in rural development.

The aim

The main aim is to meet, discuss and exchange experience. It is also an opportunity to express the unity and power of the Village Movement, and to rouse public opinion and influence the policies for rural Sweden.

Broad participation

All are welcome. Usually there are about 1000 participants. Since the very beginning we have had many international guests (around 100) from many different countries, especially from Central and Eastern Europe. Most participants are rural activists from all parts of Sweden. Also civil servants and politicians from all levels of society participate. There are always several ministers and MP's attending.

Funding

The Swedish Rural Parliament is a big event – and expensive. The budgets for recent ones have been on average 6.5 million SEK (€700,000). Our own contribution is about 1 million SEK. The rest comes from

participation fees, co-financiers, sponsors and projects. The National Rural Network, LEADER and regional authorities are examples of important co-financiers.

#### The initiative

The first Swedish Rural Parliament was the finale of a campaign for rural Sweden, with broad participation and run by about 100 NGO's and the government. The background was negative development especially in the sparsely populated areas in the north of Sweden. It was also a reaction to centralisation of influence by the amalgamation of small municipalities into bigger ones, where people in the small peripheral villages felt abandoned by the authorities. The campaign was very successful, especially in mobilizing rural people to start acting on their own and not waiting for support from outside. During this process the Swedish Village Movement HSSL was born with about 1000 action groups established.

#### The Swedish Village Movement

Today there are almost 5000 village or community action groups, members of HSSL, and this number is growing all the time. They vitalize democracy, strengthen economy and improve living conditions all over Sweden – originally in remote rural areas but now also in big cities. We say these groups form the first level of society, nearest to the citizens, and under the level of the local authority/municipality. They are an important part of civil society, nowadays mostly working hand in hand with their municipalities. The community groups take on board more and more complex and advanced tasks, such as running schools and building broadband-net. They take over when society retreats from their area.

#### What is a village/community action group?

These groups are the local hubs, often registered civil associations, but sometimes networks of existing local associations. They work broadly for the good of the community, see to the common interest and represent the community. They are open to all and work publicly, and they are elected and work democratically. They operate in a district defined by the inhabitants themselves. The village action groups are unique in their holistic approach, coordinating role and focusing of development. It is a rather wild-grown phenomenon, with no strict rules for participation.

#### The National Association - All Sweden shall live!

The vision for the national association is the same as the name: All Sweden shall live! – including the tiny village in the periphery. The mission is to support local development towards a sustainable society aiming at best progress for local communities. The action is broad: initiating pilot projects, stimulating cooperation, rousing public opinion and influencing the policies for local and rural development.

#### Organisation

Members are the 5000 local community groups and 45 organisations, mostly big national NGO's, but also banks, municipal associations and LEADER groups. In all counties, and in 100 of our 300 municipalities the active groups have established networks for cooperation. The Rural Parliament is nowadays firstly a big, important meeting-place with broad participation. Main decisions are made at the annual general meeting – sometimes in connection with the Rural Parliament – and by the Board. The office is in the Old Town in the very centre of Stockholm. The staff comprises six employees, with extra for projects, most working from other parts of rural Sweden.

## Budget and financing

The annual turnover for All of Sweden shall live has been about 2.7 million euro the last years. We get about 1.6 million euro directly from our Government. The rest comes from many different sources, including national agencies, sponsors and EU-funds. The money from Government does not come automatically, we have to apply and negotiate. This spring the Government evaluated our use of their money. The result was very positive and is promising for the future. In a couple of weeks we are going to make another application for some years ahead.

## Some guiding principles for the Rural Parliament

The event is inclusive and open – all are welcome. We try to obtain a balance between parties, with the highest priority to village activists and also young people – rejuvenation is one of our greatest challenges. We take on hot themes and important questions. We try to focus, but this is hard because of the bottom-up approach - so much is important and urgent. We try to limit, but the ambitions and expectations from our regional co-organiser and others are high. We subsidise rural activists and young people to attend. We welcome international guests for mutual inspiration and exchange of experiences. In many Rural Parliaments we have had Scottish participation – much appreciated by us.

## Recommendations to Scotland

To prepare a Scottish Rural Parliament:

- Involve a broad network of actors to prepare the Rural Parliament with a small core group doing the main work.
- In Scotland there is a great variety of NGO's and community groups, you should engage them all.
- Be open and inclusive.
- Aim from the very beginning at a movement not "just" an event.
- Where there are no active local community groups, stimulate new ones.
- Co-operate with strong influential actors but stay independent.
- Money is necessary, ask for it from different sources.
- Join the international family like ERCA to get inspiration and support – Unity gives power.

## Watch out!

There is always a risk that strong parties take over. This could change the focus from an integrated bottom-up process into one more specific and top-down. Money obliges, but dependence could be minimized by choosing the right financiers and agreeing on principles. We have had some difficulties with strong NGO's, but been able to handle the problem and survived – even strengthened. Money from government has not restrained us from criticizing bad policies and decisions.

The Swedish Village Movement is nowadays a respected part of Swedish society and the Rural Parliament an attractive event and arena for local and rural development. Welcome to the Swedish Rural Parliament in Blekinge Sept 6-9, and a special invitation to Richard Lochhead to attend.

## Panel discussion

Willy Roe – Seminar Chair

With Bert Broekhuis, Koos Mirck, Goran Soster, Liina Saar, Staffan Bond

Chair I am really struck by many things, but two things that everyone has talked about - the fun that they have at these Rural Parliaments and that food and music and culture has contributed significantly to the success of all of them. That is something important probably for us too.

### Q1

Participant All of you have mentioned, in your different ways, getting funding from government. We find in Scotland that governments don't particularly like being criticised, do you get pressure from government through the funding that you are getting, or do you work in a culture where government knows to step back?

Staffan Bond I really don't think that we are under pressure. I think that the Government realise it's good to have someone pushing them a little. So we don't feel that we are dependent of the Government in this way. But we all the time are very eager to show our independence, so we often criticise the Government on the policies, also in the media.

Bert Broekhuis In the Netherlands the situation is not in the same. For the first three Rural Parliaments we had to fight for the money from Government. We have had to use our network and connections in the Parliament. We argue that we are working with the Parliament and the advantages from the quality of our contribution. We stress that this is not against the Government, it is a support for better policy that fits better between what is going on in the population as a whole, and what is necessary for the countryside. Following this we got support for the money through the Parliament and the Minister agreed to pay.

Liina Saar In Estonia we get this money as a grant so we have to report to the Ministry on what we have done with the money, but that is all, there are no pressures, we just make good co-operation.

### Q2

Participant All of you have mentioned the importance of the rural movement, or network, behind the bi-annual Rural Parliament and Staffan specifically said that he felt we needed that movement as well as the Parliament. I wonder what the others think, whether they think Scotland needs to develop that rural movement?

Liina Saar I think it would helpful for you to have the rural community behind the organisation of the Rural Parliament, otherwise you have just a group of people who take care of this work.

Chair I think that is what we will discuss in the afternoon. There is a hugely wide, deep and diverse set of organisations in rural communities across Scotland. We don't call it a Rural Movement and it's got multiple dimensions and identities. I think all of you (European speakers) were saying to us whatever lessons come from your own countries, they need to be adapted to the culture and the expectations of this country.

Staffan Bond That is true I think, what we are telling are examples, but don't just copy. It is your own country, so try to implement it, if you want to do it in this way, in your own culture. That is very important. It must be something you feel in your own heart. Then it can grow.

Goran Šoster In our case we are still in the phase where the driving force for this is the Slovenia Rural Development Network rural movement, which has to animate the stakeholders to come. So this is a very important point because many people from the rural areas might be very effective

and active in their own circumstances, but don't see the point of why they should come to the national Rural Parliament. We have to give the arguments, invite them and give them this dimension which is not active yet, so that was a very important point.

### Q3

**Participant** In all the presentations I didn't see anything that really reflected business organisations. We have two organisation well established within Scotland, the Federation of Small Businesses and the Chamber of Commerce. I think it would be appropriate, if we are looking at setting up a Scottish Rural Parliament, for business to be well represented, and we do have policy units that go into both Holyrood and Westminster and in fact into Brussels as well. A good number of our members sit on various committees. However, in the presentations today I was a bit disappointed that there wasn't any business recognition in there for small to medium size businesses, who need support. Could I have some comment from the panel please?

**Koos Mirck** Yes it is good to hear we are talking now in fact we are organisation with three partners, we are talking for the next time to do together with the business organisation because we see its strengthens also the communities, when there are active inhabitants and strong entrepreneurs that work well together. This is one of the basis for the economic vitality of the rural area. So we have to meet each other and we have to make them our partners. This seems to be going well.

**Staffan Bond** We have also member associations of 'Hela Sverige skal leva', about 40 or 45 of them, and there are also some business oriented associations taking part. We have, for example, also a small bank, the Eco Bank, and also the saving bank's association as members of the rural movement. So we have these kind of business associations involved.

**Bert Broekhuis** It is important, but on the other hand it is also very important that we try to approach it in an holistic way. You know society is not only divided in economic, in social, in cultural, we are just normal human beings with all these aspects. It is so important that we see the balance. So you will need all the people, you will need also your neighbour, just as it is in the countryside.

### Q4

**Participant** In the presentations, the cost of some of the Rural Parliaments that were presented were high, €1mill+, but there was not one mention of poverty, disadvantage, inequality and discrimination. This is very important if a Rural Parliament is to make a quality of life difference to rural communities. Can you give us any examples of how any of the Rural Parliaments have tackled and successfully overcome inequality, disadvantage, discrimination and exclusion from a rural community perspective, for those that are most in need?

**Goran Šoster** This is a long term process, you cannot achieve it in a year.

**Bert Broekhuis** Of course it is also in our attention that we have to take care for all these kind of processes about money. But one thing, there is a lot of money mentioned here, but don't forget most of the work is done by volunteers. When I see the outcome and also see that it is helpful, I feel it is very positive.

**Staffan Bond** We don't speak about poverty directly, but equality and integration. That is very, very important for us in Sweden. The local action groups work very inclusively, often it is volunteers, of course, but unemployed people and so on are doing much of the work and they really have strong positions in the village action groups. So it is not just strong people, it is a very inclusive association on all levels of society.

## Q5

- Participant I was wondering how between Rural Parliaments you maintain a dialogue with policy on really hot topics. You mention, for example, in Estonia you take 6 months to prepare a paper on something which is absolutely critical, I wonder how and whether you have got the capacity also to issue releases or comments on really pressing issues that suddenly emerge and then disappear. This was a point raised on our table earlier. How do you keep it current and hot?
- Goran Šoster In our case I can say we are very strong in positions relating to the LEADER programme. So whatever happens we are immediately there and immediately raising our voice and influencing the policy. In other fields we are not that strong, but we still try to track the policy within the Monitoring Committee of the Rural Development Programme. So we are part of these wider bodies and we raise our voice there.
- Staffan Bond It is the same in Sweden, we have a seat in many groups and committees which influence policies, not just rural policies but, for example, we have a seat in the Strategy Group for Broadband building in Sweden. We try all the time to be very active in the policies and discussing different questions, but it is hard to be able to deal with all the issues that are raised all the time, but we are doing our best.
- Bert Broekhuis It is our experience in the Netherlands, that if you give good advice and you give good examples then you also gain a good position. We are involved in the processes for initiative laws. But we are independent. If we have credits, we give also the full credits.

## Q6

- Participant I would like to ask our speakers, how rural is interpreted in their countries? Successive governments in Scotland have defined rural by defining urban instead, and urban has been small towns over 3000 people, or small towns over 10,000. This has meant that development of rural policy has excluded the needs of these small towns that rely on their adjacent hinterland. So how does that apply in our friends' countries?
- Goran Šoster In our case I would say this is the question for academics to discuss further
- Bert Broekhuis I think it is very important that you can divide what is the rural side what is the urban side, but both are also in the same society. It is the holistic approach that is important, as in society. The countryside needs the urban side but also the urban side needs the countryside, together. That is the importance of the countryside and is what makes a nation. The development of what is going on in the countryside is just not always under the spotlight, and I think that is the importance of the Rural Parliament, that we give support to what is going there.
- Chair We are going to take that issue into the afternoon and it can become part of the dialogue we will have around the table. We can resolve it for Scotland in ways that we think are appropriate.
- We are delighted to have had with us for the whole of the morning the Cabinet Secretary for Rural Affairs and the Environment, Richard Lochhead, who is well known to us. I remember many governments where it would be unthinkable for a Cabinet Secretary to come and spend a lot of time with an event like this, but it is a hallmark I think of this Government that Ministers deliberately take time with communities, with organisations and with others. Richard's presence for the whole of the morning is a great example of that and we are delighted you have been able to join us. We were together for 3 hours last night so talked a lot about Rural Parliaments and we are delighted that Richard is going to share with us now some thoughts. So let's offer a very warm welcome.

## A Rural Parliament for Scotland

Richard Lochhead

Cabinet Secretary for Rural Affairs and the Environment

Thank you very much and hello rural Scotland, at least the high quality representative sample from Rural Scotland here today, and also a very warm welcome to our overseas visitors who have given us some fantastic presentations and no doubt you will be hearing from them later on today on this very important topic.

This is my kind of event I have only been here a couple of hours and I have already procured an invitation to go to Sweden! That is good I will certainly give it thought because I have heard so many good things about the Swedish Rural Parliament, so certainly I will try and make it along to that.

I will just say a few words reflecting on what I've have heard and maybe explaining why we are here today.

Firstly, why are we here?

Clearly as part of Government and as Cabinet Secretary we take rural Scotland very seriously, we have given a lot more priority to rural issues over the last few years, for a variety of reasons. Perhaps the solutions to many of the challenges we are facing as a country, in the future lie within rural Scotland, there is a lot of potential within rural Scotland. We also have many, many challenges that face our rural communities. So it makes sense to give as much priority to the future of our rural communities as possible, over the last few years and in the years ahead.

I am always very conscious about how we get to the views, input, expertise and ingenuity of people on the ground around the country. Whether they live in the Islands, the Highlands or Southern Scotland, wherever it may be, how as Ministers, as Government, as other policy makers around Scotland, do we get the input from the right people on the right issues? I think we have made some progress on this, but there is room for improvement, it is a challenge faced by all governments, of whichever colour. I have been very conscious of that in my time in this job over the last five years, and it is something I want to continue to strive to achieve in the years ahead, because it is a big, big challenge.

A couple of years ago we held a Rural Gathering in Scotland, where we did get representatives from many rural communities and backgrounds to come together, discuss a variety of issues, meet Ministers and talk about the future and about policy. I found that helpful, the civil servants, the agencies and the other organisations there also found that helpful, and I think you know how we can build upon that. Just as that event helped people share practice, learn from each other's experiences, talk about the big challenges, they also inspired each other.

Therefore, just as people inspire each other from Rural Scotland when they get together, countries should be inspired by other countries as well. When I was looking at how to take on the Rural Gathering I was certainly aware of what was happening in Sweden and some of the other countries represented here today. I think Scotland should be inspired by what is happening elsewhere, if it is appropriate for Scotland. Scotland is not Slovenia, Germany, Estonia, the Netherlands, Sweden or elsewhere - we are Scotland - but there are reasons why we should be inspired by what is happening in other countries.

So that is really why we are here. It is to see whether the concept of a Rural Parliament, outlining many of the benefits we have heard about this morning from the presentations, is it a potential way forward for Scotland. Is it something we should do? Clearly, I have been listening intently to what has happened this morning and I can't unfortunately be here this afternoon, but I will no doubt get all my feedback from all of you and from the colleagues in the Government who are here. We have to do what is right for Scotland.

I have to say that I represent a constituency in the North of Scotland, a rural constituency, and it is great to see there are MSPs from other parties here in the room today as well. I am very well aware that I can visit a rural community in my constituency, which is thriving, which has got leadership, which is taking control of its own destiny, as much as possible given the current constraints. And I can go a few miles along the road and there is another rural community where that is not happening.

When we talk about empowering our rural communities, when we talk about sharing that best practice, when we talk about a movement, as we have been hearing, across the rural communities in Scotland, it would be fantastic if at one point in the future we did reach a position where all the rural communities in Scotland were at the level of the highest standard we have at the moment, in terms of being pro-active, of feeling empowered, or being involved and taking a bit more control over their own destiny.

So again, I think that says something I have learned from my experience as an MSP in the Parliament since 1999, representing rural constituencies, and no doubt my colleagues from other parties and elsewhere hopefully feel the same.

So how do we get the input from rural communities and make them feel more in charge of their own futures?

If I think of the big issues facing rural Scotland and the rest of the country, in the context of rural Scotland in a 21<sup>st</sup> century, I think of the big debates that are going to come up: Connectivity, how do we get all our rural communities connected, mobile phone reception, broadband reception? Land reform communities taking control of their own assets through various means, whether it is the local petrol stations, or whether it is land or other assets, that is a big debate for the future as well. How we work with our primary production sectors, fishing, farming, forestry etc. Housing issues, how can people in rural Scotland have access to affordable housing and health services and public services?

They are all very pertinent topical debates so, from a government perspective, we have to find ways of ensuring we are getting the right messages and the right input and working in partnership with rural communities to address some of these really big challenges in the times ahead.

These are the sort of things that are on the agenda. If you have some sort of gathering of Rural Scotland you will not only have the Ministers, you will have the heads of the agencies. Imagine if we got all Scotland into the one room with the rural communities, I think that could produce dividends.

So I want to say that this is a really important event from the Scottish Government's point of view.

Clearly, some of the messages are coming through loud and clear, which I have no reason to disagree with. It is quite right to criticise governments, we don't love it, but it is quite right to do it, we live in a democracy. Also that we need "bottom up" development of rural Scotland, but also of any forums such as a

Rural Parliament, we need “bottom up” development of that as well. The people who matter should be put in charge of how that operates and how it is run and, of course, I believe that is certainly the right way forward.

So do we need a Rural Parliament? Do we want one? If so, what should it look like? These are the kind of questions I think we are looking for some feedback on from today's events.

I really liked the phrase that came up on one of the slides: that ‘unity gives power’. If all rural communities were united, coming together, inspiring each other, communicating to policy makers and each other, getting a bit more control of their own destiny, and doing everything else we have got to do in the future, I think that would be a good way forward for Scotland.

So thank you very much for coming along today I really appreciate it, especially for the overseas visitors, but clearly there will be people here from all parts of rural Scotland who have had to travel just as long to get here as some of our overseas visitors. Thank you to all of you for coming.

## Introduction to the afternoon session

Willy Roe – Seminar Chair

We have got a really important afternoon ahead where almost the only voices are yours.

Sarah Skerratt is going to just shape a few messages for us before we get down to the hard work of the afternoon. By a nice coincidence, yesterday in this very room, Sarah was launching, with her Senior Colleagues, a new publication called Rural Scotland in Focus 2012, produced by the Rural Policy Centre at the Scottish Agricultural College. This is a document of real value to all of us who work in rural Scotland. It was independently funded by SAC, the evidence that it uses to tell us what is happening in rural Scotland was drawn from all sorts of statistical sources and it produces an extraordinary wealth of knowledge which I think should probably underpin all that we do. It is not comprehensive in as much it does not touch every aspect of rural life but it is a very substantial piece of work and everyone yesterday was delighted to have it. It is available on line and there are deep resources below this actual document which are all accessible online as well. So it is with great pleasure that Sarah has come to join us today so that she can share with us some things that connect some of the themes in rural Scotland and focus with the proposal about creating a Rural Parliament for Scotland.

## Key Messages for Scotland

Dr. Sarah Skerratt

Senior Researcher and Team Leader, Rural Society Research, Scottish Agricultural College

I am going firstly, very briefly, to touch on what is rural Scotland. You might feel that is totally superfluous given we are all from rural Scotland or work in rural Scotland, however, for our international visitors I just wanted to flag up a couple of key points. I will then touch on one main point that came from our report yesterday, about the need for tailoring policy to rural Scotland. The main focus of my presentation is to give you the key messages for Scotland from our study commissioned by Scottish Government on Rural Parliaments in Europe.

As you will see in our report, the evidence shows population growth in most of Scotland's rural local authorities, especially in accessible rural areas, in the next 20 years. We are still going to see population decline in many of the most peripheral areas, but we are seeing population growth. That means that the population is becoming more culturally diverse, and that we also see the evidence of migration being increasingly important, both from within the UK, within Scotland, urban to rural migration and international in migration into rural areas. So there is going to be increasing cultural diversity in rural Scotland's population in the next 20 years.

We all are very well aware, even from the places we have come from yesterday and today, of the diversity of rural Scotland. We know the terms that Government uses, of remote and accessible. We can experience remoteness I think even in accessible areas, so they are quite flexible terms. We know that diversity exists: coastal areas, cities, peripheral areas around cities with new housing and roads. So what consequences could or should that have?

The evidence presented in our 2012 report shows, unequivocally, the need to tailor national policy to fit rural and the diversity of rural. So we have a National Policy Framework and National Architecture and the evidence shows it has to be tailored to fit rural, rural characteristics and the diversity of rural. This isn't at all to argue that rural should be separate from urban, as we have heard very strongly this morning, nor to privilege rural over urban. But simply to say that rural is different and policies need to fit to what rural Scotland is like and to what life is like in rural Scotland.

I would suggest, as the link between these two reports, that the Rural Parliament has a potential to be a key part of that tailoring process, tailoring of national policy and processes to the specific characteristics of rural and the diversity of rural.

So what about the report that was commissioned by the Scottish Government on reviewing Rural Parliaments that currently exist in Europe? The key messages I am bringing out just now are for Scotland, they are not a review of all the Parliaments, because you have heard great presentations here this morning. They are from the conclusions section of which you have the exact summary in your packs to give you more detail and the report is available online at the Rural Policy Centre.

We have heard today that Rural Parliaments are embedded within existing rural movements.

You may be aware of a report by the Organisation for Economic Co-operation and Development OECD in 2008, which reviewed rural Scotland and noted that there were over 100 non-governmental organisations operating in and for rural Scotland. So what this throws up for rural Scotland is a need for integration between these organisations. Something that also came through strongly from the interviews, was a need for balance between grassroots representation and representation from non governmental organisations.

So there isn't a rural movement as we know, there were in the past but there isn't now. But there is an array of networks, of knowledge, of experience, and the over-riding feedback we got from the interviews was build on that, don't try and start from scratch, you have all these decades of experience and networks, build on those.

The second point from the interviews is concerning the commitment of government. As we have heard already, it is necessary but it is not sufficient. There is a need for bottom up desire from communities, vision and consistent input, right from the beginning of today.

In addition to that, we shouldn't just be looking at national government, but also local government, because, as we have seen from the presentations this morning, Rural Parliament events take place in different regions. So local authorities and other levels of government can play a part in supporting these events.

The third message that came through from the report was about learning from other countries. I won't go into any depth on that because I think we have had fantastic opportunity to learn first-hand today from our partners in other parts of Europe.

The fourth key message is that this is going to take time, and we should take time. That shouldn't be seen as frustrating, it is part of the necessary process. Both in terms of addressing participation, governance and democratic accountability. And I know from discussion at tables today and over lunch these are thoughts and themes that are coming through in those discussions. How is it going to be democratically accountable? How is it going to work? How do we get the right people around the table and not exclude anyone?

The other thing that will take time is identifying multiple finance sources: public, private and third sectors, again as we have seen. So the message from the report is – let's not be frustrated that it takes time, let's expect it to take time because these are complex themes that need to be addressed.

The final message from the report is having the confidence to succeed, that was the overwhelming theme that came through from all the interviews, and what can happen if you do have that confidence, based on the evidence from our European Partners.

Firstly, there are outputs: in terms of reports, statements of priorities and specific actions. We saw this morning how those can be, and are, influential.

Secondly, there are outcomes: something softer, something longer term where communities do increase their sense of empowerment, relationships are built and sustained and there is a growing rural awareness, both at rural level, horizontally if you like between communities, and vertically where parliamentarians get to understand rural better and where rural people are understanding political processes and points of injection and intervention. Getting to understand that better, so it can work and does work both ways.

These are the key messages, to bear in mind as we move into the discussion section.

The main authors of this report are Dr. Mike Woolvin and Dr. Jane Atterton.

# Work Group Sessions

## Introduction

Robert Rae

Director of 3<sup>rd</sup> Horizons, Seminar Facilitation Manager

You have heard what is done abroad, you have heard some compelling research from Sarah, you have heard from the Cabinet Secretary and now it is over to you. It is all to play for, nothing has been decided, this is not a Government consultation where they are asking us our views on their plans. This genuinely is, as Willie said this morning, our chance to shape the future of the Scottish Rural Parliament. But it is important that we remember a few key words in the spirit of our next session:

- It is a safe space to test ideas out, to be creative and informal. No one is going to hold you to account for your ideas
- There is no such thing as a bad idea
- Listening is as important as speaking
- Look for consensus this is not just a conversation, you are looking for consensus, you are working as a team, you are looking for real dialogues, but within that you are also wanting to challenge
- You may even be outrageous

The first question is the “what” question: “What would a successful rural parliament achieve for Scotland?” Imagine that it is 2015 and that we actually do have a Scottish Rural Parliament. Think about what it would be like, where it would be, what it would be called, what would make it useful, what results and impacts it is bringing about. This question is about what does success look like for us? What is the sum of our ambitions? What does a successful Rural Parliament achieve for Scotland?

Following on from that question is the second which is the “how” question: “How would a successful Rural Parliament be organised”. This is more about the process. What governance arrangements would be required? What would make it run well? Who should be tasked to take things forward? How would we make sure that it really is genuinely open to all rural communities? How would the Scottish Rural Parliament work with Government? How would it work both at national level and local level?

There is also a template that says “What is it to be called?” so you can have a discussion about that in your group. If there is a genuine consensus from within your group about what you think it should be called, record this.

These are important questions and it is now open to you to start framing the answers.

## Work Groups - Key learning points

The following analysis provides a themed breakdown of the main ideas received from the delegates. The full tables of outputs from the groups can be found in Appendix D.

### Main principles

Overall, the main principles emerging from the group discussions indicated that a Rural Parliament be:

- ambitious with scale
- Influential and a route to government
- independent and neutral
- a process within a wider movement
- 'bottom up' and rooted in the rural communities
- involving, transparent and open to all
- empowering of rural communities
- enable co-production
- strategic, forward looking and long term
- focused on positive solutions not problems

It was also proposed that a Rural Parliament event should be a focus but not the object.

## What would a successful Rural Parliament achieve for Scotland?

### Influencing policy and decision making

This was a key focus for most groups, with 8 groups commenting on how a Rural Parliament could improve both the influence of rural people and the quality and relevance of policy relating to rural areas. The Rural Parliament was proposed as an influential platform, with critical mass, which does not exist at the moment, for influencing and lobbying government at national, local and European levels. The aim is to influence, inform and make a difference, providing concrete messages on important issues, from the bottom up. Government listening to local people, rural proofing and more relevant policy were mentioned as aims. The structure and process required to achieve this was recognised as requiring careful design, with the possible need for a Rural Parliament hierarchy working at local, regional and national levels.

### Improving targeting of policy and spend

Related to the issue of policy influence, it was hoped that the Rural Parliament could result in improvements, for instance, in prioritising the rural agenda, involving service users in the design and delivery of services, redistributing ineffective spend and avoiding duplication. In delivering this work, the Rural Parliament should understand the baseline and measure impacts over time.

### Increasing participation, connection and democracy

The role of a Rural Parliament in increasing participation, connection and democracy was regarded as very important. A Rural Parliament was seen as a mechanism for involving, connecting and co-ordinating the diversity of rural Scotland, across geography, level, interest, sector, age group, etc. It was also seen as a

driver for improving and enabling a more participative democracy. The advantages of this could be to increased understanding, collaboration and consensus; to decrease friction and enable identification of gaps. It could also result in a more powerful voice for rural people. However, it will be critical to facilitate buy-in and understanding by rural communities.

**Increasing the voice, recognition and empowerment of rural people and communities**

Closely connected to improved participation is the role of a Rural Parliament in increasing the voice, recognition and empowerment of rural people and communities. A Rural Parliament was seen as a mechanism to connect, unite and give a stronger voice to rural people. Through this, the Rural Parliament would help to celebrate rural life and values and raise the profile and recognition of rural people and their issues, expertise and achievements. It would thereby increase skills and empowerment at local level, and facilitate the people of rural Scotland to be themselves.

**Improving networking and sharing best practice**

The mechanism of a Rural Parliament would enable improved networking and sharing of knowledge and best practice across the country.

**Delivering practical benefits for rural areas and people**

A key outcome of a Rural Parliament would be to deliver practical benefits on the ground, which would improve the socio-economic sustainability and well-being of people and communities, resulting in a flourishing rural Scotland.

**Creating a rural movement**

The creation of a rural movement was proposed, to promote a continuing process, provide focus, direction, unity and community ownership of the Rural Parliament.

## How would a successful Rural Parliament be organised?

**Involvement**

A Rural Parliament should involve people of all ages, with an equal voice. It should nurture the local level and participation. The use of IT to communicate would be important, but not sufficient. How to get the necessary representation is a challenge.

**Governance**

The complex issue of how the Rural Parliament would be organised, managed and led received considerable thought. It was recognised that this would be critical to the success of the initiative. This was the main focus of discussion, with nine groups raising proposals. These are grouped under key themes:

**Bottom-up:** A key theme running through the discussions was the importance of it being 'bottom-up'. Suggestions included: The Rural Parliament being representative of all rural communities; grassroots; the 'people's Rural Parliament'; driven, lead and owned by a 'community' movement, with sectoral interests as associates which engage with it and are influenced by it.

The regional level: The importance of the regional level as a connecting level. Specific proposals included establishing regional anchor organisations or regional initiative groups, to help bridge the gap between communities and the Rural Parliament (as in other countries).

Structure: The governance and structure of the Rural Parliament, as distinct from administration, received a lot of attention. Issues for further consideration were identified as governance, authority and representation, including whether a separate organisation would be required.

Representativeness would need careful consideration, regarding geography, interest, size of organisation, etc. There was advice on the need for an independent steering group, which should not be a major NGO, and emphasis that no one group should claim ownership through the representative level. The creation of a Rural Parliament initiative group, following the seminar to determine aim, goals and objectives, was proposed.

Administration: The actual practical administration of the work is distinct from the governance of the Rural Parliament. The main points were that there should be an independent secretariat or organising body, possibly 'led' by a small, independent, voluntary organisation. It was also suggested that there be a 'co-ordinator' to manage communication between players.

Learning from others: It was noted that there are other initiatives which may provide useful ideas or models. Two were specifically mentioned in this context: the Scottish Youth Parliament and the LEADER model for linking different actors.

#### Process

The creation of a rural movement to allow continuity, focus and self-activation was proposed. It was suggested that the first Rural Parliament be regarded as a pilot, with an evolutionary process. This should be open-ended, learning from experience and not restrictive of scope. The primary focus should be on the local level and stimulation of the grassroots, with local and regional level initiative groups. Local should feed to regional and to national. The need for both national and regional level events was raised, probably in alternate years. It was also advised to link into existing structures to avoid duplication.

#### Implementation

The actual content and implementation of the Rural Parliament did not receive a lot of attention. Ideas raised included having a communications strategy, a promotional education programme, a thematic approach and including community awards as a celebration of rural Scotland.

#### Funding

There should be funding from Government, with a long-term commitment to ensure long-term viability.

#### Location and frequency

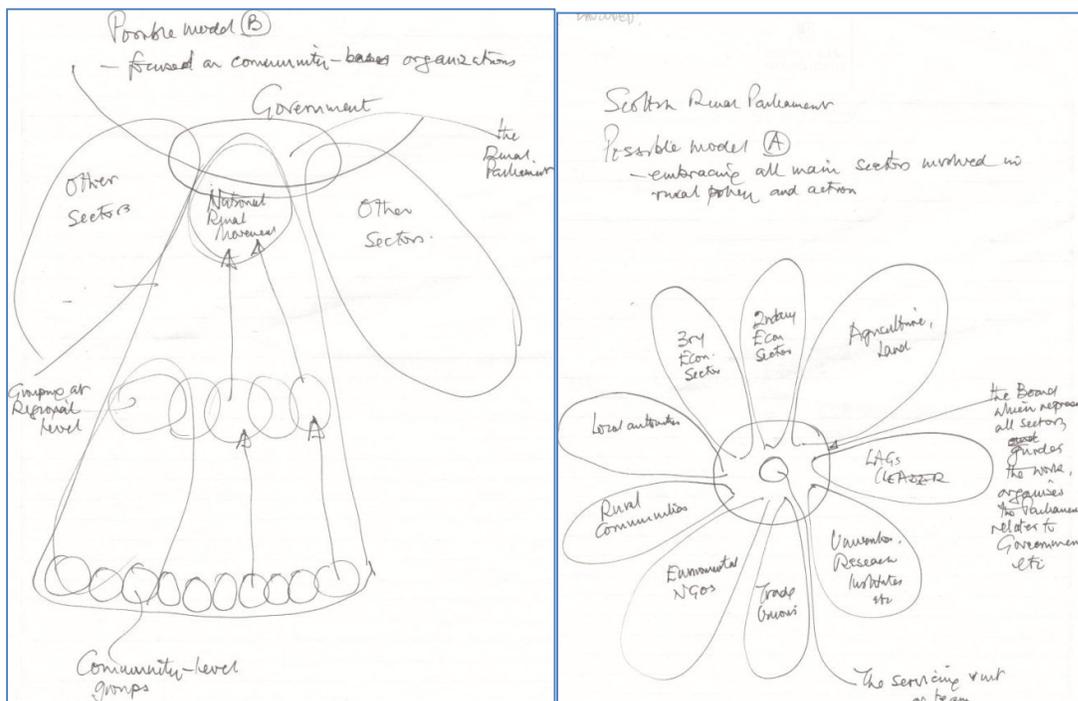
A Rural Parliament should meet in a rural area and rotate around Scotland. There were also suggestions to meet in the Scottish Parliament, or to hire a train or a ship to travel around Scotland.

## Angels and Flowers

Group 10 considered two models for the structure of a Rural Parliament, presented by Prof. Michael Dower, based on analysis of how rural movements operate across Europe. These were named the 'Angel' and the 'Flower' models. The emphatic response of the group to this choice was to prefer the Angel, on the grounds that it would more truly achieve what Richard Lochhead had called for in his speech, namely that "rural communities need to be empowered". The group felt that the Flower model would lead to domination by central or local government or by major sectoral interests, and place rural communities in a minority position<sup>1</sup>.

### Angel

The Angel's body and dress expresses the upward cascade from a multiplicity of rural community-based organisations, through county regional groupings, to a national network, these together forming the prime constituent of the national rural movement. The wings contain other sectoral organisations who play a supporting role. The Angel's head provides the movement's link with Government and others, through the periodic Rural Parliament and its on-going activity. Sweden, Finland and Estonia use essentially this model.



### Flower

This is a sectoral model, embracing all main sectors involved in rural policy and action, each forming one 'petal' of the total flower. Rural communities and their network would form one petal. Other petals would represent Local authorities, LEADER Groups, Land interests, Environmental NGOs, Research institutes, Trade unions, secondary and tertiary economic sectors. At the centre of the flower is a roundtable representing all the different sectors, running the activity of the overall network including the periodic Rural Parliament, and relating to government. This model is similar to the pattern of formal National Rural Networks (set up as part of the Rural Development Programme) in some EU countries.

<sup>1</sup> Michael Dower, Pers. Comm. 16/06/12

## What's in a name?

Throughout the day delegates considered if the name 'Rural Parliament' was the most appropriate. There were opposing views, both for and against, but on balance there were more against it than for.

Of the 8 tables for which records were received, the following were the main proposals:

- Rural Parliament was the agreed group proposal from 2 tables. 4 tables recorded negative views, with 2 of these having this as their agreed position. 2 tables did not list it at all. On balance this is a controversial name, with more against it than for it.
- Assembly (and permutations) was recorded by 3 groups, one of which had it as their agreed position.
- Gathering (and permutations) was recorded by 4 groups
- Congress (and permutations) was recorded by 2 groups
- Thing/ Althing was recorded by 2 groups

Other suggestions, with 1 listing each were:

- Scottish Rural Voice
- Rural Forum
- Rural dialogue
- Rural Stramash
- Rural partnership
- Rural days
- Rural day
- The Kitchen
- Countryside Craic
- Craic in the kitchen
- The Craic
- The Gither
- The Rural Blether

## Reflections on the day

Willy Roe – Seminar Chair

First of all I will offer you some very first impressionistic feedback from the ten substantial group reporting sheets. These are very valuable and thank you very much to the scribes and facilitators for making the very most of that hour and a half. Then I am going to ask three people, who we have invited in advance to listen to today, reflect on it and offer a perspective about their impressions of the day. I would like to offer you the opportunity to offer your reflections on today, so we can take away something of how you are feeling at the end of the day. I will then share with you the next steps, what happens after we leave here today and how is this going to be taken forward.

Feedback from the group sessions:

I am quickly going to try to pull out some of the themes which are most strongly recurring, because the fact they have arisen, in some case from six or seven groups, tells us that they are significant. This summary is literally first impressions, as I have received these within the last fifteen minutes. But I will try to share that with you because, apart from the group you were in, you have no idea what was happening elsewhere.

There are some strongly recurring themes. It is clear that quite a number of people imagined they were coming here today to create the structure for a Scottish Rural Parliament. If we have conveyed that message, our apologies, but we are not as far on as that yet. We needed first to engage with you on some of the fundamental questions. If we want to take the Parliament forward, then a number of quite tricky and complex issues will have to be grasped in the new few weeks and months.

What would a successful Rural Parliament achieve for Scotland?

More than half of the groups included points about refreshing and strengthening democracy and participation. A number of you have listened to and have talked about the paucity of representative, elected structures at the local level in Scotland, in comparison with the other European countries here today. But it is not as simple as that. There are only 32 local authorities but, if anything, the pressure I have heard over the last few years has been to cut that number to something in the late teens. I haven't, until getting engaged with this, heard a lot of people talk about the idea of creating, recreating it would be, a significantly more local system of representative or participative democracy.

But there are parts of Scotland where by using other powers that have been created, people have done this. The communities, which have used legislation to conduct a poll about buying their land, have had to go through a profoundly serious democratic process. They have had to succeed through a much higher threshold of adult voting in order to be able to use the powers that are in the legislation. And in some cases communities that have done that have had turnouts of 80% and 90% of the electorate voting in the election and very substantial proportions voting in favour of "taking the big step" to become the collective owner of their territory. In the very best of places, even 5 and 8 years on, there is a high level of active participation by these communities, even in voting for a vacancy that arises on the Board, for example. I say that only because it is a new movement in Scotland but it has got a new lease of life because of what this Government decided to do in terms of creating a new fund and so on. If you were to go to the Western Isles, for example, 60% of the population now live on land which is owned by their community collectively.

One has to ask the question, has the Western Isles Council changed anything about its ways of working when 60% of the population now have a more local democratic structure than the Council itself, and where twice as many people turn out to vote for their local democratic structure, as do for the Islands structures. So interesting issues arising in that. I only use that as an illustration because it is quite a sharp one and it helps throw into relief the question of whether we do have sufficiently robust, accountable representative and participatory bodies at the local level.

Everyone talked about the concept of a “coming together” - a gathering if you like, to share knowledge and ideas and stories of success and innovation. Now that can be done in lots of ways, for instance, there are fantastic online resources these days that contribute.

You all talked in different ways about increasing the influence of the voices of people who live and work in rural communities. I imagine many of you meant not just at the local level but at the national level, and I know one group talked about the international level also. So strengthening the voice of communities, of people in communities, who by the nature of the geography of our country are very dispersed. If you were coming from the Isle of Tiree to get here for today's meeting, for example, you would have had to leave Tiree last Thursday, unless you were going to fly at huge expense to Glasgow, in which case you could have got here yesterday

There was a lot of commonality about what success would look like, distance from government, independence from government appears in just about every page. Some groups that I was in actually expressed real fears that whatever might be said that, what was described as the centralising tendencies of the current Scottish Government might be a danger for the independence of the Rural Parliament. Therein are some fears, but also other groups talked about how can we mitigate these fears and make sure they don't happen. So work in progress obviously.

There were anxieties expressed in lots of groups about how to resource this and the importance of resourcing it. One group in particular, but not the only one, was concerned that it would be easy for this to become a Parliament of people who have got time, expertise and resources, and unless we were pretty careful it could become the same people who have the time, and make the time to take part in so many other things.

Almost every group talked about the significance of engaging young people, because it is their future that is being talked about.

So a lot of commonality but distinct differences as well.

How would a successful Parliament be organised?

There is more diversity here.

Some of the groups took on board the idea that the Parliament might meet periodically, as a high point of a set of relationships and activities, but between times they wanted to make sure that there was on-going work and influence.

People talked about the importance of an independent secretariat and of Government's role being properly defined and appropriately located.

Several groups, but fewer than I thought, talked about the role of technologies, social media and other technologies, to enable an effective Scottish Rural Parliament. In pre-seminar discussions, we talked about the importance of embracing social media if we really want to attract and engage young people. There is a network in Scotland which has already successfully engaged more than 80% of 13-25 year olds at any one time - Young Scot. It is an entitlement card which has goodies attached to it. Almost every young person chooses to become part of this network, and the network will be much more powerful than it has been before, because of the potential of social media. That is for another day, but several of you have mentioned it and we won't lose it.

Quite a few of you talked about the importance of this having a fun and enjoyment element and not being tedious hard work all the time. Again, we learned some things this morning about how that can come alive.

We have even got some interesting diagrams, which have been explained to me so that they won't get lost in the process. An idea presented at one table, was that the Rural Parliament should consist of sub constituencies of the subsets of Rural Scotland – communities, trade unions, local authorities, academic institutions, businesses and so on. And that each of these constituencies should have an equal say in the Parliament. Apparently at that table that proposition was not supported, but a different proposition was. This was that the voices of rural communities should be dominant and that other players and institutions should have a supportive role in relation to them. The Rural Parliament should be driven by people who live and work in rural areas. That is probably a recurring theme.

We have asked each of the following people if they would offer just a few minutes of their own personal reflections on what happened today:

- John Hutchison from Community Land Scotland
- Bert Broekhuis from the European Rural Community Association
- David Thomson from the Scottish Government.

## John Hutchison

Community Land Scotland

When I saw this is a manifesto commitment I thought it was a really brave thing to include and I was really interested to be part of an earlier working group about it.

One of the things that we discussed in the latter session here was what added value a Rural Parliament might bring to what exists already, in terms of professional good practice, sharing etc. For me the additional thing is that it sets down, with a regular frequency, a route into Government. A route is already there, but at the moment you have actually got to fight to participate in it and get projects forward. So this establishes for me a route that I don't have to fight for, and that is really encouraging.

The question I asked earlier about how we decide what "rural" means really has to be answered. The suggestion was that this was an academic question, but I would suggest that it is a pragmatic matter that

has to be sorted out and we either have to define urban, or we have to define rural, but not take too long about doing so. Perhaps that will change over time.

For me, it is very important that this process, for that is what it really is, rather than an organisation, should not be a centralising body.

I would be interested just to work out how the process would identify the participant groups. Would it solely look for existing community groups, would groups opt in, would the rural movement encourage new groups to be formed, how are these groups found? If there was a community council and a community association wanting to opt into this process, would one of them be excluded or restricted in some way?

As part of that, should the role of community councils be reinforced? Switzerland has a population one and a half times the size of Scotland with 3,300 active Communes, so that is an interesting thought, for me at least. At one time we also had a rural network in Scotland that excluded community councils from participation, and it is interesting that there are no community councils here today.

The Rural Parliament would be a link into the Scottish Parliament as we have been hearing. I wouldn't think that it would be lobbying or linking, in a policy way, to local government, but it would certainly have to link into the UK Parliament as well, at least for the next period of time.

One of our EU colleagues mentioned that their Rural Parliament put forward 300 ideas to government. Now one question in my mind is – how would these be prioritised, how would they be evaluated?

How would the rural movement itself, once it is defined, feed into the Rural Parliament? Would we have to have zones, for instance the South of Scotland, North East, Highlands and the Islands? I am not very sure, but would we need some sort of hierarchy to feed into the Rural Parliament.

How would the process actually develop ideas and take them forward? We had a really interesting discussion with our Dutch colleague about a health project and I asked what work was done on ideas before they came forward to the formality of the biennial parliament. The projects were expected to be worked up over that period of time and people are expected to work with the Health Service, for example, on the project and then go with the log jams or the problems to the Government and say "if you could remove this particular policy matter or procedural thing then our project can move forward". That struck a strong cord with the Belford Hospital campaign in Fort William where a West Highland Solutions Group was set up, that went forward to the Government and said "these are the barriers, can you move these barriers and things might start to happen?" Then I thought – well actually this is really how community planning was meant to work, it was meant to work at a community level, not necessarily at the full Council level. So that is another practical parallel for me in all of this.

The matter of the preservation of the independence of the parliament was particularly important to me.

Colleagues at the table were really worried about the name "Parliament". The first Parliament in the world wasn't the mother of the Parliament in Westminster, it was the Althing, the gathering of people in an assembly that took place in Iceland, the gathering that lasted for the best part of a thousand years.

So from my point of view this is a really good idea, it needs a lot of work, but it establishes a route and therefore, if it establishes a route and a process, it forces communities and the public bodies to work together to get projects ready for a certain time.

## Bert Broekhuis

Chair of the European Rural Community Association

Firstly, the Rural Parliament as we know is all about people first, and their environment, that is very important.

Secondly and very importantly, there is also a natural attitude observed, not only here but also in my country, that local, provincial or national authorities are just a little bit suspicious about what this kind of parliament is. Is it in competition? No it is not a competition. It is just a support for doing the right thing, which you will have to do as a politician and as a member of the Government. Listen to the people, listen for good ideas, exchange also the arguments, for many people have no idea what is really going on and the specific problems which Government, politicians in the Parliament are talking about. So it is not in competition, it is just a support - that is one of the basic principles of the Rural Parliament.

It is the bottom up process. I think you have to take care if you organise the Rural Parliament. You have to start it just from the villages, just from the movements in the countryside, then you can ask for the support of the local, regional and the national government. It starts from your heart, it starts from your own situation and that must be the basic principle. So not "top down" but "bottom up".

One thing that was not mentioned, and is very important, has to do with culture. It is also a culture change. Everybody knows that change in culture takes time. If you want to change your behaviour it is not from one day to another day that I am another person. You have to train, you have to look around. Everyone has to understand in his mind that it is not only the procedures, but also the way of thinking, so there is also an understanding that you can co-operate together in another way. There is also a mind-set in this new form of the democratic method.

The influence of the village strength and resources is very important. Take care that the Rural Parliament is not an anti-selection. It must be the voice of the people. Not only the people with a good education. My experience is that many people are working in the countryside, not only farmers, but also in other professions. If they understand their circumstances well, they can give very good practical advice on what is going on. Don't forget them, they are as valuable as other people. That is also a democratic principle.

You will hear a lot of other principles from other countries, and maybe you also experience on the local scale this kind of Rural Parliament, but one thing - don't copy - make your own Rural Parliament, from your own culture, with the best background that the people can understand. That also gives identity, and a good identity is also one of the guarantees that you will succeed.

Follow the social media. The world is changing very fast, not just for the youngsters. See the new techniques and see how you can incorporate them. If you are working in this way, I think you will succeed.

My feeling this day is a very good feeling, positive people and a very nice atmosphere. I wish you success.

## David Thomson

Scottish Government Department of Food Drink and Rural Communities

I am a Civil Servant, I work in Food and Drink in the Rural Communities and I will try and not be controlling of the Rural Parliament in any way, shape or form in the next few minutes!

It has been a fantastic privilege to hear the wide range of people's comments and also to see the desire that people have to know and understand more and get involved in this process. So that has been a really, really great day for me.

I have seen many models discussed, with my accountant's hat on, costing from €50,000 - 1,300,000.

I have heard the Cabinet Secretary talk about the journey - is it right for Scotland, and how will we make it work? The point that unity is strength, I think, was a strong reason for doing something like this.

The question that our colleague from Northern Ireland had about poverty, inequality and social exclusion was one thing that possibly hasn't had time to be addressed properly today. I think that it is something that we need to look at again.

I have enjoyed from the models we saw this morning the creativity and the celebration that was there, as well as the normal Government bureaucratic stuff which I do.

The concept of "bottom up" absolutely seems to be at the heart of all the models. I think I would challenge the way that we talk about that though. Because I don't think it is "bottom up" I think we all just sit in different chairs, and I would like to think of it a bit more as a 'distributed intelligence'. So it is a way for people in Government and people throughout the country to get a bit more of that distributed intelligence that makes us a better country. I think, as Bert said so eloquently, there is as much intelligence and ideas and thoughts and energy in Rural Scotland, if not more, as there is elsewhere.

So wonderful morning.

What did I learn from the group discussion this afternoon? That it is going to be very hard I think was the obvious answer.

We had a really good group discussion here but one that was incredibly diverse with a wide range of different points. We were the one that came up with the two models that Willy was discussing, Flowers and Angels. There is a real range of views about the relationship with local government, with NGOs, businesses and others. Also there is a range of views about other forms of local democracy, community councils and others. A plea also to involve those who aren't normally involved, so making sure that there is a legitimacy in rural communities, beyond the usual suspects.

So a huge set of issues for the Rural Parliament to deal with. But the overwhelming thing for me was the absolute hunger of people in the room to know more about what this might mean and to shape what and if we should have a Rural Parliament in Scotland.

So it has been a fantastic day. Thank you.

## Final words and next steps

Willy Roe – Seminar Chair

Next steps:

All the product of today's work will be taken away and written up. The steering group, will commission the production of a report of today, which will eventually be published. In that report there will be, as I understand it, proposals about how this will be taken forward from today to the next stages. Your reactions and responses to these proposals and recommendations will really matter and we would encourage you all to respond actively.

If at that time any of you would like, and think you have the time and energy, to be a real contributor to the next stages of taking this forward, that is the time when you should indicate it. Having been here today, you have got a 'stamp of approval', you know in terms for becoming one the people to take this forward. The existing steering group has done a great job, and I know they would really value those of you who have the time and would like to be involved.

Lastly some thanks for the work that all the following people have done:

- Firstly, the members of the steering group, who imagined this event from its beginnings through to your conclusions of today. They have done a sterling job, contributing energy, creativity and time and I am impressed with what they were able to achieve, knowing how hard this is to do.
- I would like to pinpoint the name of Vanessa Hallhead who, with her huge experience in Scotland and internationally, was asked to be the Adviser to the Scottish Government in taking this work forward and has also contributed enormously to the building of relationships with our European Partners, distilling out some of the things that most matter.
- The funding for today came from the Scottish Government and we thank them for that.
- David Thomson and his colleagues Alistair Prior and Graham Kay, in particular. Graham, whom many of you will have met, worked very creatively, rapidly and successfully on this.
- All of our guests from Slovenia, Sweden, The Netherlands, Estonia, Germany, England and Northern Ireland.
- The facilitators and the scribes who did a really important job this afternoon to make sure that we heard and captured all that was said.
- The technical team who have helped us with all the technology support.

Thanks to you – every single one of you for choosing to commit a day, or in some cases much more than a day, to come here and take part in this.

# Report of the evaluation survey for the Seminar on 29 May 2012

Participants in the seminar on 29 May were sent an email with a link to an online evaluation survey hosted on Survey Monkey. There were 64 responses to the survey, which are summarised below, along with a representative sample of comments.

The key points from the survey are:

- 71% found the morning and afternoon sessions very useful or useful
- 58% think there should be a Rural Parliament
- 34% don't know, are undecided or responded 'Other'
- 8% think there should not be a Rural Parliament
- 43% would like to be kept up to date with developments
- 59% said they wanted to be actively involved

## Question 1

| On a scale of 1 to 5 (1 = Not at all useful, 5 = Very useful), please tell us how useful you found the morning session (discussion, presentations and panel) in helping you to understand the implications for Scotland of establishing a Rural Parliament. |                   |                |
|---|-------------------|----------------|
| Answer Options  | Response per cent | Response count |
| 1 - Not at all useful   | 1.6%              | 1              |
| 2   | 8.1%              | 5              |
| 3   | 19.4%             | 12             |
| 4   | 33.9%             | 21             |
| 5 - Very useful   | 37.1%             | 23             |

## Sample comments

- Morning presentations were useful to understand how the structure is pieced together in other countries, in relation to the tiers of local vs national governance.
- The European examples were a fascinating insight into Rural Parliaments and movements and the different stages of their development.
- Thanks to the small countries in Europe, who gave us a clear picture of how a Rural Parliament may work in our own country. The groups were excellent as the people involved were all involved in the rural areas in Scotland and from rural areas of other countries. Must thank the Government and Richard Lochhead for their care for rural areas.
- I thought the morning session was great - very passionate and reasoned presentations
- The European experiences were well-presented and interesting. I don't think that all the implications of establishing a Rural Parliament for Scotland, in terms of democracy, engagement and impact, can be fully understood at this stage, when the exact form of the proposed Rural Parliament still remains to be confirmed.
- Some people seemed very positive; others, who already have a strong voice, dismissed the day as a talking shop. However, I do not agree at all. Individual citizens like to feel they are being heard, and a Rural Parliament can contribute to this. We will have to be inventive, test our ideas, and learn
- One sided, no consideration of potential downsides

## Question 2

| On a scale of 1 to 5 (1 = Not at all useful, 5 = Very useful), please tell us how useful you found the afternoon discussion groups in helping you to develop your views on a Scottish Rural Parliament. |                   |                |
|---|-------------------|----------------|
| Answer Options  | Response per cent | Response count |
| 1 - Not at all useful   | 4.8%              | 3              |
| 2   | 6.5%              | 4              |
| 3   | 17.7%             | 11             |
| 4   | 50%               | 31             |
| 5 - Very useful   | 21%               | 13             |

## Sample comments

- The discussion around the table was lively and interesting and it was good having someone there from one of the existing Rural Parliaments. I think we agreed that Parliament was the wrong term. I am not sure that we came to any firm conclusions about what a "parliament" should be. It was agreed I think that there was a need for more communication between rural communities who are often unnecessarily isolated and sometimes working hard to reinvent wheels. Whether a "parliament" would be the solution to this I am not sure. A biennial celebration of rural community achievement would be valuable as an inspirational event.
- The facilitator we had helped us draw together what was in our hearts - a Rural Parliament to be the rural voice for Scotland working in a positive manner alongside Government and agencies.
- Useful to discuss what the general thinking was, given the early stage the level of information/ ideas generated was a useful starting point to be considered at the next stage by a group of appropriate people
- It was helpful but also highlighted how difficult it could be to make the step change from concept to reality.
- A good degree of consensus was reached between a group representing disparate interests and desires for a Rural Parliament
- With such a big topic, the discussions could have been continued in more depth, but even as much as we managed to cover in one afternoon helped me towards a better understanding of how a Scottish Rural Parliament might work, the kind of engagement that could be anticipated and how a SRP might interact with communities, organisations and democratically elected representatives.
- Unfortunately there was an impression in the group that they were being led in a certain direction (i.e. in favour of a rural parliament) by the way that the questions were phrased. Would have been more useful to start off asking people if they wanted a rural parliament.
- It felt as if there was a presumption towards a Scottish Rural Parliament and we were only being allowed to discuss options based on that basic assumption.

## Question 3

| Having attended the seminar, do you now think there should be a Scottish Rural Parliament? |                   |                |
|--|-------------------|----------------|
| Answer Options   | Response per cent | Response count |
| Yes  | 58.1%             | 36             |
| No   | 8.1%              | 5              |
| Don't know/undecided   | 27.4%             | 17             |
| Other  | 6.5%              | 4              |

## Sample comments from those who answered YES

- Needs clear and ongoing financial support from Government, as the benefit of knowledge and understanding issues of rural places are very clear. It would lead to a better integrated and more complete country given the significant areas of remote Scotland.
- Yes, more participatory and deliberative democracy in all sectors and regions throughout Scotland please. Distribute control, share responsibility and liberate innovation.
- I think a Rural Parliament would be very worthwhile for Scotland to pursue and has the potential to make a big impact. However work must be done to establish how the many community groups can be involved in an effective way. Whilst there isn't a rural movement as such, there already exists a number of active groups, similar to the Village Action Groups in other countries. Creating a structure that allows it to be entirely led by rural communities is absolutely critical to a Rural Parliament succeeding.
- Yes BUT...Danger of putting the cart before the horse. What is really needed is an active, well-connected and adequately resourced rural network, for which the "Rural Parliament" might serve as an annual or biennial conference/convention/assembly.
- I think it is a good idea, but needs buy-in from all the many organisations currently doing good work across the country. How can we give each organisation currently working an equal voice in the parliament without having a knock-on effect to their individual business areas? If we don't get it right then we risk further alienating a lot of people. Good idea though.
- A qualified "yes". The day was dominated by the public and third sectors, and yet rural Scotland depends largely on the business community - and especially the small business community - for its wellbeing. More so at this time of public sector cutbacks. The third sector is growing but its impact is still tiny compared to that of the private sector. A Parliament would only be useful if it focuses at least in part on how to make rural Scotland a more attractive place to do business - something that we desperately need.
- As long as it isn't given that title. I'd also like to see this process go hand in hand with reform of local government to something closer to the European model.
- Needs a lot of work to decide on a structure. Should be Rural Network or Rural Partnership or Rural Forum
- The day itself was very useful. I was not alone in enjoying talking to others and learning new knowledge from them. I felt that this is how the rural parliament might work, once it is up and running. The day felt rather like this was the first meeting of the rural parliament
- I'm now very enthusiastic about the opportunities presented by an SRP, especially in regard to the wealth of knowledge and expertise that was present at the event and the potential resource that would benefit all of us in small, rural communities.

## Sample comments from those who answered OTHER/DON'T KNOW/UNDECIDED

- Depends on the format, knowledge sharing etc - yes
- Before the event I was of the opinion that there should be a SRP, but I am now less certain. Rather than creating another tier of 'democracy', why not make better use of Community Planning Partnerships or Community Councils? Where was the private sector? Where were the landowners? These are the powers that will make things happen. The process risks being heavily dominated by single interest groups.
- It is still too early to say a yes or no. I would err to the Yes, but would like further discussion to take place. The idea needs distillation and time to mature
- Concern that this might duplicate work done by existing local and national rural networks. At a time of financial restraint it might be difficult for struggling rural organisations and communities to accept expenditure on what might be regarded as an additional layer of bureaucracy.
- I do believe there should be and would like there to be one, however, the discussions in our workshop and the comments/purpose of its existence has made me query whether we actually need it now.

Sample comments from those who answered NO

- There are already sufficient forums in place. It would be difficult to see any cost justification for any more.
- I remain to be convinced that setting up a Rural Parliament would be the best use of people's time and money, although I fully support the need to talk across sectors and interests as being useful but I am not sure a RP is needed to achieve that. Specific concerns relate mainly to a lack of evidence of demand from the grassroots; issues over funding; lack of clarity of purpose; concerns about legitimacy of representatives if unelected, and how it relates to democratic processes such as Community Councils or Local Authorities; concerns over long term viability, and possible one sector dominance.
- There is a real need to increase how much is heard of rural voices and a need also to energise and animate (some) rural areas, but the Parliament as described was fairly tokenistic. The energy has to come first from a rural movement for any Rural Parliament to have teeth and go beyond the already-empowered middle class lifestyle ruralite. This is the work of a decade or more, not a couple of years.

Question 4

| If there is to be a Scottish Rural Parliament, would you like to be involved in its development? |                   |                |
|--|-------------------|----------------|
| Answer Options   | Response per cent | Response count |
| No - I have no further interest in the subject   | 3.4%              | 2              |
| Yes - I would like to be kept up to date with developments                                       | 43.1%             | 25             |
| Yes - I would like to be actively involved   | 58.6%             | 34             |

# Appendix A

## Seminar Programme

|               | Morning session  | Speakers   |
|---------------|--|--|
| 09.45         | Registration   |  |
| 10.20         | Impressions of a Scottish Rural Parliament<br>Introductory group session | Group discussion   |
| 10.40         | Welcome and introduction to the day and to the speakers                  | Willy Roe, Chairman  |
| 10.55         | Experience and lessons from abroad<br>1 – The Dutch Rural Parliament     | Bert Broekhuis, Chairman of the Dutch Rural Parliament and Chairman of the European Rural Community Association, ERCA<br><br>Koos Mirk, Manager of the Dutch Association of Small Towns and Villages, LVKK |
| 11.15         | Experience and lessons from abroad<br>2 – The Slovenian Rural Parliament | Goran Šoster, President of the Slovenian Rural Development Network, Co-ordinator of PREPARE, Partnership for Rural Europe  |
| 11.35         | Coffee refresh   |  |
| 11.40         | Experience and lessons from abroad<br>3 – The Estonian Rural Parliament  | Liina Saar, Chairperson of Kodukant, the Estonian Village Movement   |
| 12.00         | Experience and lessons from abroad<br>4 – The Swedish Rural Parliament   | Staffan Bond, General Manager of All Sweden Shall Live, HSSL, the Swedish Village Movement   |
| 12.20         | Panel discussion   | Willy Roe, Chairman<br>European Speakers   |
| 12.40         | A Rural Parliament for Scotland  | Richard Lochhead MSP, Cabinet Secretary for Rural Affairs and the Environment  |
| 12.50 – 13.45 | Buffet Lunch in the Hotel Restaurant                                     |  |
|               | Afternoon session  |  |
| 13.50         | Key messages for Scotland  | Dr. Sarah Skerratt, Senior Researcher and Team Leader, Rural Society Research, Scottish Agricultural College   |

|       |   |   |
|-------|---|---|
| 14.00 | Introduction to the group work sessions   | Robert Rae, Director of 3 <sup>rd</sup> Horizons                                |
| 14.10 | Group session 1<br>What would a successful Rural Parliament achieve for Scotland? | Small working groups  |
| 14.55 | Group session 2<br>How would a successful Rural Parliament be organised?          | Small working groups  |
| 15.40 | Refreshment break   |   |
| 16.00 | Plenary and reflections   | Chairman with Local Community, Scottish Government and European representatives |
| 16.30 | Final words and next steps  | Chairman  |
| 16.40 | Close of Seminar  |   |

## Appendix B

### Speakers and Visitors Biographies

#### Willy Roe - Chair of the Seminar

Willy lives and works in rural Scotland, in the north-west Highlands, close to the Isle of Skye. In his professional life he is a consultant, adviser and facilitator. He works in Scotland, other parts of the UK and several countries in the EU. Previously he has worked in West and East Africa and in North America and Australia. In his public service life, he has been an elected councillor in local government, and has spent the past 7 years as Chair of Highlands and Islands Enterprise, the longest established rural economic and community development agency in Europe. In his private life he is passionate about renewable energy and sustainability, and has recently transformed his home and business base from dependency on oil and carbon to being more than 95% based on renewable energy. He runs a 5-star rural business in the tourism sector, to which he has recently added an organic fruit and vegetable garden. His next challenge – after chairing this seminar - is to learn how to look after three Gloucestershire Old Spot piglets. But he's quite relaxed about it as the ancient breed has a reputation for docility, intelligence and profligacy!

#### Speakers:

##### Bert Broekhuis – Dutch Association of Small Towns and Villages

Bert is currently Chairman of the Dutch Rural Parliament, Member of the Executive Board of the Association of Small Towns and Villages in the Netherlands and Chairman of the European Rural Community Association (ERCA). He has been a Member of the Dutch Parliament (Tweede Kamer/Lower House); Special Advisor for the Dutch Delegation to the United Nation in New York; Mayor of the Municipality of Cromstrijen, and later of the Municipality of Bernisse; Member of the Council of European Municipalities and Regions; Member of the Board of Water Authority in Zeeland Province; Chairman of the Advisory Committee on new regulations on waterways in the Netherlands (Disaster Risk Management); Advisor and Researcher for Zeeland Foundation, Institute for Community Development in the Netherlands; Member of the Jury of the Dutch Architecture and Design Award; Member of the Board of the International Association of Friends and Relatives of Dutch Emigrants (Wereldcontact); President Commissioner of Maderas Hotel Group in Costa Rica; Professor in the field of Strategy Formation at the University of Warmia and Mazury in Olsztyn, Poland; he is currently a Senior Advisor to the National Assembly of Laos PDR, in Vientiane (Support for ASEP 7 bi-annual conference of European and Asian countries, 5 October 2012).

##### Koos Mirck – Co-ordinator of the Dutch Association of Small Towns and Villages LVKK

Koos studied political sciences and international affairs. For the last five years he has worked as co-ordinator for the Dutch grassroots organisation for active inhabitants of the rural areas (LVKK). In that function he is the project manager of the Dutch Rural Parliament. He is also the project manager of the current project from the national Government and the LVKK, focused on how to handle population decline and aging in the rural areas.

##### Goran Šoster – President of the Slovenia Rural Development Network

Goran has a degree from the Faculty of Economics and Business at the University of Maribor in Slovenia. From 1986 to 1989 he worked at the Municipality Ljutomer in analytical economic research. In the time of radical political changes in the Eastern Europe in late 1980s, he was one of the leaders of the alternative movement of civil society in Slovenia. From 1989 to 1998, he was Director of Mikrokozmos Ltd, well known as the pioneering group of organic agriculture in Slovenia. From 1998 to the present, he has been Director of the Prlekija Development Agency, and Manager of LAG Prlekija. In 2003 he was one of the initiators of the Slovenian Rural Development Network and, for the last three years, President of that association, representing it in the European initiatives PREPARE, ELARD, ERA and ERCA. Since 2009 he has worked as Co-ordinator of the Pan-European network PREPARE – Partnership for Rural Europe, and is a member of EN RD Coordination Committee and RD Advisory group.

Liina Saar – Chair of the Board of KODUKANT - the Estonian Village Movement

Since 2006 Liina has been strongly involved with voluntary work for the Estonian Village Movement Kodukant, and in 2008 and 2011 was elected Chair of the Board of Kodukant. She is responsible for the general development of the organisation (e.g. planning the strategy of Kodukant), and exercising links to the Ministries on rural and regional development policies. She represents Kodukant in the Ministry of Interior, in the Monitoring Committee of the Estonian Rural Development Plan 2007-2013. She also represents Kodukant at the international level (PREPARE network, ERCA European Rural Community Association, CEE CN Central and Eastern European Citizens Network) and takes care of cross-border relationships with other European village organisations. Liina has a degree in Public Administration and has worked in this field for sixteen years. She has a long experience of public administration affairs and knowledge of local and regional development. She has worked in Municipal and County Government, and currently works in the Estonian-Latvian-Russian Cross Border Co-operation Programme.

Staffan Bond – General Manager of Hela Sverige skal leva – the Swedish Village Movement

Staffan has been engaged in the Swedish rural community movement “Hela Sverige ska leva”, All Sweden shall live, since the early 1990s, and from 2003 as General Manager. During the 1980s he was Secretary of the Government Committee for Rural Development, formulating the policies for rural Sweden, also initiating pilot projects and running the Campaign for Rural Sweden, as a part of a campaign launched by the Council of Europe 1987. This was managed in co-operation with 100 NGOs, ending in the first Rural Parliament and the establishment of All Sweden shall live. Since the early 1980s Staffan has had extensive international engagement in European rural networks and supporting the establishment of national movements, eg. in Estonia and Germany. He has an expert role in rural policies at both European and national level, eg. at the European Commission, formulating Leader+ and introducing Leader in Lithuania. During the 1970s he worked at county level with rural development. He has been Secretary since 1990 of the Association for Northern Inland Municipalities, covering half of Sweden, having infrastructure, land use, service and tourism as the main issues. He is active in the community action group on his home island in rural Sweden, and also manages some forest land.

Dr Sarah Skerratt - Rural Society Research, Scottish Agricultural College

Sarah is a Senior Researcher & Team Leader. She has 24 years of experience in analysing the differences between policy vision and experience-on-the-ground in rural areas and communities. She has focused particularly on rural community development policies and strategies, as well as initiatives led by communities. She researches sustainability of initiatives, and issues of resilience, capacity-building and leadership, and has carried out her research in UK and internationally. Themes of focus include: rural services; rural broadband; village halls; and rural leadership. Sarah enjoys working in partnership with a range of individuals and organisations, and believes that mutual exchange and learning are key to doing research that makes a difference. She is Editor of SAC's Rural Scotland in Focus Reports, and is convener of the Round Table Debate Series which brings together stakeholders from across the private, public and third sectors.

Vanessa Halhead – Rural Parliament Adviser

Vanessa has worked for over 25 years as a practitioner and researcher in rural and community development, in Scotland and internationally. This has included working in the public, NGO and academic sectors, and managing several large EU funded partnership projects. She has very close working links with the Nordic countries, and has managed strategic initiatives to transfer experience on rural development. Vanessa worked with Rural Forum Scotland and in 1987 helped to initiate and then managed Highlands and Islands Forum, the first rural community network in Scotland. She has always been very involved in local community projects and help to set up and run many local groups. She has worked extensively in Europe and been an active member of several European rural development networks and projects over a 25 year period. Following research into the rural movements of Europe and publication of results in 2005, she has helped to lead the development of networks between these national movements, and currently co-ordinates the European Rural Community Association ERCA.

## Also attending the Seminar:

### Professor Kurt Krambach – Village Movement in Germany

Kurt Krambach was born in 1930 in Potsdam, Germany, and lives in Berlin. He is a Rural Sociologist, retired since 1995. He studied Philosophy at the Humboldt University, Berlin, and has a PhD from the Humboldt University. He became Professor of Sociology, Academy of Social Sciences in 1977. His research fields are: rural development, social structural change in the countryside, sustainable village development. He has been active in several European rural networks. Since 1997 he was a member and from 2003-2004, co-president of Forum Synergies (European Network for Experiences in Sustainable Development). Since 2001 he had contact with Village Movements and Rural Parliaments in Europe, visiting several Rural Parliaments in Sweden and Estonia; from 2004 he was founder and member of the Brandenburg Network for Living Villages and since 2011 a member of the Initiative Group "Village Movement in Germany". Since 2009 he has been a Board Member of the European Rural Community Association (ERCA).

### Professor Michael Dower

Michael Dower is Visiting Professor of European Rural Development at the University of Gloucestershire, England. He was previously Director-General of the Countryside Commission, England. From 2000 to 2004 he was Co-ordinator of the PREPARE Partnership for Rural Europe, which supported the creation of national Rural Parliaments or Networks in the EU candidate countries and New Member States. He has been a Core Group member of ARC, the Agricultural and Rural Convention, campaigning for a sustainable future Common Agricultural Policy in the EU.

### Michael Hughes - Chief Executive Officer, Rural Community Network, Northern Ireland

Michael has responsibility for the strategic and operational performance of Rural Community Network and has led the organisation through the development of the current strategic plan 2007-2013. He engages with a range of statutory, voluntary and community organisations highlighting the assets of rural communities, the inequalities that currently exist and how local people must be allowed play an important part in the future sustainability of their community. Michael's current work is focusing on the strategic development of a rural community development networking infrastructure, which is relevant to local rural communities, and the future support to this infrastructure from both central and local government. As a member of various European Programme Monitoring Committees, Michael is a strong advocate of A Shared Future and the promotion of an equality agenda. In developing a highly skilled staff team, Michael believes that the key to this has been creating a work environment where each staff member is able to realise their potential for the benefit not only of the organisation, but more importantly for those most vulnerable within rural communities. Michael joined Rural Community Network in 1996 as Project Assessment Officer with the Peace & Reconciliation Programme. He has also held positions of Programmes Co-ordinator for Peace II and the Rural Community Estates Programme.

### Tom Burston - Northumberland Uplands LEADER Manager

Tom Burston was born and brought up in rural Northumberland. After being educated at the University of Durham and at the School of Oriental and African Studies he took a job in Pakistan Kashmir. Working with the Aga Khan Rural Development Programme in their community development team he began a long stint of work overseas. Tom has worked in the international development sector across a number of countries, including Pakistan, Afghanistan, Indonesia, Sudan, Malawi and Ethiopia. In this time he has gained direct experience in development planning, participatory appraisal, humanitarian aid delivery and the management of integrated development programmes. Moving back to the place of his birth to coordinate the Leader Local Action Group, Tom is bringing a wide outlook on development priorities at the same time as embracing and understanding local needs and local values. Tom is currently engaged in the initiative to introduce a Rural Parliament in England.

## Appendix C - Work Groups – outputs by group

| table | What would a successful Rural Parliament achieve for Scotland?  | How would a successful Rural Parliament be organised?  |
|-------|---|--|
| 1     | Facilitator: Vanessa Glynn / Scribe: Alistair Prior   |  |
|       | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Better connected rural communities.</li> <li>• Celebrate rural life/values – knowledge transfer/best shared practice.</li> <li>• Forward looking.</li> <li>• Understanding baseline, measuring impacts.</li> <li>• Influencing policy and involving public, private and third sectors.</li> <li>• Making a difference.</li> </ul>  | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Process: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>○ Movement/Community of practice</li> <li>○ Alignment</li> </ul> </li> <li>• Funding mixture – Scottish Government and LEADER/NRN longer term</li> <li>• Communications strategy.</li> </ul>  |
| 2     | Facilitator: Mike McCarron / Scribe: Graham Kay   |  |
|       | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• It would enable 'co-production'.</li> <li>• It could redistribute ineffective spend – avoid duplication.</li> <li>• Increase democratic participation, with powerful voice.</li> <li>• Invoking service users in the design and delivery of services (Communities can be considered as users).</li> </ul>  | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Appropriate funding for a viable, long term organisation.</li> <li>• Modest budget to administer the process.</li> <li>• Must be grass roots up.</li> <li>• Must involve people of all ages with an equal voice (youth and elderly).</li> </ul>   |
| 3     | Facilitator: Francis Gallop / Scribe: Lorraine Macrae   |  |
|       | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Will engage with young people.</li> <li>• Has lobbying function, has influence, inform policy and make a difference.</li> <li>• Be the envy of urban Scotland.</li> <li>• Be used as cross country network forum, sharing best practice.</li> <li>• Engage with everyone, has an agile and broad participation, quality participation with far reach.</li> <li>• Be credible.</li> <li>• Has overturned cultural inertia and made communities feel accountable and responsible.</li> <li>• Decision makers obligated to listen.</li> </ul> | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Virtual parliament? Only if digital divide closed.</li> <li>• RP 'event' as focus but not the object.</li> <li>• Community awards – a celebration of rural Scotland.</li> <li>• Use community councils/other local groups – empower and revitalise these within an integrated context.</li> <li>• Improve the skill set at grass roots level.</li> <li>• Set up regional anchor organisations to bridge the gap between communities and the RP (as in Netherlands/Sweden).</li> <li>• Rotating location.</li> <li>• Governance should be determined at ground level with small professional management group with core functions: communication, rural proofing, info gathering and sharing and speaking to wide range</li> </ul> |

|   |   |  |
|---|---|--|
|   | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Come to consensus, both sides (national government and grass roots), come together to deliver.</li> <li>• Have working groups that discuss regional issues and feed into national body.</li> <li>• Prioritises rural agenda e.g. closing the digital divide.</li> <li>• Recognises the expertise of rural community and stereotypes must be challenged.</li> <li>• Redundant layers of democracy removed.</li> <li>• Rural communities are sustainable and vibrant places.</li> </ul>  | of government/third sector and other existing forums e.g. agricultural shows, other parliaments e.g. SYP, university researchers.  |
| 4 | Facilitator: Linda Boyce / Scribe: Angela Hallam  |  |
|   | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Should there be a rural parliament in the first place?</li> <li>• Influence at national and international level.</li> <li>• Diversify existing groups in Scotland. RP would be a mechanism for bringing together, connecting and joining up – how representative are the existing groups?</li> <li>• Establishing a route to the government that isn't there at present, voices from places to articulate difference. Local powers listening to local people.</li> <li>• RP has the powers to lobby central government and achieve change.</li> <li>• Concrete messages to government about what needs to be changed and what the barriers are at local level. Design solutions.</li> <li>• Celebration of rurality – strengthening voice of community.</li> </ul> | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Long term commitment from government (funding).</li> <li>• The Rural Parliament should learn from Youth Parliament.</li> <li>• Look at LEADER as model – brought together statutory bodies and community groups. Extend to cover lobbying and networking but structuring is already there.</li> <li>• Route to government – coming together on a regular basis – stronger voice.</li> <li>• How to get representation?</li> <li>• Use technology between meetings to keep people updated.</li> <li>• Principles – open to all, transparent, positive – solutions not problems.</li> </ul> |
| 5 | Facilitator: Alistair Wilson / Scribe: Angela Morgan  |  |
|   | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Improved local democracy/participation.</li> <li>• A "Gathering" to: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>○ Exchange knowledge and ideas.</li> <li>○ Expand networks.</li> <li>○ Draw in groups that are not usually involved.</li> <li>○ A driver of change leading to more participative democracy.</li> </ul> </li> </ul>   | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Meet once a year.</li> <li>• Independent secretariat, not government controlled.</li> <li>• Secretariat "led" by small, independent, voluntary organisation.</li> <li>• Needs to happen in rural areas.</li> <li>• It might be thematic.</li> <li>• It will travel from area to area.</li> <li>• It will receive funding from government.</li> </ul>  |

|   |  |   |
|---|--|---|
|   |  | <p>Other thoughts</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Guiding principles: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>○ Engagement.</li> <li>○ Influence.</li> <li>○ Holding department to account.</li> </ul> </li> </ul>  |
| 6 | Facilitator: Colin Campbell / Scribe: Vicky Dunlop   |   |
|   | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Will give a strong voice and unify communities – encourage engagement/empowerment of local communities.</li> <li>• Build social benefits and ensure local communities are protected &gt; economically and sustainably.</li> <li>• Create rural movement and promote self-activation &gt; focus direction.</li> <li>• Ensure rural communities unite (union of villages).</li> <li>• Provide mechanism for direction and give greater emphasis to the rural voice.</li> <li>• Consultation – consideration on how rural parliament would be consulted.</li> <li>• Rural proofing (Island proofing).</li> </ul> | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Create a local parliament initiative group following today's seminar – determine aim/goals/objectives.</li> <li>• Regional initiative groups – co-ordinator to communicate to regional and national levels.</li> <li>• Open ended process &gt; learn from experiences, do not restrict scope.</li> <li>• National and regional levels – National gathering (2 years), Regional gathering (alternative years as required).</li> <li>• Make use of existing structures &gt; don't recreate the wheel.</li> <li>• 'Bottom up' approach – the people's rural parliament.</li> <li>• Governance and authority.</li> <li>• Election/Representation.</li> <li>• National and Regional meetings.</li> <li>• Tie into existing structures.</li> <li>• Formulate goals and objectives – regional/local level initiative groups.</li> <li>• Continue to learn from experiences and other international rural networks.</li> <li>• Co-ordinator to communicate.</li> </ul> |
| 7 | Facilitator: Norman MacAskill / Scribe: Adam Groat   |   |
|   | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Co-ordinating diverse rural voices – across sectors.</li> <li>• Rural proofing of government policy and legislation.</li> <li>• Identifiable, beneficial impacts for the disadvantaged.</li> <li>• Buy in and understanding by rural communities.</li> </ul>  | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Need for secretariat/organising body.</li> <li>• National park model of engagement.</li> <li>• Fully inclusive – full cost recovery expenses.</li> </ul>   |
| 8 | Facilitator: Sandra Hogg / Scribe: Gillian McTavish  |   |
|   | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• More relevant government policy making.</li> <li>• Lobbying platform.</li> </ul>  | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Write to Minister for money.</li> <li>• Promotional education programme.</li> </ul>  |

|    |  |  |
|----|--|--|
|    | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Sharing good practice.</li> <li>• Empowering individuals and groups to have a voice.</li> <li>• Sharing good practice not at the heart of it – influencing policy is.</li> <li>• Individual actions, LA actions.</li> <li>• Where? Rural rotation.</li> </ul>   | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Venue to hold 400-500 people – Aviemore?</li> <li>• Government help to set up – possibly using SNRN.</li> <li>• Structure – existing organisation or separate – undecided.</li> </ul>   |
| 9  | Facilitator: Felix Spittal / Scribe: Justine Geyer   |  |
|    | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Vehicle to bring diverse interests together in rural Scotland increasing awareness of each other – map interests to increase collaboration, decrease friction and identify gaps.</li> <li>• Personal learning, lobbying, laughing.</li> <li>• Raise rural profile and issues.</li> <li>• Creating critical mass to draw in Ministers, important groups, media. Scale.</li> <li>• Has to have deliverables – drive socio-economic development – flourishing rural Scotland.</li> </ul>   | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Pilot event with evolutionary process – stimulation of grass root.</li> <li>• Need careful representativeness – geographical, interest gp, size of org.</li> <li>• Strategic – long term, major cross cutting issues of transport, housing.</li> <li>• Independent admin gp (steering gp) – not major NGO. No one gp to claim ownership through representative level.</li> <li>• Big – Ambitious.</li> </ul>  |
| 10 | Facilitator: Mat Tyrer / Scribe: Nicole Reilly   |  |
|    | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Work, folk and place.</li> <li>• Must be independent from Government.</li> <li>• Connecting people from all across Scotland and providing a voice for everyone.</li> <li>• Must have movements between ‘parliaments’. Allow debate between members. Continual.</li> <li>• Promote the economy and well being of people of rural Scotland.</li> <li>• Facilitate people of rural Scotland to be themselves.</li> <li>• Listened to by other organisations and local government (shared control and responsibilities).</li> <li>• There needs to be a parliament hierarchy in place so that local issues are dealt with at local level and major issues are pushed up the hierarchy.</li> </ul> | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Needs to be representative of all rural communities: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>○ Random samples from across Scotland.</li> <li>○ Ensuring that the right people are involved.</li> </ul> </li> <li>• Focus on local level primarily, which would then lead to regional level and the national.</li> <li>• Driven/lead/owned by ‘community’ movement. Not business, agriculture, unions etc. Those sectors are associates that engage with the movement and are influenced by it.</li> <li>• Nurture local level and participation.</li> </ul> <p>Other thoughts:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Using parliament building.</li> <li>• Hire a train.</li> </ul> |

## Appendix D

### Interim Steering Group

|                  |  |
|------------------|--|
| Jennifer Wallace | Carnegie UK                                  |
| Jon Hollingdale  | Community Woodlands Association              |
| Vanessa Halhead  | Rural Parliament Adviser                     |
| Sarah Skerratt   | Rural Policy Centre                          |
| Alistair Prior   | Scottish Government                          |
| Graham Kay       | Scottish Government                          |
| Rob Gowans       | Scottish Youth Parliament                    |
| Angus Hardie     | Scottish Community Alliance                  |
| Norman MacAskill | Scottish Council for Voluntary Organisations |

### Interim Stakeholder Group

|                   |  |
|-------------------|--|
| Vincent Waters    | Association of Scottish Community Councils   |
| Jennifer Wallace  | Carnegie UK                                  |
| Jamie Adam        | Community Energy Scotland                    |
| John Hutchison    | Community Land Scotland                      |
| Jon Hollingdale   | Community Woodlands Association              |
| Ewan Green        | Convention of Scottish Local Authorities     |
| Alex Walker       | Development Trusts Association Scotland      |
| John Watt         | Highlands and Islands Enterprise             |
| Scott Walker.     | National Farmers Union of Scotland           |
| Vanessa Halhead   | Rural Parliament Adviser                     |
| Sarah Skerratt    | Rural Policy Centre                          |
| Julian Pace       | Scottish Enterprise                          |
| Angela Hallam     | Scottish Government                          |
| Alasdair Mckinlay | Scottish Government                          |
| Billy McKenzie    | Scottish Government                          |
| Alistair Prior    | Scottish Government                          |
| Graham Kay        | Scottish Government                          |
| Rob Gowans        | Scottish Youth Parliament                    |
| Angus Hardie      | Scottish Community Alliance                  |
| Norman MacAskill  | Scottish Council for Voluntary Organisations |
| Pip Tabor         | Southern Uplands Partnership                 |

## Appendix E

### Seminar Delegates

|                   |  |
|-------------------|--|
| Stuart Lindsay    | Ailsa Horizons                                       |
| Alistair MacLaren | Argyll & Bute Third Sector Interface                 |
| Rachel Milne      | Buchan Dial a Community Bus                          |
| Brian Wood        | Cairngorms National Park                             |
| Edward Redmond    | Cannich  |
| Lisa Buchanan     | Cantraybridge College, Croy                          |
| Jennifer Wallace  | Carnegie UK Trust                                    |
| Jenny Brotchie    | Carnegie UK Trust                                    |
| Willy Roe         | Chair  |
| Carola Bell       | Community Energy Scotland                            |
| John C Hutchison  | Community Land Scotland                              |
| John MacDonald    | Community Transport Association                      |
| Jon Hollingdale   | Community Woodlands Association                      |
| Isobel Knox       | Community Woodlands Association                      |
| Blair Urquhart    | Comrie Development Trust                             |
| Gillian Fyfe      | COSLA  |
| Nick Reiter       | Crofting Commission                                  |
| Alex Walker       | Development Trusts Association Scotland              |
| Bert Broehuis     | Dutch Association of Small Towns and Villages (LVKK) |
| Koos Mirck        | Dutch Association of Small Towns and Villages (LVKK) |
| Amanda Burgauer   | Elvanfoot Development Group                          |
| Tom Burston       | English Rural Parliament                             |
| Elisabeth Rowark  | English Rural Parliament                             |
| Liina Saar        | Estonia Village Movement, Kodukant,                  |
| David Richardson  | Federation of Small Business                         |
| Helen Rorrison    | Fife Third Sector Interface                          |
| Kelly McIntyre    | Fintry Development Trust                             |
| Bob Frost         | Forestry Commission                                  |
| Peter Sunderland  | Forth Valley & Lomond LEADER                         |
| Reid Hutchieson   | Fraserburgh Community Development Trust              |
| Sonia McLay       | Fresh Futures, Falkirk                               |
| Kate Maclean      | Highland Council                                     |
| Anne MacDonald    | Highlands & Islands Enterprise                       |
| Helen McDade      | John Muir Trust                                      |
| Kate Sankey       | LLT National Park                                    |
| Sandy Brunton     | Mull and Iona Community Trust                        |
| Scott Walker      | National Farmers Union of Scotland                   |
| Michael Hughes    | Northern Ireland Rural Community Network             |
| Pat Able          | Nourish  |
| Phyllis Harvey    | Orkney LEADER  |

|                     |  |
|---------------------|--|
| Jennie Macfie       | Promoters Arts Network                           |
| Susan Pettie        | Prophet Scotland Ltd                             |
| Gordon Muir         | Rural Development Trust                          |
| Wendy Pring         | Rural Leadership Programme - Scottish Enterprise |
| Gary Groves         | Rural Leadership Programme - Scottish Enterprise |
| Andrew Hornall      | Rural Leadership Programme - Scottish Enterprise |
| Kay Diack           | Rural Leadership Programme - Scottish Enterprise |
| Vanessa Halhead     | Rural Parliament Adviser                         |
| Sarah Skerratt      | SAC Rural Policy Centre                          |
| Jane Atterton       | SAC Rural Policy Centre                          |
| Jane Gray           | Scottish Allotments and Gardens Society          |
| Sally Wilson        | Scottish Association of Young Farmers Clubs      |
| Bryan McGrath       | Scottish Borders LEADER                          |
| Bill Harvey         | Scottish Churches Rural Group                    |
| Angus Hardie        | Scottish Community Alliance                      |
| Norman MacAskill    | Scottish Council for Voluntary Organisations     |
| Patrick Krause      | Scottish Crofting Federation                     |
| Julian Pace         | Scottish Enterprise                              |
| Andy Myles          | Scottish Environment Link                        |
| Alistair Prior      | Scottish Government                              |
| Graham Kay          | Scottish Government                              |
| Lorraine Macrae     | Scottish Government                              |
| Angela Hallam       | Scottish Government                              |
| Angela Morgan       | Scottish Government                              |
| Vicky Dunlop        | Scottish Government                              |
| Adam Groat          | Scottish Government                              |
| Nicole Reilly       | Scottish Government                              |
| Justine Geyer       | Scottish Government                              |
| David Thomson       | Scottish Government                              |
| Scott Petrie        | Scottish Land and Estates                        |
| Norette Ferns       | Scottish National Rural Network                  |
| Claudia Rowse       | Scottish Natural Heritage                        |
| Claire Baker MSP    | Scottish Parliament                              |
| Dr Stewart Jamieson | Scottish Tenant Farmers Association              |
| Rob Gowans          | Scottish Youth Parliament                        |
| Emily Shaw          | Scottish Youth Parliament                        |
| Angus Duncan        | Scottish Youth Parliament                        |
| Goran Soster        | Slovenian Rural Development Network              |
| Tanya Castell       | Soirbheas - Strathglass and Glen Urquhart        |
| Alison Blair        | South Ayrshire Council                           |
| Pip Tabor           | Southern Uplands Partnership                     |
| Peter Roy           | Strachur Development Company                     |
| Alex Stobart        | Sustainable Inshores Fisheries Trust             |
| Staffan Bond        | Swedish Village Movement, Hela Sverige skal Leva |
| Prof. Michael Dower | University of Gloucester                         |

|                     |                             |
|---------------------|-----------------------------|
| Prof. Kurt Krumbach | Village Movement in Germany |
| Paula McDonald      | Visit Scotland              |
| Gail Anderson       | Voluntary Action Orkney     |
| John Cairns         | Voluntary Arts Scotland     |
| Bridie Ashrowan     | Youth Borders               |
| Jenny Neesham       |                             |
| Craig Crosthwaite   |                             |
| John Watt           |                             |
| Nigel Baylis        |                             |
| Vanessa Glynn       | Facilitator                 |
| Mike McCarron       | Facilitator                 |
| Francis Gallop      | Facilitator                 |
| Linda Boyes         | Facilitator                 |
| Alister Wilson      | Facilitator                 |
| Colin Campbell      | Facilitator                 |
| Robert Rae          | Facilitator                 |
| Sandra Hogg         | Facilitator                 |
| Felix Spittal       | Facilitator                 |
| Matt Tyrer          | Facilitator                 |