

## PRESS RELEASE

**Contact:** Jan Bailey  
The Rural Media Company  
Tel: 01432 344039  
Email: janb@ruralmedia.co.uk

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### ***Over the Hill? Gathers Pace***

Earlier this year, the Rural Media Company (RMC) was awarded £300,000 over three years by The Nationwide Foundation to undertake the *Over the Hill?* campaign. *Over the Hill?* aims to highlight the challenges faced by older people in rural areas – particularly with regard to housing and financial inclusion - and focus on some ground-breaking approaches that have been introduced to deal with them.

RMC launched an appeal for examples of innovation, resulting in many schemes being brought to the fore. From these, the Company has selected eight which are now being filmed for inclusion in a DVD and accompanying report. The DVD will be presented in four sections: Rural County Strategic Approach; House and Home; Independence at Home; and Help with Finance.

In November, older people from across the West Midlands will be invited to view the DVD and to give their views on the approaches highlighted. Do they like the ideas? Would they work in their area? If not, why not? Some of these views will be included in the final 'cut' of the DVD.

In early 2011, we will be working with our partners, Action with Communities in Rural England (ACRE), Age UK and the BBC, to disseminate the completed DVD and report to as wide an audience as possible. In particular, we will be contacting Rural Local Authorities, Parish Councils and relevant Government departments to ensure they are aware of *Over the Hill?* and its findings.

Jane Jackson, Head of Production at RMC says: "Many older people aspire to a retirement in the countryside but the rural idyll is often shattered by the reality of trying to access the services that they need. These realities are, of course, felt daily by those already living in the countryside." She continues: "As the rate of ageing in rural communities is expected to continue to outpace that in urban communities, and as the proportion of older people in rural communities remains consistently higher than that in urban areas, we will be highlighting examples of how some of these challenges can be overcome."

For further information about *Over the Hill?*, or if you are interested in receiving a copy of the DVD and report, please contact Jan Bailey at the Rural Media Company: [janb@ruralmedia.co.uk](mailto:janb@ruralmedia.co.uk) or phone (01432) 344039. Alternatively, please visit our web page: [www.ruralmedia.co.uk/over-the-hill-question](http://www.ruralmedia.co.uk/over-the-hill-question).

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### Notes to Editors

- **The Rural Media Company** [www.ruralmedia.co.uk](http://www.ruralmedia.co.uk) is a charity and company limited by guarantee and is supported by ScreenWM, Elmley Foundation and Herefordshire Council.
- ***Over the Hill?*** is supported by the Nationwide Foundation.
- **The Nationwide Foundation's Investor Programme** aims to tackle financial exclusion affecting disadvantaged groups and address housing issues and homelessness among vulnerable groups in the UK. They focus such support on survivors of domestic abuse and specific groups of disadvantaged older people. [www.nationwidefoundation.org.uk](http://www.nationwidefoundation.org.uk).
- **Action with Communities in Rural England (ACRE)** is the rural community charity and the national arm of the Rural Community Action Network (RCAN). ACRE is also the national champion of community led planning, a process that enables local people in a rural community to come together, explore local needs, issues and opportunities and develop a vision for their own future. Crucially, community led planning challenges communities to identify what part they can play in finding solutions and making it happen. [www.acre.org.uk](http://www.acre.org.uk).
- **Age Concern and Help the Aged (UK)** have joined together to form a single charity, Age UK, dedicated to improving the lives of older people. The charity is driven by the needs and aspirations of people in later life. They support all people over 50 in the UK, ensuring that they get the most from life. They aim to re-shape our ageing society so that later life is a time of security and opportunity for all. They provide vital services to help older people in the UK to live independent, active lives as well as supporting a range of different international work around the globe. They campaign on issues like age discrimination and pensions, and work to influence public opinion and government policy about older people. They also carry out and fund a wide range of research on older people and ageing. [www.ageuk.org.uk](http://www.ageuk.org.uk).