



From The Rural Consultant  
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## February 2022



### Welcome



It's not just the URC that turns 50 this year so does the Arthur Rank Centre. With its roots as the Chaplaincy for the National Agricultural Centre and Royal Show ARC celebrates 50 years of resourcing and advocating for rural churches. This news update is devoted

to the work of ARC which I commend to you

### ARC Rural Ministry Course

Tuesday 14 – Thursday 16 June (Midlands) King's Park Conference Centre, Northampton

The Rural Ministry Course is designed for **lay and ordained church leaders across the denominations entering a rural appointment for the first time**, and those already **in rural ministry who feel the need for a 'refresher'**.

The three-day programme employs a variety of approaches including practical sessions, group work and workshops led by practitioners, and includes sessions on understanding rural contexts, mission and growth, leadership, farming and work with children and young people in the countryside.

Fees are £300 per delegate for the residential course, which includes a one-year subscription to Country Way magazine. Contact: [arthurrankcentre.org.uk/ruralministrycourse](http://arthurrankcentre.org.uk/ruralministrycourse)

### ARC Rural Isolation and Loneliness Resource Packs

These can be downloaded from their [website](#) and will help you find out what steps that you can take to help tackle this ongoing societal issue.

Getting people talking about their feelings of isolation or poor mental health can be difficult, so ARC teamed up with the Ugly Duckling Company to create two Table Talk mini card packs, to help you get the conversation started in your community! Contact [officeadmin@arthurrankcentre.org.uk](mailto:officeadmin@arthurrankcentre.org.uk) to find out how you can order yours.

### What is Table Talk mini?

*Rural Table Talk* is a conversational game that creates space for the big (and not so big) questions of life. There are two Table Talk minis with an introduction and 15 questions which can be used either in a Church or Community setting. Contact [officeadmin@arthurrankcentre.org.uk](mailto:officeadmin@arthurrankcentre.org.uk) if you would like to place an order.

### Dates for your diary from ARC

- The Big Jubilee Lunch - Sunday 5 June 2022: [edenprojectcommunities.com/blog/the-big-jubilee-lunch](https://edenprojectcommunities.com/blog/the-big-jubilee-lunch)
- Dreaming Beyond - an online webinar to gather and dream for those serving rural churches. Hosted by the Southern and Islands Methodist Learning Network, 15 June 2022: [learningnetsi.org.uk/events/dreaming-beyond-for-those-serving-in-rural-and-small-](https://learningnetsi.org.uk/events/dreaming-beyond-for-those-serving-in-rural-and-small-)

[churches-2-3zxx8](https://youtu.be/pHdkr6_RaDA). Hear a story of hope and abundant community contributions from Rev Tracey Darling, speaking about the development of Malham Chapel garden: [https://youtu.be/pHdkr6\\_RaDA](https://youtu.be/pHdkr6_RaDA).

## **Keeping shop**

Rural consumers name their village shop as their most essential service. The Association of Convenience Stores has published its [Rural Shop Report 2022](#), with profiles of the entrepreneurs who provide vital rural services.

ARC partner Plunkett is lobbying wholesaler Booker, after it told independent retailers they will be charged a flat £34.95 delivery fee on all orders. This will come as a further blow for many community-owned shops, who already face challenges securing the delivery of core goods through major wholesalers.

## **Support network created for Rural Pioneers**

A network for Church Mission Society rural pioneers is set to gather for the first time. The CMS aims to connect missionaries working rurally to pray and support each other across the UK. The Pioneering in Rural Communities conference will take place on May 14, at the Church of St Nicholas in Corfe Mullen, Dorset. Convenor Peter Jones said: "All rural pioneers can join this adventure so we can journey together to grow hope in our communities. The network will offer a home and a place to belong for the pioneer in the rural context."

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## **Back To Northern Synod. What Is Happening in Your Community?**

Have the recent storms created problems in your community? We have all seen images of snow, floods, fallen trees, damaged property and downed power lines. It is difficult for people to understand the scale of the suffering experienced when they have been fortunate enough to avoid it themselves. Levelling up and resilience are big themes we keep hearing about yet little seems to happen. Asking what we can do to help people recover in the aftermath of such storms is important but it is not enough. We need to ask what we can do to help minimise the possibility of such devastation occurring again. As in all things prevention is better than cure

## **What's Missing**

That's a question I kept asking myself recently as I drove around Hambleton and Richmondshire recently with another hat on. Not being content just to sit back and complain at the lack of information from the County Council I drafted a series of five comprehensive bus timetable leaflets for our area and persuaded the group to print and distribute them. We were able to get funding from Rotary and Dalesbus to cover the print cost of just under £400. In trying outlets for them in each community I was amazed to discover how many places do not have a shop of any sort. Some didn't even have a public house. Village hall or church. There was nowhere for the community to meet. How will our rural communities survive without even basic amenities? Yes, we can do almost everything by internet but we are human and sometimes we just need to meet another human being in person.

## **Into the Future**

Enjoy Lent and Easter and I hope to bring you more news and information early in May.

Ian Ring

22 February 2022