

# Rural Policy Framework for Northern Ireland



Response Template

*Sustainability at the heart of a living, working, active landscape valued by everyone.*



Department of  
**Agriculture, Environment  
and Rural Affairs**

[www.daera-ni.gov.uk](http://www.daera-ni.gov.uk)



**INVESTORS  
IN PEOPLE**

## How to Respond

This template replicates the questions posed in the online survey on the Rural Policy Framework for Northern Ireland Consultation found at: <https://consultations.nidirect.gov.uk/daera-central-services-and-rural-affairs/rural-policy-framework>

The full text of the consultation can be found on the Department's website at: <https://www.daera-ni.gov.uk/sites/default/files/consultations/daera/20.21.043%20Rural%20Policy%20Framework%20NI%20-%20Consultation%20Final.PDF> It is recommended that you read the full consultation document before completing your response, whether you choose to use this template or the Citizen Space Hub.

If you wish to use this template for your response, please reply:

**By e-mail to:** [ruralpolicydelivery@daera-ni.gov.uk](mailto:ruralpolicydelivery@daera-ni.gov.uk)

**By post to:** Rural Policy and Delivery Branch

Department of Agriculture, Environment and Rural Affairs  
Rural Affairs Division,  
2nd Floor, Ballykelly House  
111 Ballykelly Road  
Ballykelly  
Limavady  
BT49 9HP

Early responses are encouraged but all responses should arrive no later than

**Monday 6 September 2021.**

Before you submit your responses please read the "Publication of Responses" section below, which gives guidance on the legal position. If you require any further information on this consultation exercise, we would encourage you to contact us via e-mail. If you are unable to access e-mail, you can telephone us on 028 7744 5113. Please note this is a voicemail service and a member of the team will call you back.

## Publication of Responses

The Department will publish a summary of responses following completion of the consultation process. Your response, and all other responses to the consultation, may be disclosed on request. The Department can refuse to disclose information only in exceptional circumstances. Before you submit your response, please read the paragraphs below on the confidentiality of consultations and they will give you guidance on the legal position about any information given by you in response to this consultation.

Section 8(e) of the Data Protection Act 2018 permits processing of personal data when necessary for an activity that supports or promotes democratic engagement. Information provided by respondents to this stakeholder engagement exercise will be held and used for the purposes of the administration of this current exercise and subsequently disposed of in accordance with the provisions of the Data Protection Act 2018 and UK General Data Protection Regulation.

The Freedom of Information Act 2000 gives the public a right of access to any information held by a public authority (the Department in this case). This right of access to information includes information provided in response to a consultation. The Department cannot automatically consider as confidential information supplied to it in response to a consultation. However, it does have the responsibility to decide whether any information provided by you in response to this consultation, including information about your identity, should be made public or treated as confidential. If you do not wish information about your identity to be made public, please include an explanation in your response.

This means that information provided by you in response to the consultation is unlikely to be treated as confidential, except in very particular circumstances.

The Lord Chancellor's Code of Practice on the Freedom of Information Act provides that:

- The Department should only accept information from third parties in confidence if it is necessary to obtain that information in connection with the exercise of any of the Department's functions and it would not otherwise be provided;
- The Department should not agree to hold information received from third parties 'in confidence' which is not confidential in nature; and
- Acceptance by the Department of confidentiality provisions must be for good reasons, capable of being justified to the Information Commissioner.

For further information about confidentiality of responses, please contact the Information Commissioner's Office: <https://ico.org.uk/>

## About You

**Name (Required)**

**E-mail address (required if responding electronically)**

**Address (required if responding by post)**

**Organisation/ Respondent type (required)**

**Public Sector**

**Private individual**

**Private Sector**

**Other (please specify)**

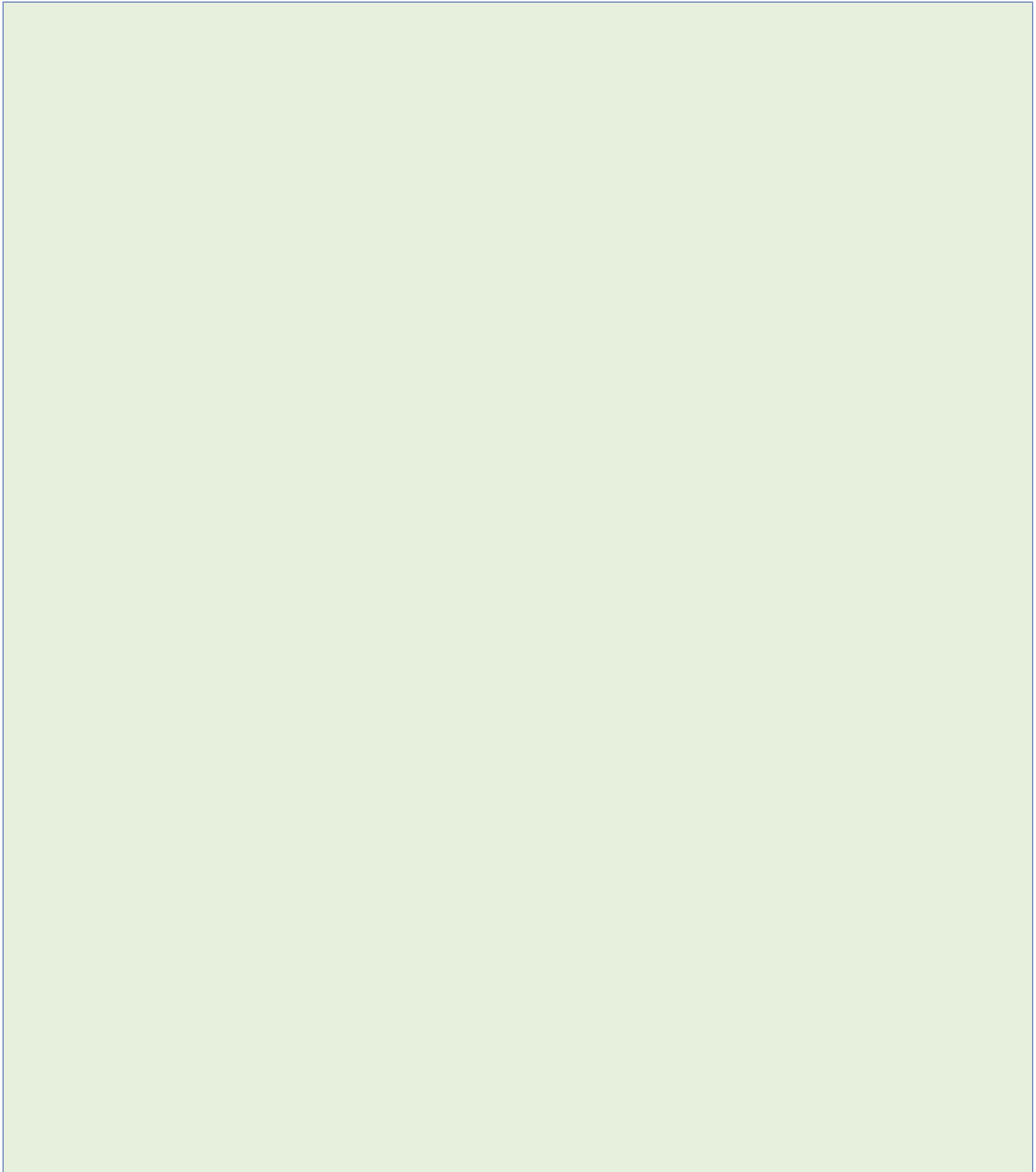
**Community/voluntary**

**Please provide further details including the name of your organisation below**

**Q1: Do you agree that the proposed overarching aim ‘To create a sustainable rural community where people want to live, work and be active’ for the Rural Policy Framework for Northern Ireland is appropriate?**

**Yes**            **No**

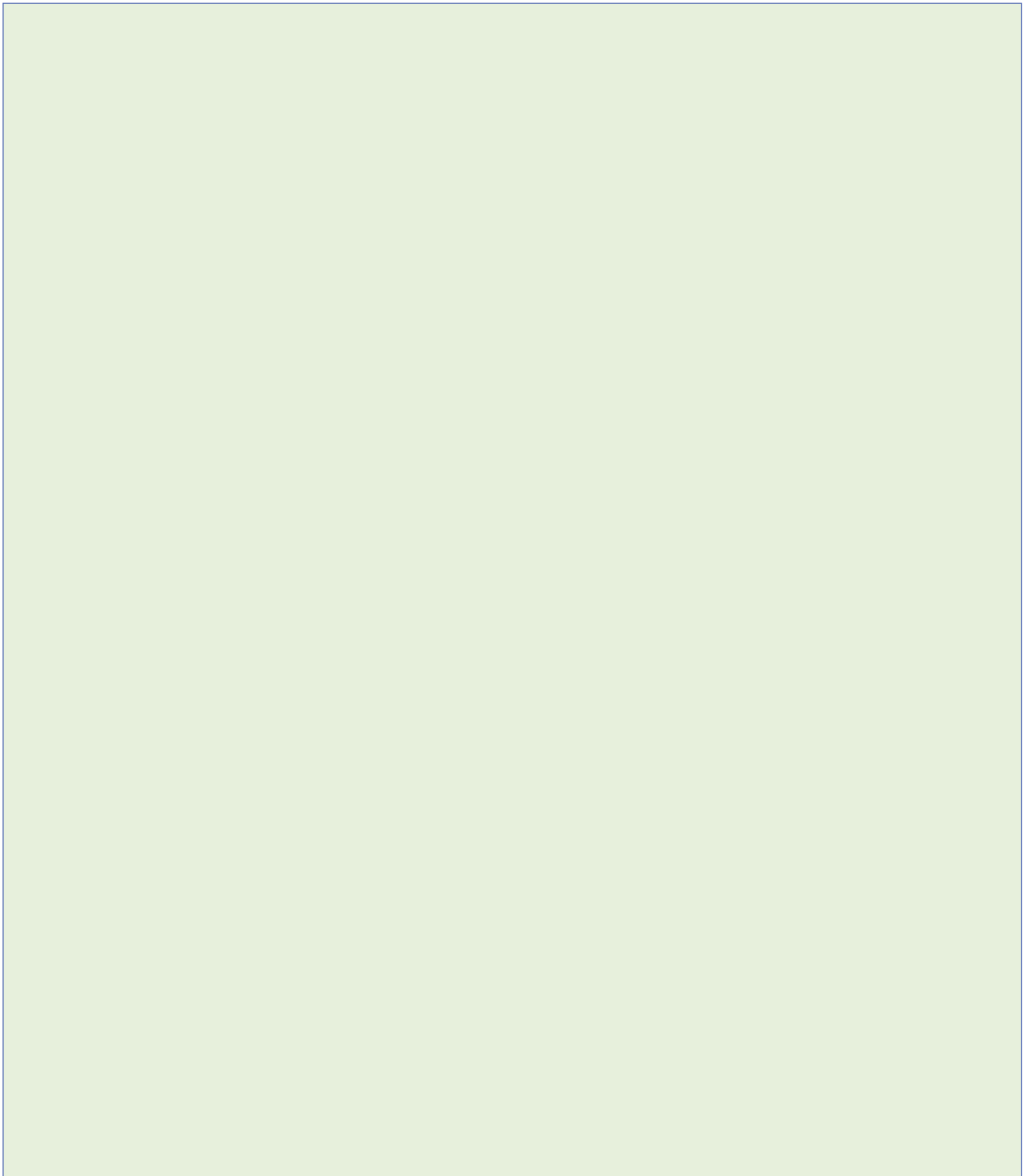
If you have any additional comments to accompany your answer, please outline below.



**Q2: Do you agree that the Tackling Rural Poverty and Social Isolation (TRPSI) approach should continue under the wider umbrella of the Rural Policy Framework?**

**Yes          No**

If you have any additional comments to accompany your answer, please outline below.



**Q3: In your opinion, what are the main challenges facing rural communities in Northern Ireland over the next 5 years? Please select what you feel are the top five challenges from the options outlined below.**

*NB: You should only select five challenges from the options provided and rank those challenges by priority from 1 to 5 in the box provided (with 1 being the most significant challenge, 2 being less significant etc.)*

Access to public services (e.g. health, education and social services).

Availability of appropriate and adequate community facilities/supports for different age groups.

Broadband/mobile phone connectivity.

Changing demographics (e.g. ageing population, new communities, and retention of young people in rural areas).

Climate change and environmental sustainability.

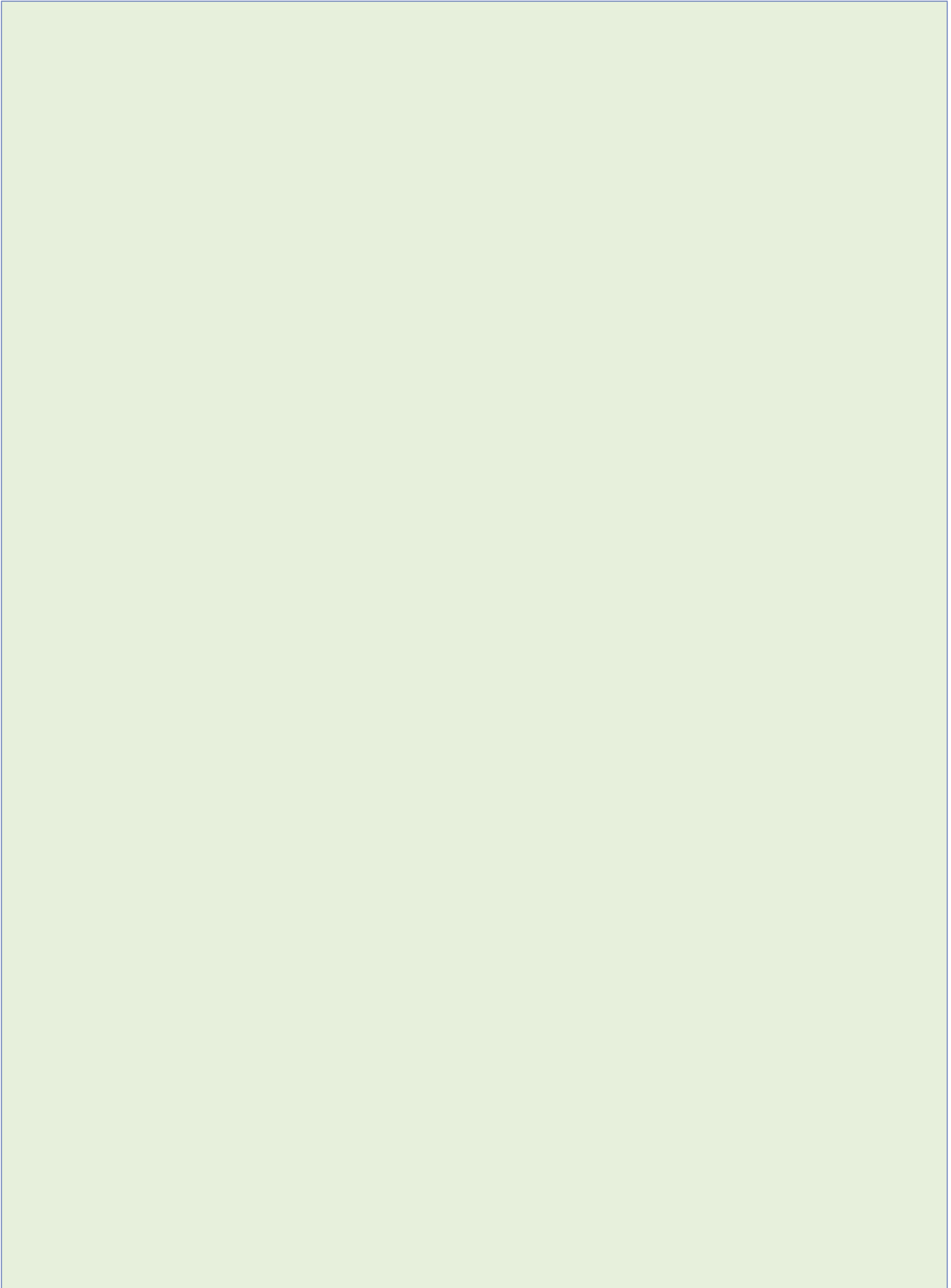
Future of farming/agri-food sector.

Jobs and business.

Managing tourism in a sustainable way.

Transport and infrastructure.

If there are any other challenges you feel have not been included in the list, please indicate these in the comment box on the next page.





**Q4: In your opinion, what are the main opportunities facing rural communities in Northern Ireland over the next 5 years? Please select what you feel are the top five opportunities from the options outlined below.**

*NB: You should only select five opportunities from the options provided and rank those opportunities by priority from 1 to 5 (with 1 being the most significant opportunity, 2 being less significant etc.)*

Diversification within farming/agri-food sector.

Economic development of markets (local, national and international) and sectors (both non-traditional and emerging).

Enabling communities (e.g. supporting local leadership, groups and volunteers, enhancing community amenities).

Enterprise and employment: expanding opportunities (e.g. Social Enterprise, apprenticeships, supporting entrepreneurs).

Joined-up approach from Government on delivering for rural communities in Northern Ireland.

Optimisation of digital connectivity (e.g. Broadband and emerging technologies) (e.g. remote working, research, development and innovation, and future jobs).

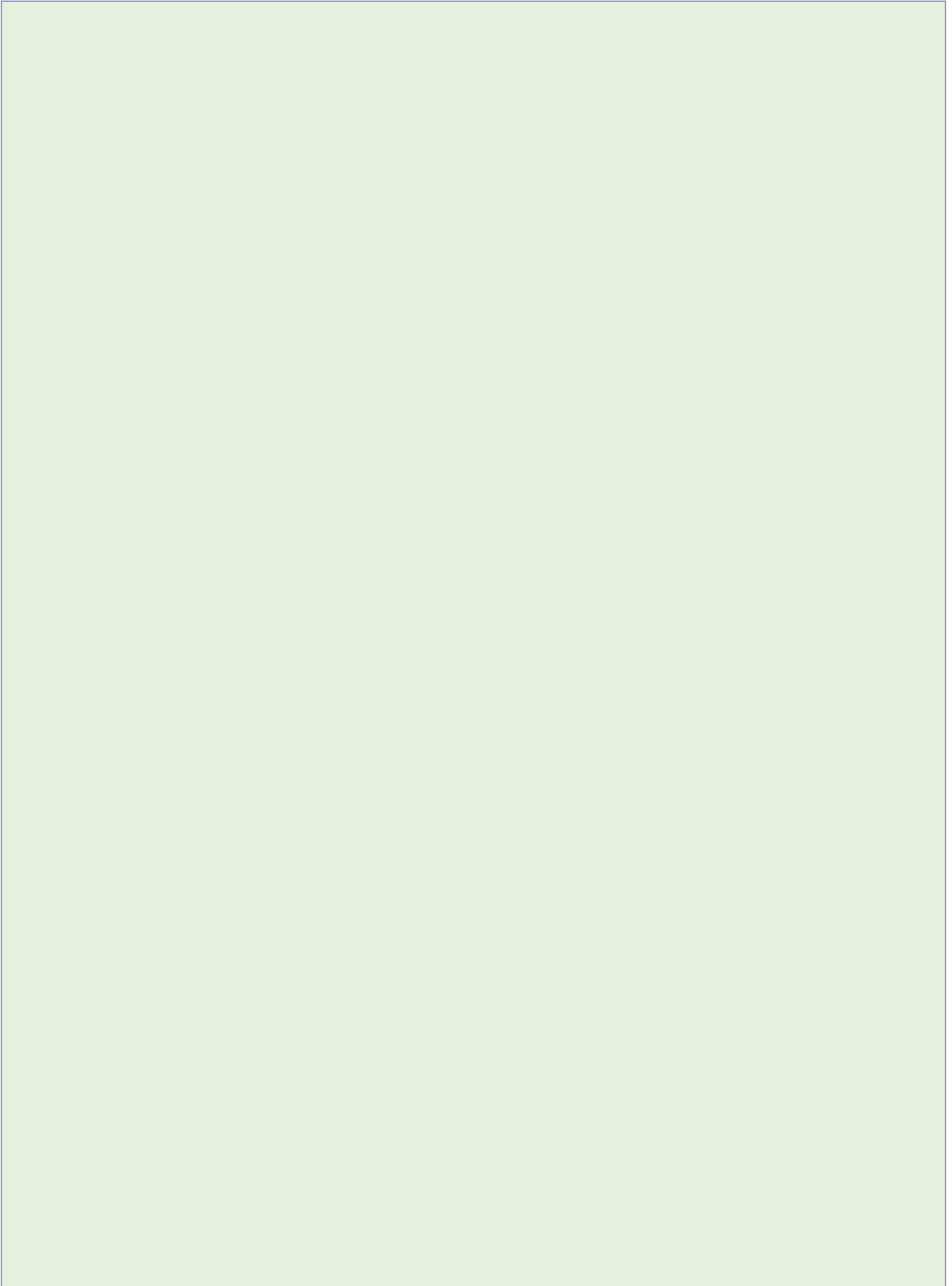
Revitalisation of towns and villages.

Sustainable development and climate adaptation (e.g. renewable energy).

Tourism: expansion of options including heritage, recreation and activity tourism.

Transport infrastructure and services.

If there are any other opportunities you feel have not been included in the list, please indicate these in the comment box on the next page.



**Q5: Thematic Pillar 1: Innovation and Entrepreneurship: To create a rural society where innovation and entrepreneurship flourish.**

**a. Do you agree that Thematic Pillar 1: Innovation and Entrepreneurship is appropriate for the Rural Policy Framework for Northern Ireland?**

**Yes            No            Not Applicable**

If you have selected ***Not Applicable***, please go to ***Question 6***.

If you have any additional comments to accompany your answer, please outline below.

**b. Do you agree that the three priority areas for intervention outlined below supporting Thematic Pillar 1: Innovation and Entrepreneurship are appropriate for the Rural Policy Framework for Northern Ireland?**

- Develop a culture of rural innovation.
- Raise awareness, build capacity and capability to engage in rural entrepreneurship and innovation.
- Invest in and develop our rural economy.

**Yes**            **No**

If you have any additional comments to accompany your answer, please outline below.

**Q6: Thematic Pillar 2: Sustainable Tourism: To maximise the contribution that sustainable rural tourism makes to rural society and to the wider economy and environment.**

**a. Do you agree that Thematic Pillar 2: Sustainable Tourism is appropriate for the Rural Policy Framework for Northern Ireland?**

**Yes            No            Not Applicable**

If you have selected ***Not Applicable***, please go to ***Question 7***.

If you have any additional comments to accompany your answer, please outline below.

**b. Do you agree that the four priority areas for intervention outlined below supporting Thematic Pillar 2: Sustainable Tourism are appropriate for the Rural Policy Framework for Northern Ireland?**

- Encourage and support the delivery of compelling year-round, authentic visitor products and experiences of a quality that will provide international stand out for Northern Ireland.
- Support a rural tourism sector that is commercially focused and achieves sustainable levels of growth and prosperity.
- Facilitate welcoming and supportive rural communities to play an enhanced role in developing and managing tourism in their locality, thereby strengthening, benefitting and enriching local areas.
- Recognise, value, protect and enhance Northern Ireland's natural, cultural and historic built environment as the cornerstone of its rural tourism.

**Yes**            **No**

If you have any additional comments to accompany your answer, please outline below.

**Q7: Thematic Pillar 3: Health and Wellbeing: To reduce loneliness and social exclusion in rural areas, to minimise the impacts of rural isolation and to promote the health and wellbeing of rural dwellers.**

**a. Do you agree that Thematic Pillar 3: Health and Wellbeing is appropriate for the Rural Policy Framework for Northern Ireland?**

**Yes            No            Not Applicable**

If you have selected ***Not Applicable***, please go to ***Question 8***.

If you have any additional comments to accompany your answer, please outline below.

**b. Do you agree that the five priority areas for intervention outlined below supporting Thematic Pillar 3: Health and Wellbeing are appropriate for the Rural Policy Framework for Northern Ireland?**

- Champion awareness and understanding of rural social exclusion, isolation and loneliness.
- Support a rural dimension within the work of other organisations which are promoting positive health and wellbeing, addressing social exclusion, isolation and loneliness and build the capacity of rural organisations and people to develop their activities in this area.
- Establish effective approaches to reducing loneliness and social exclusion in rural areas, to minimise the impacts of social isolation and to promote the health and wellbeing of rural dwellers.
- Sustain the future viability of villages as social and economic centres.
- Support the strategic development of existing rural community assets as places where people can meet, interact, access services and enhance their health and wellbeing.

**Yes**            **No**

If you have any additional comments to accompany your answer, please outline below.



**Q8: Thematic Pillar 4: Employment: To increase employment opportunities available to people living in rural areas.**

**a. Do you agree that Thematic Pillar 4: Employment is appropriate for the Rural Policy Framework for Northern Ireland?**

**Yes            No            Not Applicable**

If you have selected ***Not Applicable***, please go to ***Question 9***.

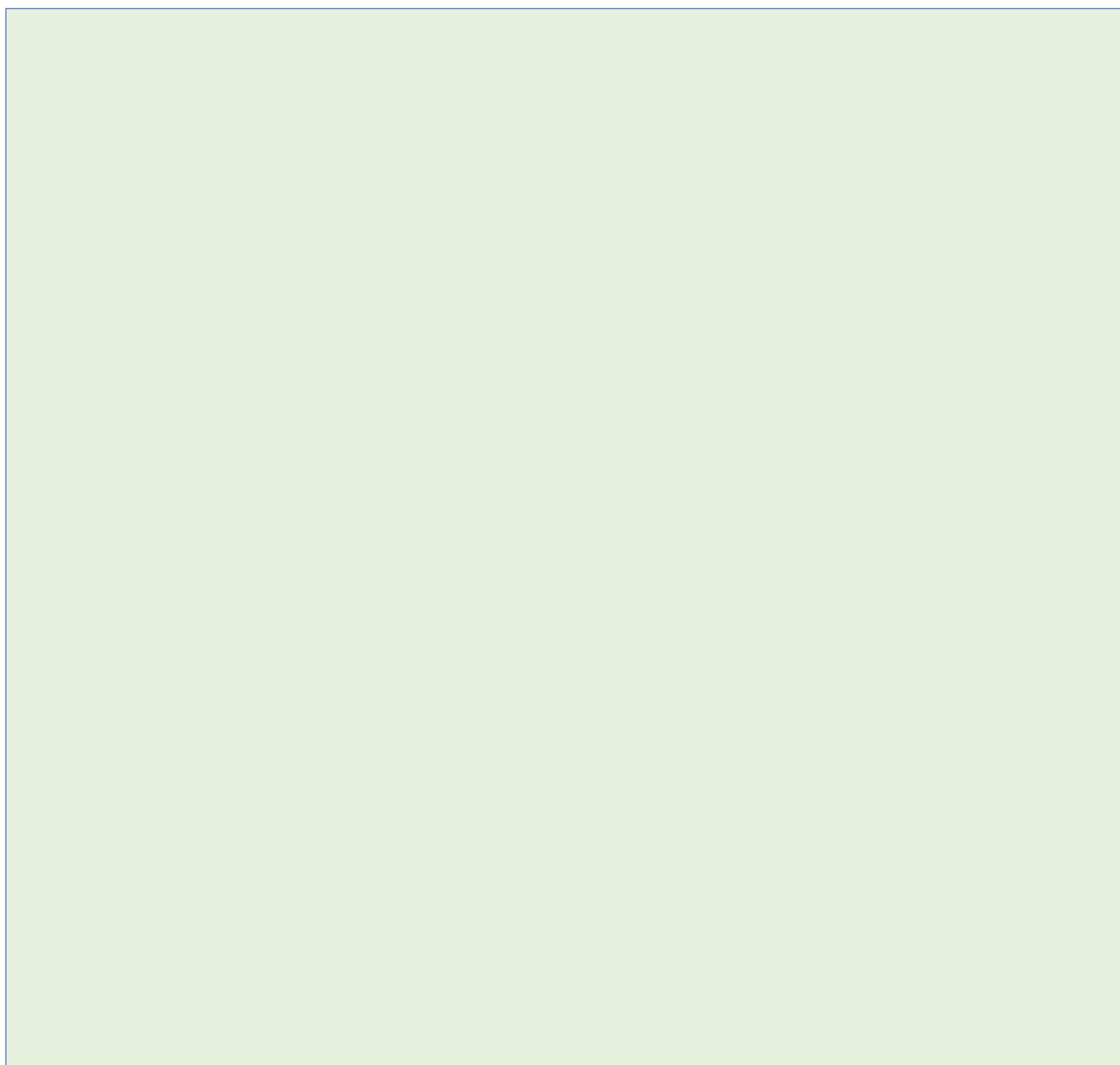
If you have any additional comments to accompany your answer, please outline below.

**b. Do you agree that the three priority areas for intervention outlined below supporting Thematic Pillar 4: Employment are appropriate for the Rural Policy Framework for Northern Ireland?**

- To promote rural prosperity by providing support to non-farming rural enterprises to help increase rural business start-ups, sustainability and growth;
- To champion the need to address the personal and practical issues which create barriers to employability for our rural dwellers;
- To invest in and develop our rural society.

**Yes**            **No**

If you have any additional comments to accompany your answer, please outline below.



**Q9: Thematic Pillar 5: Connectivity: To improve connectivity between rural and urban areas.**

**a. Do you agree that Thematic Pillar 5: Connectivity is appropriate for the Rural Policy Framework for Northern Ireland?**

**Yes            No            Not Applicable**

If you have selected ***Not Applicable***, please go to ***Question 10***.

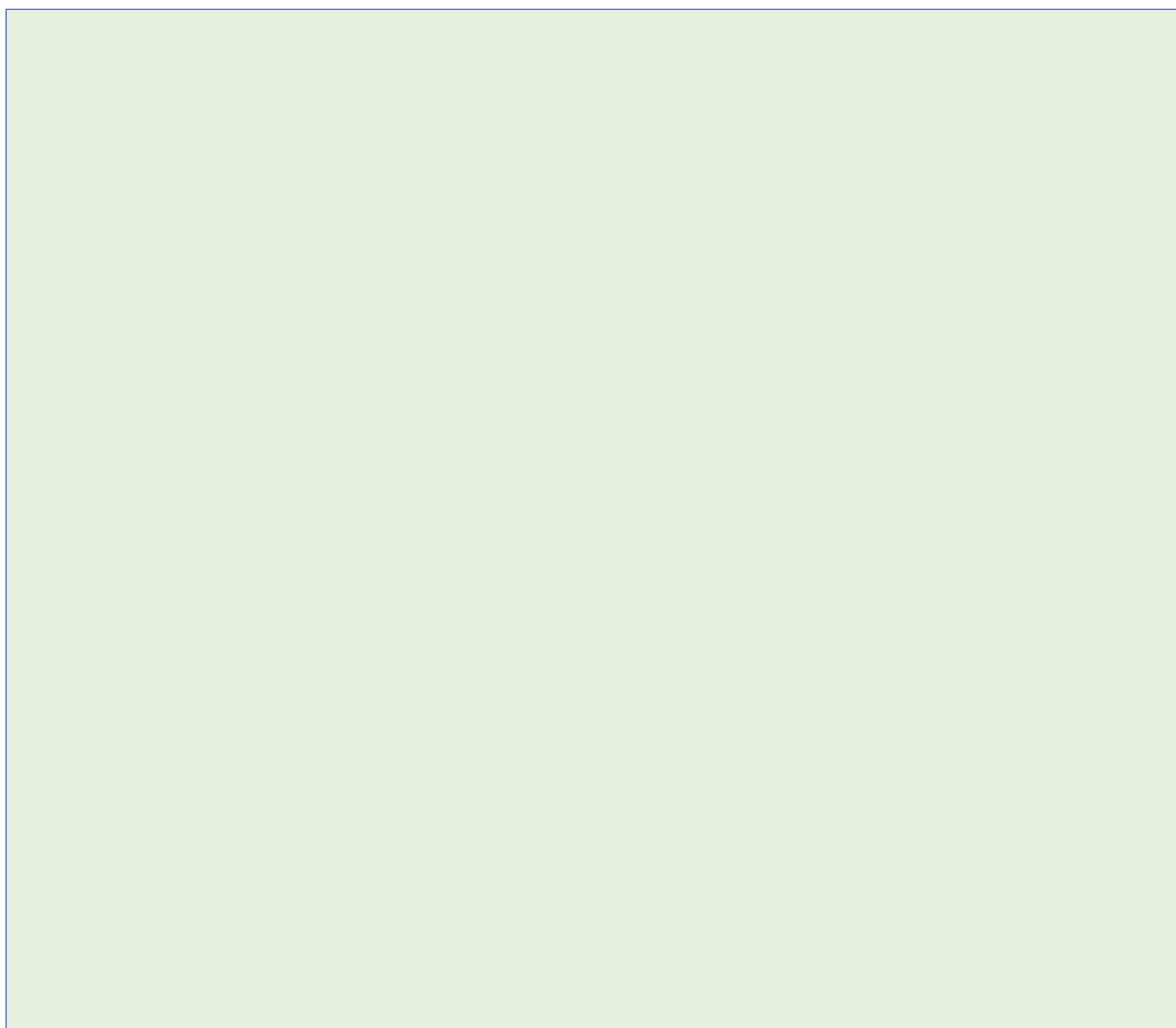
If you have any additional comments to accompany your answer, please outline below.

**b. Do you agree that the four priority areas for intervention outlined below supporting Thematic Pillar 5: Connectivity are appropriate for the Rural Policy Framework for Northern Ireland?**

- To support sustainable public transport services between rural areas and urban centres and encourage active and public transport usage that better meets the needs of rural dwellers.
- To support balanced regional development by promoting better connectivity between urban and rural centres.
- To support improved telecommunications infrastructure including high speed broadband making it available to as many people as possible regardless of where they live.
- To reduce barriers to accessing services in rural areas.

**Yes**            **No**

If you have any additional comments to accompany your answer, please outline below.



**Q10: What are your views on how the five thematic pillars should be prioritised, ranked by priority from 1-5 (with 1 being the highest priority and 5 being the lowest priority)?**

Thematic pillar 1: Innovation and Entrepreneurship

Thematic pillar 2: Sustainable Tourism

Thematic pillar 3: Health and Wellbeing

Thematic pillar 4: Employment

Thematic pillar 5: Connectivity

Please choose  
each number  
only once.

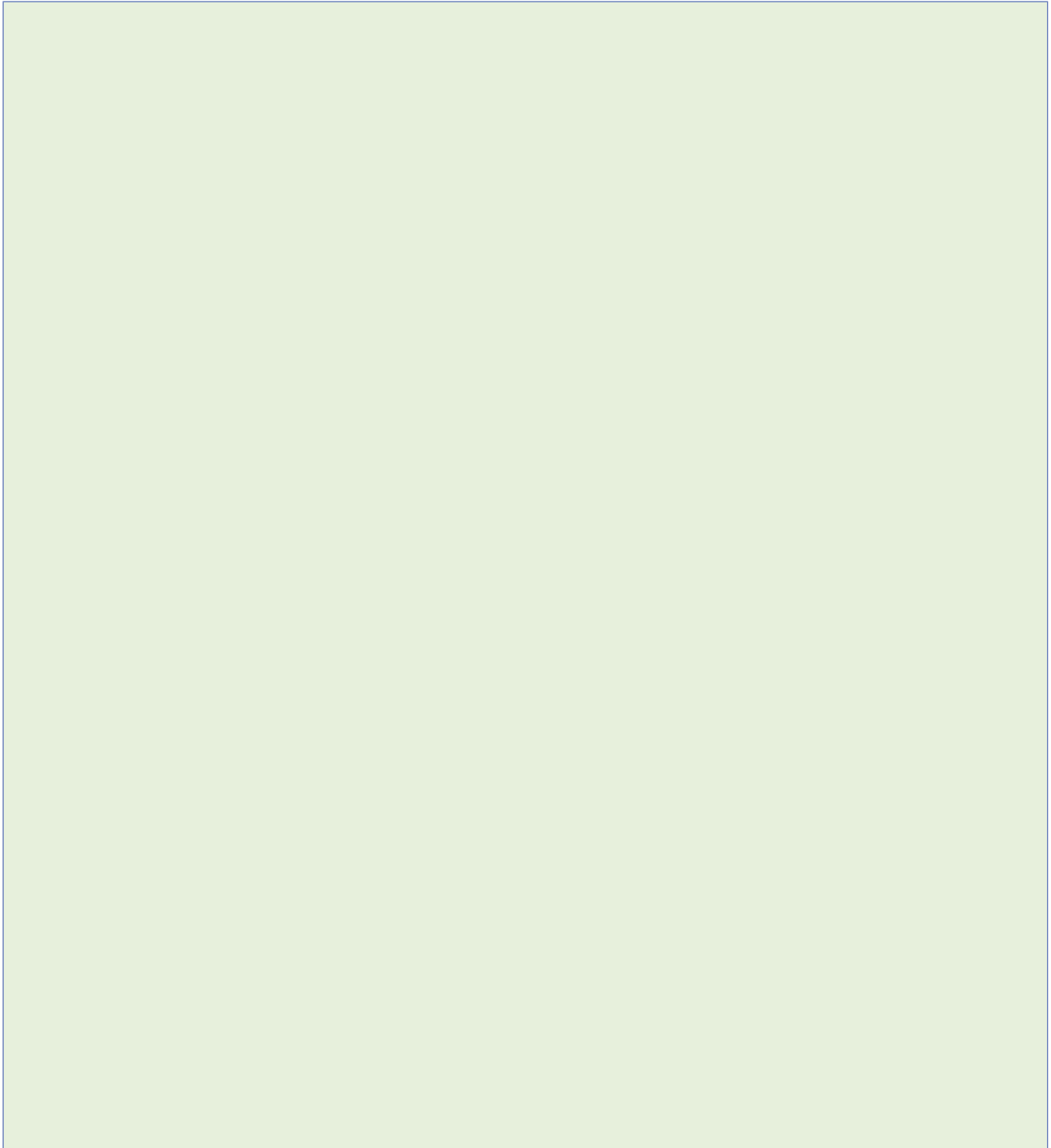
**Q11: Do you agree that the 14 Key Principles outlined below are appropriate for the Rural Policy Framework for Northern Ireland?**

- Address the needs of rural communities through the delivery of outcomes based initiatives which provide value for money and also contribute to the outcomes set out in the draft Programme for Government 2016-21 (PfG);
- Promote the piloting of new and innovative approaches to the challenges facing rural communities;
- Encourage partnership working between Departments, other public sector organisations and the rural community sector;
- Recognise the important role played by the rural community sector and the need to encourage rural community empowerment;
- Encourage the mainstreaming of successful projects and the development of suitable exit strategies;
- Complement other rural initiatives including the Rural Needs Act 2016;
- Be cognisant of the fact that all Departments have responsibilities for rural areas;
- Promote sustainability through support for projects which deliver long term benefits for rural communities;
- Seek to promote equality and good relations in line with the Department's duties under Section 75;
- Seek to complement the aims and objectives of other key Executive policies and strategies including the Draft PfG and the New Decade, New Approach Deal;
- Promote the sharing of information (in line with UK data protection legislation), learning and best practice between organisations;
- Seek to complement the community planning process;

- Recognise opportunities for partnership working on a North/South, East/West or transnational basis; and
- The Framework will seek to use the Tackling Rural Poverty and Social Isolation Framework (TRPSI) delivery approach under the wider umbrella of Thematic Pillar 3.

**Yes**            **No**

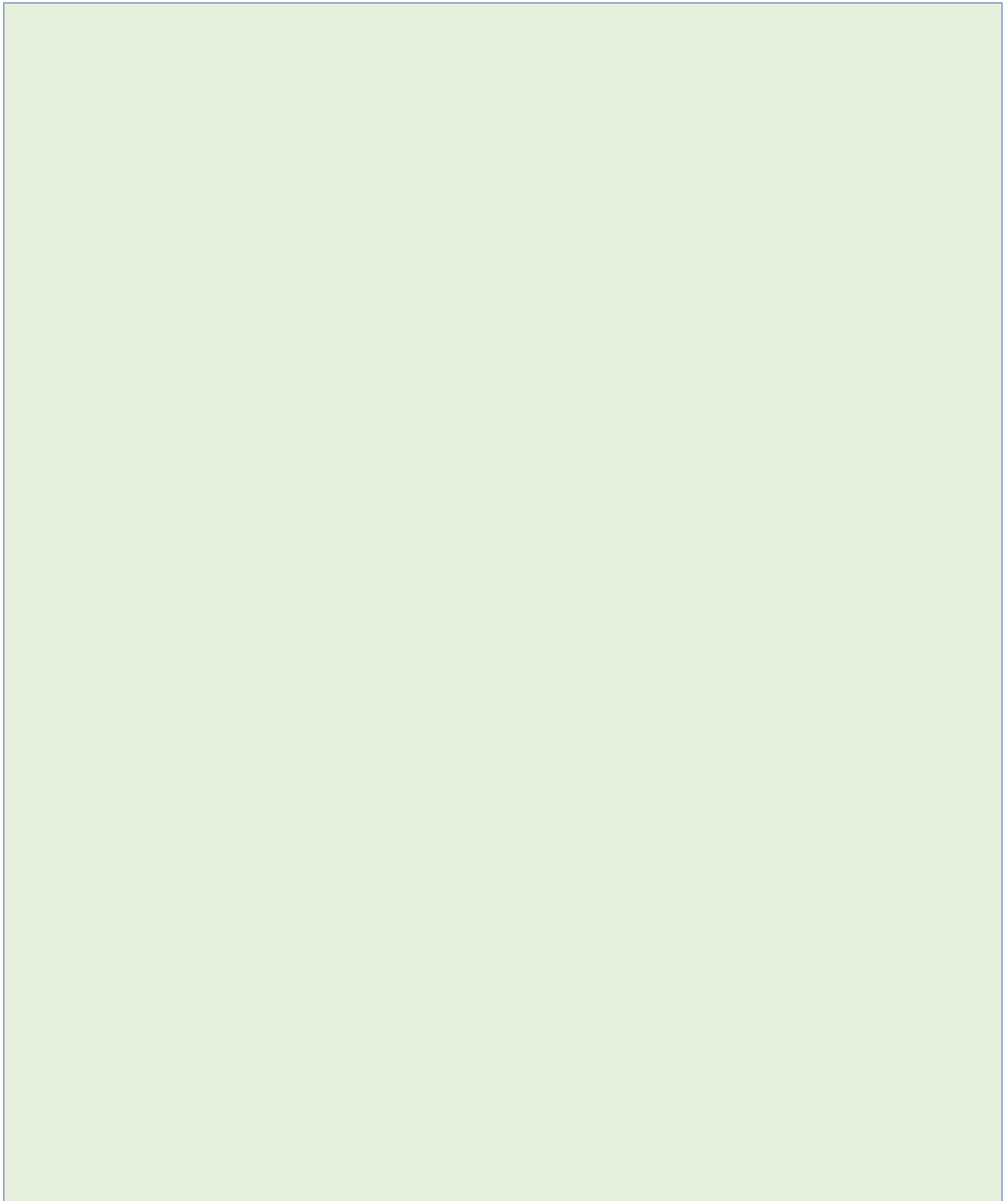
If you have any additional comments to accompany your answer, please outline below.



**Q12: Are there any other aspects of the proposals that you wish to comment on?**

**Yes**      **No**

If you have any additional comments to accompany your answer, please outline below.

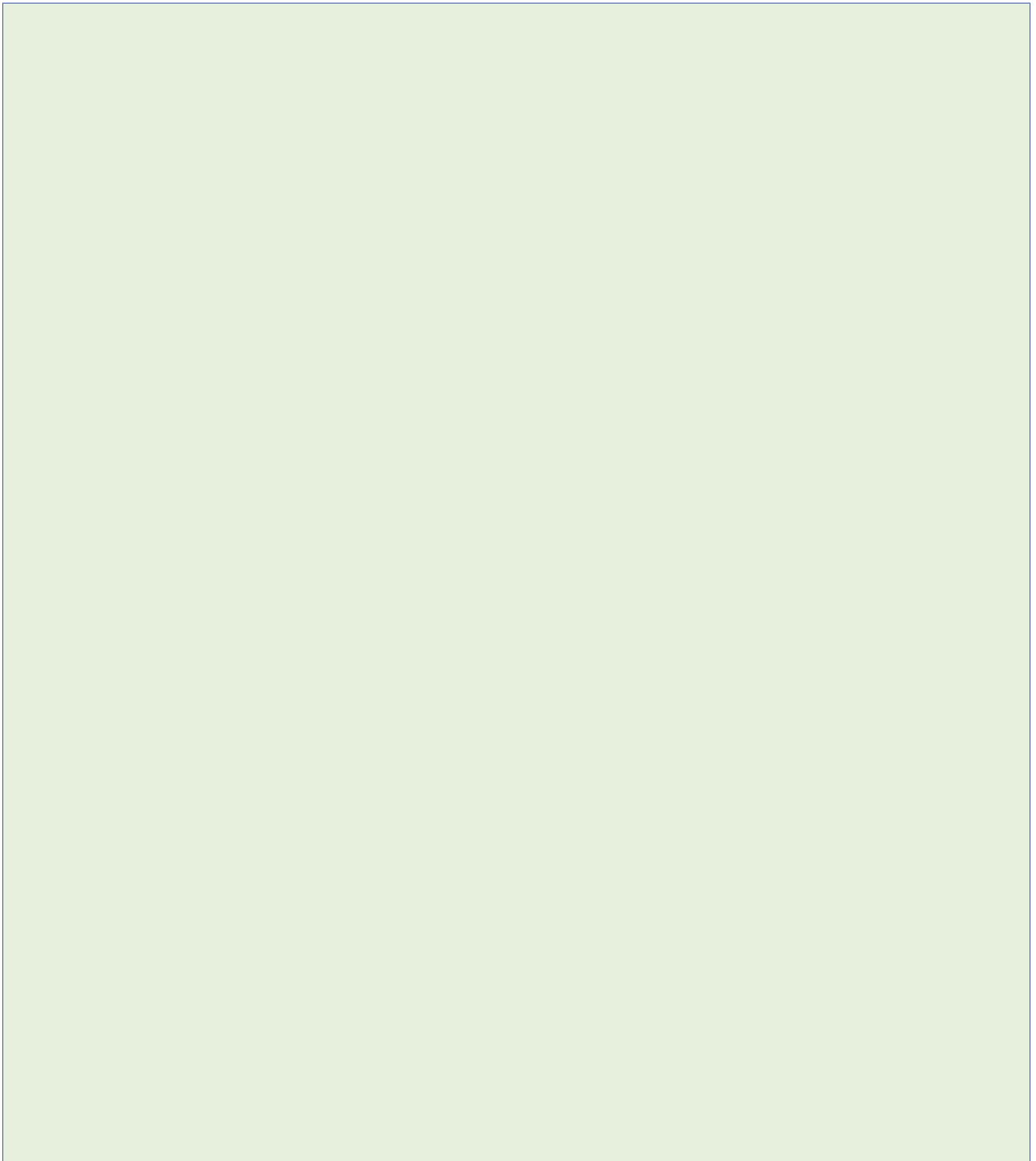


**Q13: Do you have any views on the conclusions reached by DAERA in relation to Rural Policy Framework for Northern Ireland in respect of:**

**a. The Equality and Human Rights Screening Template**

**Yes            No**

If you have any additional comments to accompany your answer, please outline below.

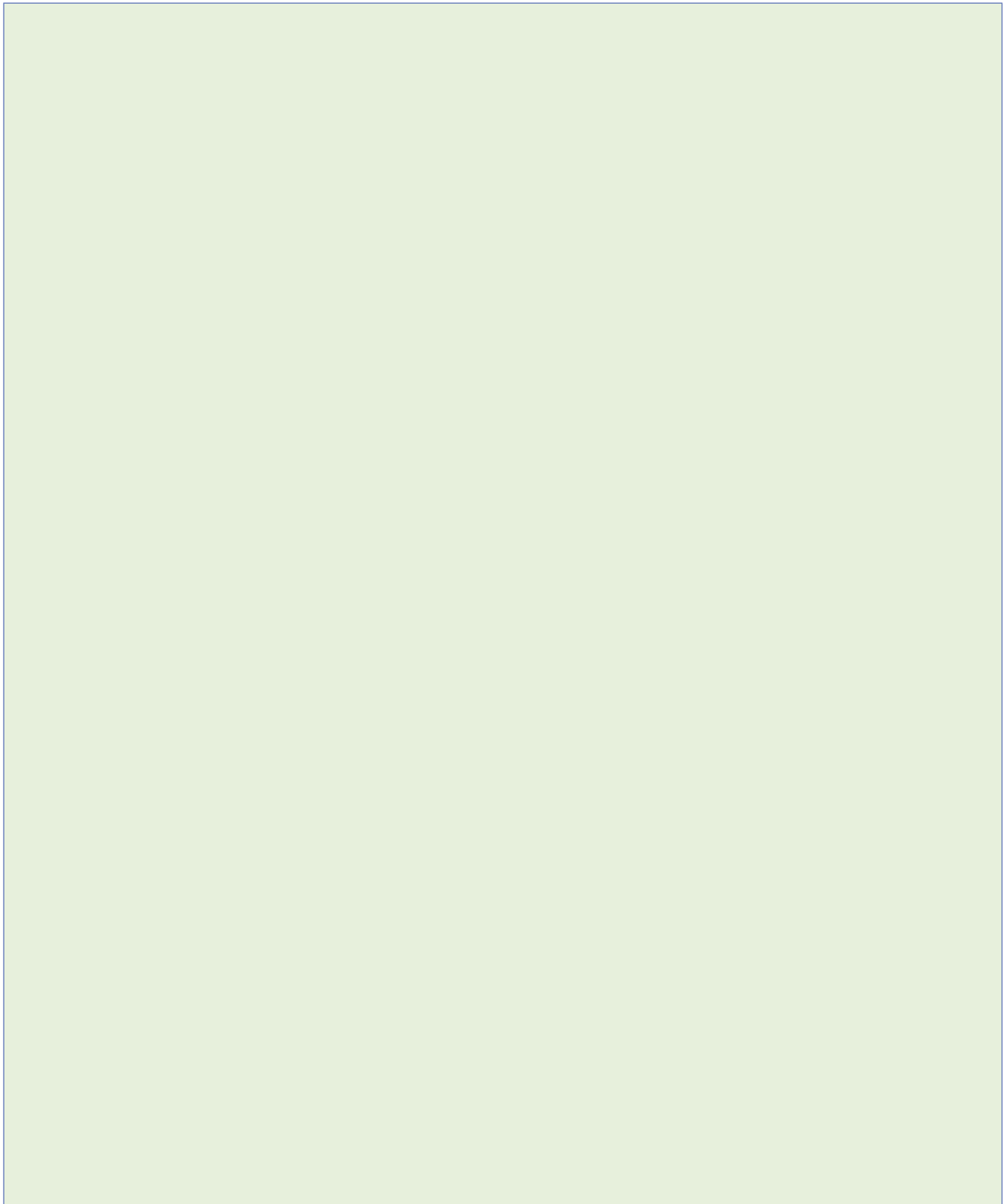




**b. The Rural Needs Impact Assessment**

**Yes**            **No**

If you have any additional comments to accompany your answer, please outline below.



**For further information:**

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