



The Rural Affairs Forum presents a one day Conference

## Building a Stronger Rural West Midlands

Wednesday 12<sup>th</sup> November 2008

The Bromsgrove Hotel

Kidderminster Road, Bromsgrove, Worcestershire, B61 9AB



**Please cascade to your networks for their attention. Please note that the conference is free to attend and includes a regionally sourced lunch and refreshments. Spaces are limited and will be allocated on a first come, first served basis.**

The event is being sponsored by the Government Office for the West Midlands, West Midlands Regional Assembly, Natural England and Advantage West Midlands.



West Midlands  
Regional Assembly

# Building a Stronger Rural West Midlands

## Message from the Chairman West Midlands Rural Affairs Forum

The West Midlands Regional Rural Affairs Forum has hosted an annual rural conference since 2003 – this year will be the sixth. Each year, a different theme has been chosen to reflect one of the major issues affecting rural areas. This time we are looking to the future and our conference, entitled “Building a Stronger Rural West Midlands”, will draw on some of the success stories which highlight the diverse economic opportunities, our unrivalled natural resources and the solid sense of community that exists in rural areas. The Conference will also look at the important changes in regional governance which will affect us, and there will be an opportunity for delegates to debate, with the help of an external facilitator, how an integrated approach to regeneration might achieve a stronger and more prosperous Region.

This is an important time of change to be debating the future prosperity of the Region, please come and join us for this exciting event.

Best wishes,

A handwritten signature in black ink that reads "Nick Read". The signature is fluid and cursive, with the first name "Nick" being more prominent than the last name "Read".

**Rev'd Nick Read**

Chairman, West Midlands Regional Rural Affairs Forum

# Conference Programme

09:30 Registration and refreshments

10:00 Welcome and introductions

Facilitator Eric Smith, Radio Shropshire - setting the scene for the day

## EVIDENCE GATHERING

10:15 Strong Evidence, Strengthening Rural Delivery – Marie Greer, AWM

10:30 State of the Region - John Walker, West Midlands Regional Observatory

## MARKET TOWNS SUCESS

10:55 Stourport-on-Severn – Liz Durnell, Stourport Forward

11:15 Question and answer session

## PRESENTATIONS FORUM

11:30 Coffee break leading into your choice of one of the following presentations:

- A Model for the Future - Ian Edwards, AWM Rural Regeneration Zone
- Strengthening an area of outstanding natural businesses – Andrew Blake, Wye Valley AONB
- New life for old buildings - Dorothy Coleman, Redundant Buildings Grant
- Reconnecting children with the environment - Bill Fearnough and Satpal Kang, Year of Food and Farming
- Rural Skills for the future - Teresa Addinell, Learning and Skills Council

13:00 Lunch

## A STRONGER RURAL WEST MIDLANDS - KEYNOTE SPEECHES

14:00 Rural challenges, Rural solutions - Nick Paul, Chairman AWM

14:30 Looking to the future – Sub National Review

15:00 Question and answer panel session

15:30 Close and refreshments

## Travel and directions

**The Bromsgrove Hotel**  
**Kidderminster Road**  
**Bromsgrove**  
**Worcestershire**  
**B61 9AB**

### **M5 (From the South)**

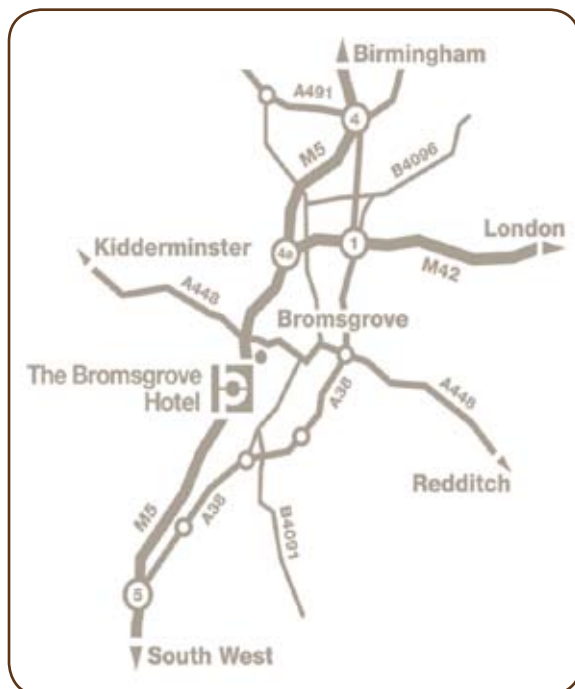
Leave M5 at J5. A38 Bromsgrove for 2miles. At roundabout turnleft, Bromsgrove (B4091) for 1.5miles. Left at mini roundabout, Kidderminster Road (A448). Hotel half a mile on the left.

### **M5 (From the North)**

Leave M5 at J4. A38 Bromsgrove for 2miles. Straight across traffic lights, straight on at roundabout. Filter right at traffic lights, NorthBromsgrove. Straight across two sets of traffic lights. Right at mini roundabout, Kidderminster Road (A448). Hotel half a mile on the left.

### **From M42 (including Birmingham NEC)**

Leave M42 at J1. At roundabout, 2nd exit, A38 Bromsgrove. Traffic lights, filter right, North Bromsgrove. Straight across two sets of traffic lights. Right at mini roundabout, Kidderminster Road (A448). Hotel half a mile on the left.



### **By rail**

Nearest Mainline Station: Bromsgrove; Service run by Central Trains  
Tel: 0871 200 49 50 Web: [www.nationalrail.co.uk](http://www.nationalrail.co.uk)

### **For further information:**

Please visit the West Midlands Rural Network website: [www.ruralnetworkwm.org.uk](http://www.ruralnetworkwm.org.uk) or contact **Nigel Daw 0121 352 5362** or **Liz Battram 0121 352 5336** at GOWM.