

Sussex Rural Community Council Report of the Trustees for the year ended 31 March 2010

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Reference and administrative details

Secretary and Registered office: N J Simpson, Sussex House, 212 High Street, Lewes, East Sussex BN7 2NH

Company No: 2907172

Charity No: 1035401

Auditors: Russell New Limited, The Courtyard, Shoreham Road, Upper Beeding, Steyning, West Sussex, BN44 3TN

Bankers: Barclays Bank plc, The Old Bank, High Street, Lewes, East Sussex , BN7 2JP

Solicitors: Beverley Ogden & Company Solicitors, Howard Cottage, Broomans Lane, Lewes, East Sussex, BN7 2LT

Trustees at 9 September 2010:

- B Dashwood-Hall (Honorary Treasurer)
- R A S Farhall
- R T H Jackson
- R R Molony
- C J Nicholson
- RJ Paterson
- G Peters
- D W Robins
- W F de Salis (Vice Chair, East Sussex)
- P J Shanahan (Chairman)
- J A Slaughter (Vice Chair, West Sussex)
- A K Stewart-Roberts
- M C Stroude
- C F Wilson

Sussex Rural Community Council

Report of the Trustees for the year ended 31 March 2010 (continued)

Chairman's foreword

I picked up the Chair's baton from Kathryn Field at the AGM in November 2009 and have found myself leading a very committed group of trustees who bring extensive knowledge and expertise to Action in rural Sussex's work.

I would like to welcome two new trustees, Chantal Wilson and Carole Nicholson, both of whom are already making a substantial contribution to the Board.

I make no apology for the strong emphasis we have placed in this review and in our future plans, on raising awareness of how disadvantage affects rural people and rural communities. This is all too easily forgotten in the face of more visible urban needs.

As a charity, Action in rural Sussex is only able to make a difference to rural communities through grants from and contracts and service agreements with our partners. I pass on our sincere thanks to all of them.

I believe we provide excellent value for money and could do more in the future as resources become even tighter for the public sector. We have a highly committed staff team who are cognisant of the difficulties ahead, and I am confident that their commitment and skills will help us find new ways of addressing the needs of those we serve.

Since the end of the year in question it has become clear how challenging the future will be for organisations such as Action in rural Sussex who work with the public sector to support vulnerable people. We aim to rise to this challenge by finding ways of making our services more sustainable without large scale grants and also to re-focus our energies on helping communities play a full role in providing for their own needs. We greatly value our relationship with the Sussex Association of Local Councils in this and aim to work closely with them on it.

Patrick Shanahan
Chairman, Action in rural Sussex

1. Introduction

The Trustees, who are the directors of the charitable company, present their report together with the audited financial statements for the year ended 31 March 2010 (pages 14-23). This report should be read in conjunction with the information on the preceding page. The statement of financial activities is set out on page 14 and shows the details.

2. Charitable objects

The charity's objects are to promote any charitable purposes for the benefit of the community of the counties of East and West Sussex and, in particular, the advancement of education, the protection of health and relief of poverty, distress and sickness, and to promote and organise co-operation in the achievement of the same and to that end to bring together council representatives of the statutory authorities, voluntary organisations and other bodies and any persons pursuing the above objectives within the area of benefit.

We set out our strategic aims and activities in more detail later in this report.

3. Structure, governance and management

Legal and administrative details

Sussex Rural Community Council (SRCC) is a company limited by guarantee and a registered charity. The governing body is the Board of Trustees. The governing document is the Memorandum and Articles of Association.

Operating name

The Sussex Rural Community Council has operated during the year under the title "Action in rural Sussex".

Trustees

The Trustees are elected by the members of the charity at the Annual General Meeting, and may serve a maximum of three terms of three years. Vacancies not filled at the Annual General Meeting are filled by co-option on the initiative of the Trustees.

Sussex Rural Community Council Report of the Trustees for the year ended 31 March 2010 (continued)

New Trustees receive an induction pack and an induction meeting to brief them on their legal obligations under charity and company law, the committee and decision-making processes, the business plan and the recent financial performance of the charity. During the induction meeting, they meet key employees. Trustees are encouraged to attend appropriate training where this will facilitate the undertaking of their role, and also to attend Trustee and Staff Awaydays and an annual Business Planning day.

A maximum of 16 members of the Board of Directors will be elected at General Meeting proposed by members of the Company and are invited by the Board of Directors to make such proposals.

The trustees of the charity during the year were:

B Dashwood-Hall (Honorary Treasurer)
R A S Farhall
K M Field (Chair, term ended 6 Nov 2009)
R T H Jackson
J P M Lytton (Vice Chair, West Sussex, term ended 6 Nov 2009)
R R Molony
C J Nicholson (appointed 24 Feb 2010)
R J Paterson
N M Pearson (resigned 1 April 2009)
G Peters
D W Robins
W F de Salis (Vice Chair, East Sussex)
P J Shanahan (Chairman, appointed 6 Nov 2009)
J A Slaughter (Vice Chair, West Sussex, appointed 6 Nov 2009)
A K Stewart-Roberts
M C Stroude
C F Wilson (appointed 9 Sept 2009)

Presidency

Joint Presidents:
Peter J Field – Lord Lieutenant of East Sussex
Mrs Susan Pyper – Lord Lieutenant of West Sussex

Subsidiary Company

Action in rural Sussex owns the two shares in SRCC (Trading) Limited. The Directors of SRCC (Trading) Limited during the year were:

B Dashwood-Hall	G Peters
R A S Farhall	D W Robins
K M Field (term ended 6 Nov 2009)	W F de Salis
A A W Grubb	P J Shanahan
R T H Jackson	J A Slaughter
J P M Lytton (term ended 6 Nov 2009)	A K Stewart-Roberts
R R Molony	M C Stroude
C J Nicholson (appointed 24 Feb 2010)	C F Wilson (appointed 9 Sept 2009)
R J Paterson	
N M Pearson (resigned 1 April 2009)	

Company Secretary: Jeremy Leggett

SRCC (Trading) Limited has not traded during the year.

Senior Management

Chief Executive	Jeremy Leggett
Head of Finance	Anne Mari Barker-Davies
Head of Fieldwork	Pat Buesnel
Head of Strategy and Communications	Teresa Gittins
Head of Local Governance Services	Trevor Leggo

Sussex Rural Community Council

Report of the Trustees for the year ended 31 March 2010 (continued)

Finance Committee

The following responsibilities are delegated to the Committee which reports its actions to the main Board:

“The Committee will advise the Board and Senior Management Team on matters relating to financial management.”

Membership during 2009/2010:

B Dashwood-Hall (Honorary Treasurer)
K M Field (term ended 6 Nov 2009)
N M Pearson (resigned 1 April 2009)
P J Shanahan
C F Wilson (appointed 9 Sept 2009)

Internal Audit and Risk Committee

The following responsibilities are delegated to the Committee which reports its actions to the main Board:

“The Committee will provide a continuing independent appraisal of the quality of Action in rural Sussex’s management by the regular examination of its operational policies, procedures and standards and their implementation.”

Membership during 2009/2010:

R T H Jackson
W F de Salis
A K Stewart-Roberts

Human Resources Committee

The following responsibilities are delegated to the Committee which reports its actions to the main Board:

“The Committee will advise the Board and Senior Management Team on matters relating to human resource management and equality of opportunity monitoring.”

Membership during 2009/2010:

B Dashwood-Hall
K M Field (term ended 6 Nov 2009)
A K Stewart-Roberts
J A Slaughter
M C Stroude

Marketing and Communications Committee

The following responsibilities are delegated to the Committee which reports its actions to the main Board:

“The Committee will keep up to date the External Communications Strategy of Action in rural Sussex and facilitate the active engagement of Trustees in those parts of the strategy that can best be implemented through their involvement.”

Membership during 2009/2010:

R A S Farhall
R R Molony
W F de Salis
J A Slaughter

Property Task & Finish Group

The following responsibilities are delegated to the Group which reports its actions to the main Board:

“The Group will advise the Board on matters relating to Action in rural Sussex’s ownership, occupation and future needs as regards land and buildings currently used or required wholly or partly for its own purposes including surplus property sublet.”

Membership during 2009/2010:

J P M Lytton (term ended 6 Nov 2009)
G Peters
D W Robins
P J Shanahan

4. Strategic objectives

Our Vision:

We want Sussex to be a place where an inclusive, active, community life is valued equally alongside economic success and environmental protection, and where all three are pursued together.

Our Aims:

1. Reduce both the incidence and impact of disadvantage and poverty on people living in rural areas.
2. Increase the capacity of rural communities to bring about change to the benefit of all their members.
3. Inform and amplify the voice of rural communities in public policy.
4. Support partnership initiatives with other organisations in pursuit of the first three aims.

Our Objectives

The charitable objects of Action in rural Sussex are wide, and during 2009/2010 we continued to carry out an extensive range of activities in support of community life in Sussex. The policy of Action in rural Sussex is to concentrate on a number of key areas where rural communities require particular support. In addition to the priority attached to rural communities, Action in rural Sussex places a similar priority on initiatives that provide a benefit to voluntary and community organisations as a whole but are of particular importance to those in rural areas. The Review section gives greater detail of the work carried out in each area.

The Trustees have paid due regard to the Charity Commission Guidance on 'Public Benefit' in deciding what activities the charity undertakes. All activities undertaken by Action in rural Sussex are focused on our charitable purposes.

Exploiting opportunities and managing risk whilst pursuing our Aims

The Trustees acknowledge their responsibility for systematically assessing risks and do so as part of a process of reviewing both the new and existing opportunities to pursue our Aims. Wherever possible, opportunities are taken and appropriate mitigation and control measures are both put in place and recorded on the Risk Register.

The Trustees have adopted a formal policy for this at both a strategic and operational level. This policy includes carrying out an annual assessment of all aspects of the organisation in preparation for the development of the following year's business plan.

In addition to this annual process, any substantial change to the charity's operations is subject to a similar assessment, and a register of risks and the measures to manage them is to be maintained with the charity's formal records. The Opportunity and Risk Management policy uses a categorisation process, which initially classifies risk into:

- governance and management
- operational
- finance
- environmental and external
- law and regulation compliance

and then assesses each potential risk under these headings by (a) potential impact and (b) probability of occurrence.

Beneficiaries of the charity

The beneficiaries of the work of Action in rural Sussex are those living and/or working in rural Sussex, and especially those for whom living in a rural location can easily become an additional excluding or disadvantaging factor in their lives. In particular this includes those not sharing the general prosperity of the region; young people struggling to maintain a foothold in a high cost, low wage economy; people dependent on rural public transport and limited local services and those who are dependent on the support of a local community that is undergoing fundamental change whilst remaining superficially attractive and prosperous.

Sussex Rural Community Council Report of the Trustees for the year ended 31 March 2010 (continued)

We have day to day contact with our beneficiaries through outreach work with communities. We distribute widely an attractively designed newsletter, 'Action', which invites feedback from beneficiaries and other stakeholders. We canvass users in regular service-oriented surveys. We have established rural community networks or Rural Forums in both East and West Sussex, and continually seek wider participation from potentially hard-to-reach groups. Much of our practical work is carried out with rural young people and we have led the way on their direct involvement in the recruitment process for our youth workers.

In addition to these informal ways of engaging our beneficiaries we also actively promote formal membership of the Charity. Growing numbers of local village organisations and individuals are members of the charity and take part in its formal governance processes.

During 2009/10 the process of appointing new Trustees through open advertisement and nomination from the charity's members and subsequent election at the Annual General Meeting did not bring forward any nomination. Two new Trustees were subsequently co-opted by the Trustees to fill both geographic and skills gaps that had been identified

5. Review of 2009/10

Highlights:

- Our Village Care programme in East Sussex reached over 1300 vulnerable people through support for local voluntary schemes.
- Our Fieldwork Team helped 31 villages, mainly in West Sussex, promote local health and well-being through local community led plans.
- We rolled out a dedicated website to support community led plans and trained 70 parishes and 32 local authority officers in its use.
- Our 11 locally placed Family Outreach Workers reached 363 families in East Sussex with parenting support. The project also helped run four parent groups.
- We campaigned for village hall capital funding through the Heart of the Village campaign and a Downing Street petition. In February 2010, the Big Lottery Fund announced a new funding programme to become available in the autumn.
- We have planted 12 small orchards, in schools and community locations, with the participation of 350 children and 50 adults and have carried out apple cookery workshops involving similar numbers of participants.
- We also co-organised an Apple Day attended by over 4000 people.
- Our Housing and Research Teams carried out 11 housing needs surveys, appraising over 100 sites, with four planning applications having been submitted and two 12 unit exception sites coming to practical completion in March 2010.

This is a small sample of what we have achieved over the year; none of it would be possible without a very committed staff and active partnerships with a wide range of statutory and other organisations.

Aim 1 - Reduce both the incidence and impact of disadvantage and poverty on people living in rural areas.

Health and well-being

Our village care programme has been a key part of our support for vulnerable people in rural East Sussex for over ten years and is a partnership between ourselves, the NHS in East Sussex and East Sussex County Council (ESCC).

In recent years we have also worked very closely with the Alzheimer's Society to bring their specialist knowledge into this work as well.

Over 1300 older people in rural East Sussex have benefited from a range of community run health and well-being activities. We have provided support to groups to help with getting started, introducing new activities, general advice, support, motivation and information. These all help to ensure the ongoing development and sustainability of informal rural health and well-being community activities.

It is very encouraging that this year the East Sussex Health Overview and Scrutiny Committee identified informal rural support networks as being essential to the support of vulnerable people in rural areas.

Family support

Young people and young families are as likely as older people to become isolated and miss out on support that is more readily available in larger towns. Our Family Outreach Service, delivered with resources from East Sussex County Council, has become an important part of our work.

The Children's Outreach and Parents Extended Support (COPES) family outreach has offered individual family support to children aged five to 13 years and their families in the rural areas of East Sussex for over four years and to the 103 schools that make referrals to the service.

Sussex Rural Community Council Report of the Trustees for the year ended 31 March 2010 (continued)

The heart of this project is to provide early and effective individual support to families and children using sophisticated therapeutic methods. Between April 2009 and March 2010, COPES offered services to 363 families from our 11 geographically placed Family Outreach Workers. The project also helped run four parent groups. An essential part of the service involves evaluation and feedback from the families involved. This helps to inform us and as a result adjustments are made to improve the service and make it even more effective.

Transport and access to services in East Sussex

Action in rural Sussex has been actively involved with ESCC over the past year in assessing and exploring improvements to community transport services. Transport remains one of the key issues identified in parish action plans.

One result of the research has been the introduction of community transport consultations in identified parishes across the County. Action in rural Sussex has started work with communities to identify local needs and find solutions.

Action in rural Sussex is also working in ten East Sussex locations to find ways of improving access to services as part of the Rural Access to Services Programme (RASP).

Each location has identified the services that it needs and the programme is using a range of settings for the Village Information Points. These include community buildings, pubs, a mobile bus and even a portacabin. We are also actively improving online access to information through community websites. We are building relationships with ESCC's Joint Access to Information Provision, East Sussex Advice Plus, the Primary Care Trusts, Southdown Housing, Homeworks, adult education providers and more.

Aim 2 - Increase the capacity of rural communities to bring about change to the benefit of all their members.

Local councils

Action in rural Sussex and the Sussex Associations of Local Councils (SALC) are proud of their close working relationship; we don't believe it is a coincidence that SALC is one of the leading county associations and is often looked to for leadership by the national association network.

Our relationship is a mutually beneficial one, but is costed so that Action in rural Sussex does not subsidise a local government association. The staff who provide services to SALC and its members are employees of Action in rural Sussex and are supported by Action in rural Sussex's back office services and occupy offices in Sussex House. The 'business' relationship is confined to SALC's services, but the relationship between SALC and Action in rural Sussex does not end there.

The added value comes from being able to ensure that when Action in rural Sussex provides help to village communities, it is doing so in a way that is sensitive to the place that local councils have as formal representatives of the community. Equally, when local councils or SALC need advice or support on wider issues such as affordable housing, transport or services for young people, Action in rural Sussex will often have the expertise to provide this.

Affordable housing

Affordable rural housing is one of the most locally controversial, but also essential, parts of our work. We provide a comprehensive and independent housing support service for parishes wishing to provide for local needs. In the past year we have worked with 36 parishes across East and West Sussex.

This has included 11 housing needs surveys, appraising over 100 sites, with four planning applications submitted and two 12 unit exception sites coming to completion in early 2010; one in Amberley via Saxon Weald Housing Association and the other in Barcombe with Hastoe Housing Association.

This is immensely satisfying for all concerned given their efforts and commitment to making this happen. It is also a source of inspiration to others and clear evidence of what can be achieved.

Village Action Plans

We believe that the most genuinely sustainable approach to meeting the needs of a community comes from within the community through its Village Action Plan. Eight completely new plans were drawn up and four whole reviews completed. In addition, a particular theme in West Sussex this year has been residents' health and well-being and we have helped 31 villages with local initiatives. We are grateful for the support of NHS West Sussex (formerly the Primary Care Trust) for this work. We have also rolled out a dedicated website to support village action plans and make links between their myriad priorities and those of wider community strategies.

The Horsted Keynes Conservation Group is an example of a typical action identified by an action plan. The action plan identified the need to maintain local footpaths and neglected common areas and was supported in this by West Sussex County Council, Mid Sussex District Council, the Parish Council and landowners. 15 people have now joined the Conservation Group and have monthly outings to which further volunteers are attracted. This has proved so successful that a second group is being formed.

Sussex Rural Community Council Report of the Trustees for the year ended 31 March 2010 (continued)

Village halls

At the beginning of the year we initiated a campaign for further capital funding through our Heart of the Village campaign and set up a Downing Street petition alongside our national association, ACRE. In February 2010, the Big Lottery Fund announced a new funding programme in response to the high demand for such funding.

Angmering, Dial Post, Fishbourne and Boxgrove commenced new community building projects and support was given to another 18 projects seeking funding in West Sussex.

Cocking Parish Council finally won funding to replace its decrepit pavilion with a new timber village hall. Action in rural Sussex helped show funders that this small village needed to have its own hall to deliver activities for the health and well-being of local, and especially older, people. We also helped ensure grant offers from the Big Lottery Fund, LEADER and Chichester District Council were co-ordinated, a fact that secured the Lottery Grant.

Aim 3 - Inform and amplify the voice of rural communities in public policy.

We have become increasingly focused over the course of the year on the eleven specific areas where we believe rural areas need action from government at all levels. Whilst we have pursued these locally through partnerships with other agencies and with local government we have also used a range of other opportunities including our Newsletter 'Action', our own website, the No 10 Poll and most importantly our own 'Heart of the Village' Campaign to raise the profile of these issues:

Recognition of rural deprivation

Action in rural Sussex believes that all public and statutory bodies should be aware of the 'Rural Share of Deprivation' approach and should develop needs assessments, delivery approaches and monitoring mechanisms which ensure that resources are provided equitably across all areas based on the numbers of people in need.

Access to services in rural areas

Action in rural Sussex believes service providers must ensure that their services are accessible from rural areas. To achieve this, services must be planned from inception with rural in mind and work with other stakeholders encouraged so as to provide innovative and integrated solutions which can overcome the additional cost of rural delivery.

Rural economy – a focus on rural growth

Action in rural Sussex believes that the rural economy must be supported to remain the foundation stone on which rural communities are based. Support and assistance must be maintained for the land-based industries with additional emphasis being placed on the role of home-based business, rural skills and employment.

Rural broadband provision

Action in rural Sussex believes that rural broadband is crucial for the continued viability of rural communities in the 21st century. Rural broadband needs to be universally accessible, affordable and perhaps most importantly meet the needs of rural residents and businesses. Achieving this is unlikely if left solely to market forces.

Affordable rural housing

Action in rural Sussex believes that all aspects of the 2008 Taylor Review should be implemented fully. Affordable housing in rural areas is crucial for their sustainability. Central and local government need to commit additional time and resources to achieve this and local communities require clear guidance on the implications of them not doing so.

Addressing fuel poverty

Action in rural Sussex believes that Government must outline a clear long-term strategy to address fuel poverty which provides motivations to change, such as tax incentives, grants and information on energy efficiency, but which does not unfairly penalise those in rural areas for whom travel is a necessity and housing is generally older.

Services for the ageing population

Action in rural Sussex believes supporting older people in rural areas requires a partnership approach between the NHS, local authorities, the third sector as well as community groups and local residents. The emphasis must be on maintaining a healthier and fitter older population who are supported remain active in their community.

A future for rural young people

Action in rural Sussex believes that young people need to be supported and involved in rural communities. Emphasis should be placed on developing private and public sector initiatives to assist young people in accessing training, skills and employment as well as encouraging them to participate in their local community and its governance.

Sussex Rural Community Council Report of the Trustees for the year ended 31 March 2010 (continued)

Support for community buildings and assets

Action in rural Sussex believes community buildings are essential in maintaining thriving rural communities. Their importance not only needs to be acknowledged but reflected in direct capital funding support for their development and maintenance. Other issues also need to be addressed such as the bureaucracy involved in operating them.

Rural public and community transport provision

Action in rural Sussex believes increased use of public and community transport is feasible only if provision is regular, reliable, flexible and comfortable. To achieve this, greater co-ordination between councils, transport providers and communities is required, with integrated and innovative solutions developed to meet the needs of rural dwellers.

Aim 4 - Support partnership initiatives with other organisations in pursuit of the first three aims

Voluntary and Community Sector (VCS) Partnerships (Aim 4)

Government has encouraged the VCS to modernise and engage in direct delivery of what might otherwise be statutorily provided services. Our focus is primarily on rural communities, but we have also pursued this aim through partnerships with other voluntary and community organisations and with colleagues in the south east. We provide back office support to some partnerships and provide specialist rural delivery.

- this year over £300,000 was allocated to organisations working with unemployed people in Sussex through the South East Community Grants programme
- over 40 short courses were provided for people from voluntary and community organisations and groups across Sussex through the Learning4Counties project
- 25 organisations in Sussex obtained bursaries of up to £1,000 through the Capacitybuilders Modernisation programme. 18 of these went on to secure further grants, worth a total of over £165,000
- the East Sussex ChangeUp Consortium supported the Big Event and West Sussex ChangeUp supported a very successful Supporting Volunteers event.

Supporting all our aims - West Sussex Rural Programme

A great deal has happened for rural areas in West Sussex. The rural third of West Sussex has become an increasingly defined area alongside Coastal West Sussex and the Gatwick Diamond areas. Perhaps the key difference is that rural West Sussex is defined both as a specific spatial area like the other 'thirds', but also as a policy focus that includes the rural areas on the coast and in central Sussex. Much of rural West Sussex also falls into the new South Downs National Park. This strong strategic focus on rural areas has enabled the Rural Partnership to address rural issues and guide the implementation of delivery programmes. The Partnership, which includes partners from the public, private and voluntary and community sectors, plays a key role in overseeing and monitoring the delivery of the range of rural delivery programmes ensuring both co-ordination and the best use of resources.

Action in rural Sussex carries out much of the implementation of the rural programmes in West Sussex, but not all. The two European LEADER programmes link into the Rural Partnership. Rural economic development initiatives are taken forward by a range of partners and there is an increasing focus on rural skills that is drawing in the colleges and universities. Our NHS West Sussex Rural Pathfinder programme looks at access to health and well-being services, the work of our Public Service Board funded programmes and the South East England Development Agency funded Rural Access to Services Programme, enable us to use our resources effectively to respond to broad communities needs and assist those communities to address those needs, helping to provide local services or improve the accessibility of those services. A good example of the joined up approach in West Sussex is the mobile employment support being provided in Storrington. This has been organised by Action in rural Sussex with JobCentre Plus, the Storrington Community Partnership, Citizens Advice Bureau and West Sussex Credit Union. It provides support to local people searching for jobs, who would normally have to travel up to 20 miles to use their nearest JobCentre. It also provides a service to employers looking to fill vacancies. The project is a good example of partnership working and was initiated through the West Sussex Rural Partnership.

Developments and changes to activities

There has been no material change in the activities we have carried out in pursuit of our strategic aims. We have continued to develop a focus on direct support to rural people as well as indirect support through services to other organisations. We have, however, reduced our direct delivery of rural transport services in favour of a more strategic involvement in the development of both transport and more local access for rural people to essential services. Our case work with communities in East Sussex is limited due to no replacement funding having been found since the ending of the DEFRA Rural Social and Community Programme

Sussex Rural Community Council Report of the Trustees for the year ended 31 March 2010 (continued)

Volunteers and help in kind

Action in rural Sussex relies heavily in its work on time freely given by volunteers in their own communities. Relatively few volunteers work directly within Action in rural Sussex. Those who do, however, contribute a very high level of expertise in specific specialist fields. Many of the projects carried out by Action in rural Sussex are done as partnership projects in which other organisations contribute help in kind. We do not show the financial contribution of this help in kind within the financial statements. We are indebted to the organisations that work with us in this way and are grateful for their co-operation in preparing statements of their contributions when these are required to demonstrate match funding.

Work with other charities

The core of Action in rural Sussex's work is its support of smaller voluntary organisations and charities throughout Sussex. In addition, it seeks to work in partnership with a wide range of other voluntary organisations in order to help rural communities access specialist skills and services.

Impact beyond the area of benefit

In addition to Action in rural Sussex's involvement with South East England Development Agency, much of the organisation's rural policy work has been directed at working with the Commission for Rural Communities and others to influence the delivery of the government's Local Area Agreements with East and West Sussex, and to ensure that this can work for rural areas. This reflects the policy environment within which Action in rural Sussex works. Action in rural Sussex is currently satisfied that the involvement of its officers and Trustees on a regional, national and European stage brings net benefits to rural Sussex.

6. Financial review

Overview

Action in rural Sussex carries out a wide range of projects and programmes in pursuit of its strategic aims. The outcome of this activity has been reported earlier in the Trustees' Report. From the financial statements (pages 14-23) it is clear that there was a slight drop in income between 2009 and 2010. However, the overall financial health and status of the organisation must be viewed in the context of a division of activity into restricted and unrestricted funds.

Restricted Funds

As shown in the Statement of Financial Activities (page 14), the balance of restricted funds held by the charity has decreased over the year. The net movement of funds reflects the expenditure of large brought forward balances from prior years, and does not represent an overall overspend in this area. Restricted income was stable between 2009 and 2010.

The detail of the restricted fund activity is set out in Note 11 to the accounts (page 22). Where individual projects show a deficit on completion or termination, this has been made good from unrestricted funds.

Unrestricted Funds

Unrestricted income decreased between 2009 and 2010. This was, in the main, due to the ending of core grant funding supporting the strategic development of the charity, the reduction in both interest and rental income during the year.

The Trustees also created designated funds for business development and a property sinking fund.

Full Cost Recovery

We recover overheads through full cost recovery based on a well recognised model developed by the Association of Chief Executives of Voluntary Organisation (ACEVO). This ensures that premises, governance and shared central costs are recovered fairly from all activities in proportion to the 'drivers' of those costs, and is a reassurance to funders that Action in rural Sussex can deliver its projects in a sustainable way.

Free Reserves

The total funds (reserves) of the charity, as represented by net assets in the balance sheet, amount to £1,061,135. In order to establish the value of reserves available to the Trustees, known as "free reserves", monies held for specific purposes including funds designated by Trustees for particular projects, and any monies not available for other uses must first be deducted. Restricted funds whose use is formally restricted by the funder total £291,754. In addition, resources invested in fixed assets and funds designated by the Trustees for particular projects or purposes total a further £531,750 leaving a free reserve of £237,631.



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Reserves policy

With substantial commitments to employees, and the need for business continuity, the Board of Trustees have developed a reserves policy to allow for contingent liabilities. The policy of Action in rural Sussex is to aim to keep a free reserve the equivalent of:

“Six months’ core unrestricted operating costs in order to fulfil obligations; plus 10% six months’ restricted operating costs, plus any planned capital payments due over the next twelve months.”

The free reserve is maintained primarily in case Action in rural Sussex suffers a sudden and unforeseen contraction of activities. Any remaining free reserves not required under the reserves policy are available to develop the work of the charity, to meet its charitable objectives and to fulfil any latent contractual obligations entered into by the charity as part of its primary purpose trading.

The Board of Trustees confirm that each restricted fund has sufficient assets to meet its obligations, or arrangements exist with the funders that these obligations will be met at the point at which the requirement arises.

The level of free reserves against target fluctuates based on the balance of unrestricted and restricted funds projected by the charity. Using the above calculation, the free reserves have reached 92% of their target.

Valuation of Sussex House

The value of Sussex House appearing in the Accounts follows a re-valuation carried out in March 2009.

Sussex Rural Community Council
Report of the Trustees for the year ended 31 March 2010 (continued)

7. Statement of Trustees' responsibilities

The Trustees, who are also the directors of Sussex Rural Community Council for the purposes of company law, are responsible for preparing the Trustees' Report and the accounts in accordance with applicable law and United Kingdom Accounting Standards (United Kingdom Generally Accepted Accounting Practice).

Company law requires the Trustees to prepare accounts for each financial year which give a true and fair view of the state of affairs of the charity and of the incoming resources and application of resources, including the income and expenditure, of the charitable company for that year.

In preparing these accounts, the Trustees are required to:

- select suitable accounting policies and then apply them consistently;
- observe the methods and principles in the Charities' Statement of Recommended Practice;
- make judgements and estimates that are reasonable and prudent; and
- prepare the accounts on the going concern basis unless it is inappropriate to presume that the charity will continue in operation.

The Trustees are responsible for keeping proper accounting records that disclose the reasonable accuracy at any time the financial position of the charity and enable them to ensure that the accounts comply with the Companies Act 2006. They are also responsible for safeguarding the assets of the charity and hence for taking reasonable steps for the prevention and detection of fraud and other irregularities.

Auditors

All of the current Trustees have taken all the steps that they ought to have taken to make themselves aware of any information needed by the charitable company's auditors for the purposes of their audit and to establish that the auditors are aware of that information. The trustees are not aware of any other relevant information of which the auditors should be aware.

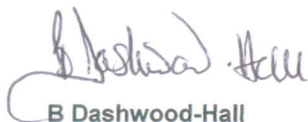
A resolution proposing the reappointment of Russell New Limited as auditors and authorising the Trustees to fix their remuneration will be put to the Annual General Meeting.

We confirm that the accounts comply with current statutory requirements and with the requirements of the governing document.

Approved by the Board of Trustees and signed on its behalf by:



P J Shanahan
Chairman of Trustees



B Dashwood-Hall
Honorary Treasurer



**Sussex Rural Community Council
Report of the Independent Auditors**

To the members of Sussex Rural Community Council

We have audited the accounts of Sussex Rural Community Council for the year ended 31 March 2010 set out on pages 14 to 23. These accounts have been prepared in accordance with the accounting policies set out on pages 16 to 17.

This report is made solely to the charitable company's members as a body, in accordance with Chapter 3 of Part 16 of the Companies Act 2006. Our audit work has been undertaken so that we might state to the charitable company's members those matters we are required to state to them in an auditors' report and for no other purpose. To the fullest extent permitted by law, we do not accept or assume responsibility to anyone other than the charitable company and its members as a body, for our audit work, for this report, or for the opinions we have formed.

Respective responsibilities of trustees and auditors

As described on page 12, the trustees, who are also the directors of Sussex Rural Community Council for the purposes of company law, are responsible for preparing the Trustees' Report and the accounts in accordance with applicable law and United Kingdom Accounting Standards (United Kingdom Generally Accepted Accounting Practice) and for satisfying themselves that the charitable company's accounts give a true and fair view.

Our responsibility is to audit the accounts in accordance with relevant legal and regulatory requirements and International Standards on Auditing (UK and Ireland).

We report to you our opinion as to whether the accounts have been properly prepared in accordance with United Kingdom Generally Accepted Accounting Practice, have been prepared in accordance with the Companies Act 2006, and give a true and fair view. We also report to you if, in our opinion, the information given in the Trustees' Report is not consistent with those accounts.

In addition we report to you if, in our opinion, the charity has not kept proper accounting records, if we have not received all the information and explanations we require for our audit, or if certain disclosures of trustees' remuneration specified by law are not made.

We read the Trustees' Report and consider the implications for our report if we become aware of any apparent misstatements within it.

Basis of audit opinion

We conducted our audit in accordance with International Standard on Auditing (UK and Ireland) issued by the Auditing Practices Board. An audit includes examination, on a test basis, of evidence relevant to the amounts and disclosures in the accounts. It also includes an assessment of the significant estimates and judgements made by the trustees in the preparation of the accounts, and of whether the accounting policies are appropriate to the charity's circumstances, consistently applied and adequately disclosed.

We planned and performed our audit so as to obtain all the information and explanations which we considered necessary in order to provide us with sufficient evidence to give reasonable assurance that the accounts are free from material misstatement, whether caused by fraud or other irregularity or error. In forming our opinion we also evaluated the overall adequacy of the presentation of information in the accounts.

Opinion

In our opinion:

- the accounts have been prepared in accordance with the Companies Act 2006; and
- the accounts give a true and fair view of the state of affairs of the charity as at 31 March 2010, and of its incoming resources and application of resources, including its income and expenditure, for the year then ended.
- the information given in the Trustees' Report is consistent with the accounts

Mr Mark Cummins FCCA (Senior Statutory Auditor)
For and on behalf of Russell New Limited
Statutory Auditor
The Courtyard
Shoreham Road
Upper Beeding
Steyning
West Sussex
BN44 3TN

Dated: *15 September 2010*



Sussex Rural Community Council
Statement of Financial Activities (including income and expenditure account)
For the year ended 31 March 2010

	<i>Note:</i>	Unrestricted Funds £	Restricted Funds £	2010 Total £	2009 Total £
Incoming Resources:					
Incoming Sources from Generated Funds					
Voluntary income - donations & legacies		13,984	-	13,984	8,664
Activities for generating funds	2	15,581	-	15,581	32,457
Investment income & interest		292	-	292	19,434
Incoming Resources from Charitable Activities					
<i>Grants & contracts for operational programmes by aim:</i>					
Tackling rural disadvantage	3	-	962,222	962,222	881,755
Building community capacity & resilience		178,593	531,404	709,997	713,819
Rural voice		112,224	54,519	166,743	154,090
The wider community		-	191,978	191,978	280,130
Other Incoming Resources					
Strategic development		64	-	64	52,888
Total Incoming Resources		320,738	1,740,123	2,060,861	2,143,237
Resources Expended:					
Expended Resources for Generated Funds					
Activities for generating funds	4	2,799	-	2,799	29,680
Costs of Charitable Activities					
<i>Costs of operational programmes, by aim:</i>					
Tackling rural disadvantage		463	890,605	891,068	850,106
Building community capacity & resilience		135,295	589,654	724,949	714,878
Rural voice		123,688	55,957	179,645	185,132
The wider community		-	211,973	211,973	296,264
Governance Costs					
		5,650	27,091	32,741	35,770
Other Resources Expended					
Property revaluation impairment	7	-	-	-	71,565
Structural premises repairs		-	-	-	23,500
Strategic development		-	-	-	19,301
Total Resources Expended		267,895	1,775,280	2,043,175	2,226,196
Net Incoming/(Outgoing) Resources Before Transfers		52,843	(35,157)	17,686	(82,959)
Transfer Between Funds	11	(519)	519	-	-
Net Movement in Funds		52,324	(34,638)	17,686	(82,959)
Fund Balances Brought Forward at 1 April 2009		717,057	326,392	1,043,449	1,126,408
Fund Balances Carried Forward at 31st March 2010		769,381	291,754	1,061,135	1,043,449

All amounts relate to continuing activities
The notes on pages 16 to 23 form part of the financial statements

**Sussex Rural Community Council
Balance Sheet at 31 March 2010**

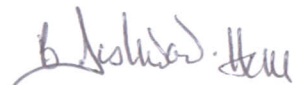
	Note:	Unrestricted Funds £	Restricted Funds £	Total 2010 £	Total 2009 £
Fixed Assets					
Tangible Assets	7	434,240	-	434,240	442,454
Current Assets					
Debtors	8	81,717	128,330	210,047	312,873
Cash at bank and in hand		325,811	199,085	524,896	405,915
		407,528	327,415	734,943	718,788
Creditors: amounts falling due within one year	9	(72,387)	(35,661)	(108,048)	(117,793)
Net Current Assets		335,141	291,754	626,895	600,995
Total Assets Less Current Liabilities		769,381	291,754	1,061,135	1,043,449
Net Assets represented by:-					
Restricted Funds	11		291,754	291,754	326,392
Non-Designated Unrestricted Funds	10	237,631	-	237,631	292,057
Designated Funds	10	531,750	-	531,750	425,000
		769,381	291,754	1,061,135	1,043,449

The notes on pages 16 – 23 form part of the financial statements

Approved by the board of Trustees and authorised for issue on 8 September 2010
and signed on its behalf by



P J Shanahan
Chairman of Trustees



B Dashwood-Hall
Honorary Treasurer

Sussex Rural Community Council
Notes forming part of the financial statements for the year ended 31 March 2010

1 Accounting policies

Basis of accounting

The financial statements have been prepared under the historical cost convention, as modified by the revaluation of freehold buildings, and are in accordance with applicable accounting standards and the Statement of Recommended Practice, "Accounting and Reporting by Charities" (revised 2005).

The principal accounting policies adopted, are:

Consolidated Financial Statements

The Company is exempt from the requirement to prepare consolidated financial statements by virtue of section 398 of the Companies Act 2006 as the group it heads qualifies as a small group. These financial statements therefore present information about the company as an individual undertaking and not about its group.

Incoming resources

All incoming resources are recognised once the charity has entitlement to the resources, it is certain that the resources will be received and the monetary value of incoming resources can be measured with sufficient reliability.

Income from grant funding, both core and specific, is taken to the statement of financial activities in accordance with the terms of the funding.

Resources expended

Liabilities are recognised as resources expended as soon as there is a legal or constructive obligation committing the charity to the expenditure.

Grants payable are payments made to third parties in the furtherance of the charitable objectives of the charity. The grants are accounted for where either the trustees have agreed to pay the grant without condition and the recipient has a reasonable expectation that they will receive a grant, or any condition attaching to the grant is outside the control of the charity.

Where possible, costs are identified directly with specific programmes and allocated to the relevant heading within resources expended. Indirect costs are allocated to programmes in proportion to activity levels and their relative demands on central resources. Premises costs have been allocated on the full time equivalent of salary time costs and other costs have been allocated on head count bases and in proportion to direct costs incurred.

Governance costs

Governance costs comprise all costs involving the public accountability of the charity and its compliance with regulation and good practice. These costs include costs related to statutory audit together with an apportionment of overhead and support costs.

Tangible fixed assets

All assets costing more than £1,000 are capitalised. Depreciation is provided to write off the cost or valuation, less estimated residual values, of the assets over their expected useful lives at the following rates:

Freehold land and buildings	- 1% straight line basis
Furniture, fixtures and equipment	- 33% reducing balance method

Pensions

The company makes defined contribution pension and superannuation payments in relation to certain members of staff in accordance with the terms of their employment contracts. Such payments are charged to the statement of financial activities as they become payable.

Sussex Rural Community Council
Notes forming part of the financial statements for the year ended 31 March 2010

1 Accounting policies (continued)

Leased assets

Rentals under operating leases are charged to the statement of financial activities on a straight-line basis over the term of the lease.

Restricted funds

Where funds are received for specific purposes set out by the donor or implied by the terms of appeal, these are shown as restricted income in the statement of financial activities. Expenditure for the purposes specified is applied against the income and any amounts unexpended at the balance sheet date are shown within restricted funds. Where expenditure is incurred in advance of income it is shown as a negative fund.

Delegated funds

Where amounts held for distribution as grants on behalf of the funders and the charitable company has an active role in the distribution of grants, these are included in restricted funds. Where the charitable company acts solely as an intermediary between the funder and the beneficiary, any balances held are shown as funds held on behalf of third parties within creditors.

Designated Funds

The Trustees, at their discretion, may set aside funds to cover specific future costs. Such funds are shown as designated funds within unrestricted funds. Where the trustees decide such funds are no longer required for the purposes intended, they may be released by transfer to general unrestricted funds.

2 Activities for generating funds

Included in total incoming unrestricted resources are the following:

	2010	2009
	£	£
Rental income	1,376	26,024
Conference rooms	10,123	4,471
Other services	4,082	1,962
	<hr/>	<hr/>
	15,581	32,457
	<hr/> <hr/>	<hr/> <hr/>

3 Incoming Resources from Charitable Activities

	Unrestricted Funds	Restricted Funds	Total 2010	Total 2009
	£	£	£	£
Contracts	248,181	-	248,181	289,321
Grants	42,636	1,740,123	1,782,759	1,740,473
	<hr/>	<hr/>	<hr/>	<hr/>
	290,817	1,740,123	2,030,940	2,029,794
	<hr/> <hr/>	<hr/> <hr/>	<hr/> <hr/>	<hr/> <hr/>

Sussex Rural Community Council
Notes forming part of the financial statements for the year ended 31 March 2010

3 Incoming Resources from Charitable Activities (continued)

Major Grant Income by Source	2010	2009
	£	£
Action with Communities in Rural England (ACRE)	35,800	14,186
Big Lottery Fund	-	10,244
Capacity Builders	89,781	81,000
Chichester District Council	19,200	21,798
Department for Children, Schools & Families	-	17,645
East Sussex County Council	491,638	443,330
East Sussex Downs & Weald Primary Care Trust	16,312	44,261
Hastings & Rother Primary Care Trust	57,421	19,230
Horsham District Council	16,493	34,133
Leader +	-	13,616
Learning & Skills Council	20,000	162,030
National Heritage Lottery Fund	27,618	44,910
National Institute of Adult Continuing Education	30,000	-
Rother District Council	87,500	67,600
Rother Voluntary Action	-	10,000
South East Economic Development Agency	219,116	135,429
South East Coast Strategic Health Authority	20,250	38,329
South East Rural Community Council	18,348	8,609
Southern Railway	-	15,500
Surrey Community Action	50,633	34,632
Wealden District Council	10,950	12,750
West Sussex County Council	336,198	335,490
West Sussex Primary Care Trust	110,000	10,000
Other	125,851	165,751
	1,782,759	1,740,473

4 Total charitable expenditure

	Staff Costs	Grants Awarded	Other Direct Costs	Total 2010	Total 2009
	£	£	£	£	£
Activities for generating funds	1,577	-	1,222	2,799	29,680
Costs of charitable activities	1,314,414	222,613	470,608	2,007,635	2,046,380
Property revaluation impairment	-	-	-	-	71,565
Structural premises repairs	-	-	-	-	23,500
Strategic development	-	-	-	-	19,301
	1,315,991	222,613	471,830	2,010,434	2,190,426
Governance costs	19,620	-	13,121	32,741	35,770
	1,335,611	222,613	484,951	2,043,175	2,226,196

Support costs of £382,023 (2009: £357,962) have been allocated across all resources expended using a Full Cost Recovery system which charges support costs to project based on full-time equivalent headcount. These costs comprise of central functions costs (ICT, finance, HR, training, administration) and premises costs (rent, rates, utilities).

Included within other direct costs is interest payable on bank loans of £nil (2009: £2,530) and £18,420 (2009: £22,384) relating to the hire of land and buildings under operating leases.

Sussex Rural Community Council
Notes forming part of the financial statements for the year ended 31 March 2010

4 Total charitable expenditure (continued)

Governance costs consist of:	2010	2009
	£	£
Staff costs	19,620	18,954
Trustees and other expenses	1,994	1,124
Auditors' remuneration - for statutory audit services for the charity	8,600	10,030
Legal & Professional Fees	1,045	2,155
Annual general meeting	1,482	3,507
	32,741	35,770

Expenditure by Aim	Grants awarded	Other costs	Total 2010	Total 2009
	£	£	£	£
Tackling rural disadvantage	31,751	859,317	891,068	850,106
Building community capacity & resilience	106,076	618,873	724,949	714,878
Rural voice	2,500	177,145	179,645	185,132
The wider community	82,286	129,687	211,973	296,264
	222,613	1,785,022	2,007,635	2,046,380

5 Staff Costs

Included in total resources expended are the following costs:	2010	2009
	£	£
Wages and salaries	1,191,837	1,178,914
Social security costs	114,487	112,520
Other pension costs	29,287	24,508
	1,335,611	1,315,942

The average weekly number of employees during the year was as follows:	2010	2009
	Number	Number
Professional staff	46	51
Support staff	5	5
Casual staff	3	-
	54	56

Included in the above figures are 33 part time staff (2009: 34).

Sussex Rural Community Council
Notes forming part of the financial statements for the year ended 31 March 2010

5 Staff Costs (continued)

The number of employees whose annual emoluments were £60,000 or more were:

	2010	2009
£60,000 to £70,000	-	1
£70,000 to £80,000	1	-

Contributions totalling £3,250 (2009: £2,973) were made during the year to pensions schemes on behalf of employees whose emoluments exceeded £60,000

There was no remuneration paid to any trustees of the charitable company, or their connected persons, during the year and the Trustees are not included in the staff numbers shown above. Travel expenses of £950 (2009: £870) were reimbursed to three trustees during the year.

6 Net Profit / Loss of Subsidiary

The results of SRCC (Trading) Limited are summarised below:

	2010 £	2009 £
Expenditure and Net Profit / (Loss)	-	-

Action in rural Sussex owns 100% of the 2 Ordinary Shares of SRCC (Trading). The company was used to carry out the non-charitable activities of Action in rural Sussex. SRCC (Trading) Limited is incorporated in England and has in the past been involved in business and management consultancy. SRCC (Trading) Limited has not traded during the year.

The share capital and accumulated reserves of SRCC (Trading) Limited as at 31 March 2010 were £3,121 (2009: £3,121).

7 Tangible fixed assets

	Freehold Land and Buildings £	Furniture, Fixtures and Equipment £	Total £
<i>Cost or Valuation</i>			
At 1 April 2009 and 31 March 2010	425,000	150,424	575,424
<i>Depreciation</i>			
At 1 April 2009	-	132,970	132,970
Provided for the Year	3,250	4,964	8,214
At 31 March 2010	3,250	137,934	141,184
<i>Net Book Value</i>			
At 31 March 2010	421,750	12,490	434,240
At 31 March 2009	425,000	17,454	442,454

The freehold property was valued by Oakley Commercial Ltd, Chartered Surveyors, in March 2009 which showed a market value of £425,000.

Sussex Rural Community Council
Notes forming part of the financial statements for the year ended 31 March 2010

8 Debtors

	2010	2009
Amounts falling due within one year:	£	£
Grants and other debtors	140,690	213,342
Accrued Income	55,667	94,254
Prepayments	10,690	2,277
Amounts due from subsidiary undertaking	3,000	3,000
	210,047	312,873
	210,047	312,873

9 Creditors: amounts falling due within one year

	2010	2009
	£	£
Other Creditors	61,240	53,649
Accruals & Deferred Income	34,074	57,407
Taxation & Social Security	12,734	6,737
	108,048	117,793
	108,048	117,793

10 Unrestricted funds

	Fund Balances at 1 April 2009	Incoming Resources	Resources Expended	Transfers	Fund Balances at 31 March 2010
	£	£	£	£	£
Designated Funds:					
Centre for Rural Development	425,000	-	(3,250)	-	421,750
Business Development Fund	-	-	-	100,000	100,000
Listed Building Repair Fund	-	-	-	10,000	10,000
	425,000	-	(3,250)	110,000	531,750
Total Designated Funds	425,000	-	(3,250)	110,000	531,750
General Fund	292,057	320,738	(264,645)	(110,519)	237,631
	717,057	320,738	(267,895)	(519)	769,381
	717,057	320,738	(267,895)	(519)	769,381

The Centre for Rural Development designated fund represents the resources invested in the charitable company's freehold land and buildings. The resources expended represents the depreciation for the year.

Sussex Rural Community Council
Notes forming part of the financial statements for the year ended 31 March 2010

11 Restricted Funds

	Balances at Start of Year £	Transfers £	Incoming Resources £	Outgoing Resources £	Balances at end of Year £
Aim 1: Tackling Rural Disadvantage					
Children, Young People & Families	77,615	(36)	608,488	570,679	115,388
Food & Community	11,974	(10)	76,323	78,666	9,621
Social Inclusion	31,421	-	277,411	255,914	52,918
Aim 2: Building Community Capacity & Resilience					
Action Plans East Sussex	3,974	519	20,588	23,733	1,348
Action Plans West Sussex	53,725	-	166,317	169,335	50,707
Grant Making	50,562	-	53,576	96,103	8,035
Housing	14,600	-	78,589	86,029	7,160
Parish Governance	4,272	-	8,816	5,795	7,293
Rural Access to Services East Sussex	5,204	-	80,162	85,366	-
Rural Access to Services West Sussex	13,374	-	87,741	99,081	2,034
Rural Economy	13,153	-	35,616	32,237	16,532
Rural Transport	6,293	-	-	-	6,293
Aim 3: Rural Voice					
Research & Policy	-	-	52,797	52,797	-
Village of the Year	2,361	-	1,722	4,083	-
Aim 4: The Wider Community					
Training Consortium	32,611	46	122,328	147,732	7,253
VCS Infrastructure	5,253	-	69,649	67,730	7,172
Totals	326,392	519	1,740,123	1,775,280	291,754

12 Pension Scheme

Action in rural Sussex participates in the Pensions Trust Growth Plan (the Plan). The Plan is funded and is not contracted-out of the State scheme. The Plan is a multi employer pension Plan.

Contributions paid in to the Growth Plan up to and including September 2001 were converted to defined amounts from Normal Retirement date. From October 2001 contributions were invested in personal funds which have a capital guarantee and which are converted to pension on retirement, either within the Growth Plan or by the purchase of an annuity.

It is not possible in the normal course of events to identify on a reasonable and consistent basis the share of the underlying assets and liabilities of the Plan belonging to individual participating employers. The Plan is a multi-employer scheme where the Plan assets are co-mingled for investment purposes, and benefits are paid from the total Plan assets. Accordingly, due to the nature of the Plan, the accounting charge for the period under FRS17 represents the employer contribution payable.

The valuation results of the Scheme at 30 September 2008 have now been completed and have been formalised. The valuation of the Scheme was performed by a professionally qualified Actuary using the Projected Unit Method. The market value of the Scheme's assets at the valuation date was £742 million and the Plan's Technical Provisions (i.e. past service liabilities) were £771 million. The valuation therefore revealed a shortfall of assets compared with the value of liabilities of £29 million, equivalent to a funding level of 96%.

The next full actuarial valuation will be carried out as at 30 September 2011.

Sussex Rural Community Council
Notes forming part of the financial statements for the year ended 31 March 2010

12 Pension Scheme (continued)

Following a change in legislation in September 2005 there is a potential debt on the employer that could be levied by the Trustee of the Plan. The Trustee's current policy is that it only applies to employers with pre-October 2001 liabilities in the Plan. The debt is due in the event of the employer ceasing to participate in the Plan or the Plan winding up.

Action in rural Sussex has been notified by the Pensions Trust of the estimated employer debt on withdrawal from the plan based on the financial position of the Plan as at 30 September 2009. As of this date the estimated employer debt for Action in rural Sussex was £250,297 but will not crystallise unless all employees leave the scheme.

13 Contingent liability

The charity has received funding to create a centre for rural development within the charity's main building, Sussex House. Under the terms of the agreement the funding may have to be repaid in full or part should the property be sold or its use be changed up until December 2021. The maximum amount of the contingent liability is £164,000.

14 Commitments

Annual commitments under non-cancellable operating leases were as follows:

	2010 Land & Buildings £	2010 Other £	2009 Land & Buildings £	2009 Other £
Leases which expire:				
In two to five years	16,500	3,835	23,938	3,428

15 Related party transactions

At 31 March 2010, £3,000 (2009: £3,000) was owed by SRCC (Trading) Limited, a subsidiary company.

Funding contributions of £8,300 (2009: £1,500) were made to, and grants and income for services of £18,348 (2009: £8,609) were received from South East Rural Community Council, an organisation for which K Field and B Dashwood-Hall, trustees of Action in Rural Sussex, were also trustees.

One of the Trustees has had related transactions with the Charity during the year. During the year, Foye Estates Ltd (owned by Mr Graham Peters) invoiced the charity £1,041 (2009: £6,250) for rent. All transactions were at arm's length.