

SEEDA RURAL ADVISORY COMMITTEE
23 November 2004

1. South East Plan

- 1.1 Ray Bowers, Head of Spatial Planning, gave a presentation on the main features of the consultation draft South East Plan to be considered by the full Assembly on 29 November. He referred to the spatial emphases in the draft Plan and to the sub-regional strategies being developed to deal with specific strategic cross-boundary issues. He also mentioned that while there is no specific rural chapter there are references to rural elements in a number of sections of the draft.
- 1.2 Comments made during the ensuing discussion included:
- i) There is inadequate reference in the draft Plan to the economic and social importance of agriculture for rural areas and for the management of the landscape.
 - ii) While recognising that other key rural elements were covered to varying degrees in the draft there should be a policy or statement that brings these elements together to give an overview of the strategy for rural areas.
 - iii) The reference to the largely rural 'residual' areas outside the sub-regions was misleading and should be renamed.

2. SEEDA Rural Leaflet

- 2.1 A draft new leaflet was circulated by SEEDA highlighting the rural initiatives being undertaken by SEEDA and the grants available. A number of Committee members questioned the purpose and target audience for the leaflet. It was decided that the leaflet should be put on hold to allow SEEDA time to clarify its purpose and to prepare a revised draft for piloting on Committee members.

3. Proposed SEEDA Website

- 3.1 Valerie Carter informed the Committee of plans to revamp the SEEDA website to fit in the new rural leaflet. Most of the work has been completed, although some changes still need to be made. Valerie also provided Committee members with best practice examples for the SEEDA website.

Ray Bowers
Head of Spatial Planning
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Tel: 01483 555231

E-mail: raybowers@southeast-ra.gov.uk