

# **Review of Key Trends and Issues in UK Rural Land Use**

**Living Landscapes Project**

**Final Report to The Royal Society**

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## **Executive Summary**

The set of unique circumstances that are aligning in 2020 and 2021 make this a major moment for agriculture, environment and land use policy. We have a rare opportunity to re-imagine how we want our landscape to look and think carefully about which functions we want it to provide. In the UK, Brexit means that our entire agricultural policy will be rewritten and a 25-year plan for nature recovery will be enshrined in legislation. Internationally, the UN Convention on Biological Diversity COP15 will agree on an ambitious new global biodiversity framework and the UN Framework Convention on Climate Change COP26 will be hosted in the UK and consider the interlinkages between climate change, agriculture, land use and biodiversity. In addition, in light of the COVID-19 pandemic, the public are beginning to engage far more with the green spaces on their doorstep and consider the resilience of the global food system.

Alongside this, we have a triple crisis in the UK, relating to climate, nature, and public health and land provides a significant contribution to the solutions for all of these. However, changes to land use must be delivered in an integrated, multi-purpose way.

The Royal Society's Living Landscapes policy programme aims to inform a long-term vision for how the UK manages its land in a way that combines agricultural productivity with sound environmental stewardship. A major component of this is exploring how different functions and benefits delivered by the land are connected and what the implications are for land use policy in the UK.

This report by the University of Reading and commissioned by the Royal Society as part of the Living Landscapes policy programme provides a review of the history and current arrangements for rural land use decision-making in the UK. It is based on an extensive review of the academic and professional literature, a policy review and stakeholder audit. The research:

1. Explored the historical development of the current system.
2. Mapped-out the range of stakeholders that shape rural land use policy and practice.
3. Evaluated current policy, practice and governance arrangements.
4. Drew lessons from selected international case studies and recent stakeholder proposals.

The main lessons derived from the research can be summarised around the three significant threads of **governance**, **integration** and **multifunctionality**.

### **Governance**

There are multiple demands on land to meet a range of policy objectives and national Government needs to set clear ambitions for them all at national level.

- Arrangements for rural land use decisions need be inclusive, involving multiple stakeholders and co-operative practices.
- A networked approach to land use could work favorably, in which more bottom-up solutions are developed using a framework of stakeholder partnership, but with a key

role for the state in providing an overarching arena for conflict mediation and policy development.

- Devolution is already part of that process, and has fostered innovation in land use policy, for example in relation to community ownership and well-being.
- Landowners are a key stakeholder that should be involved, having significant control over rural land use decisions. The variety of approaches they can adopt provide opportunities for more sustainable land use.
- International comparisons indicate that effective regional governance structures to facilitate landscape-scale decision-making can help secure sustainable development goals. Initially, these might need to be developed informally.
- There are opportunities to extend the localism agenda through enhanced community involvement and stakeholder partnerships and these could achieve better linkages with rural land use and foster a culture of multifunctional land use.
- International comparisons suggest that achieving ambitious, sustainable development goals is critically dependent on stakeholder buy-in, ongoing political commitment and adequate resourcing (especially in relation to local capacity).
- Principles of co-governance have been developed by Ostrom (cf. 1990; 2003; 2010) and expanded by others as part of the Integrated Action and Development and Socio-Ecological Systems frameworks. The more collaborative approach involved in new institutional theory can provide a flexible and adaptive form of governance that supports both the mediation of stakeholder interests and innovations in policy and practice.

## **Integration**

The policy and practice for rural land use need to be integrated across multiple policy scales, from local to national, and across multiple policies e.g. net zero, farming and biodiversity.

- An integrated framework for land use is required to meet current environment, climate and public health challenges. The overarching positioning of sustainable development could provide relevant framework of principles and a form of political/stakeholder legitimacy that could assist in building a collective response.
- Ecosystem services and land use multifunctionality provide supportive approaches towards the goals of sustainable development, maintaining a focus on integration and holistic thinking.
- Greater “responsibilisation” in land use decision-making is likely to be most effective, through a mix of regulation, incentive and social ties.
- The planning system remains a very important part of our institutional arrangements, providing a synoptic process and integrated set of policies that relate to land use decisions.
- Integrated but appropriately scaled policy could facilitate a more multifunctional approach to rural land use, using land use frameworks at a level larger than local but smaller than national, similar to those currently prepared for National Parks.
- Nationally, the Scottish Assembly has provided an example of an integrated approach through its Land Use Strategy, whilst the Welsh Government’s ‘Well-being of Future Generations Act’ puts sustainability at the centre of the decision-making process.

- Integration is likely to require a transitional period in order to bring policy and practice ideas to fruition, but the opportunity for that transition is provided by Brexit and now as part of a post-COVID-19 reassessment.
- Funding of these integrative approaches remain problematic, but the use of Common Agricultural Policy (CAP) funding and the possibility of creating a ‘Nature Fund’ (or similar) would support effective policy implementation.

## **Multifunctionality**

Land use can contribute to sustainable rural development by delivering multiple ecosystem services and/or societal benefits from the same piece of land.

- There are different possible combinations of activity, land use and function that characterise multifunctional land use and these can be assembled at different scales over a range of times. However, some may be untenable or result in sub-optimal trade-offs or outcomes.
- The process of creating net-positive multifunctional land use requires structures of co-governance to effectively mediate conflicts of interest and integrate policy objectives and stakeholder actions.
- Multifunctional land use needs to respect and enhance local context and spirit of place and be flexible and resilient in its definition, policy and implementation.
- UK farmers and land managers have existing experience of farm diversification and multifunctional use that can be drawn upon.
- Multifunctional land use requires a mixed package of private investment, third sector initiative, and state support and regulation.

The complexity of the UK’s land use decision-making system and the vast array of issues, policies, legislation and stakeholder interests that impinge on it are such that a study of this length can only offer a broad survey. Further research is certainly warranted and difficulties across the range deserve closer attention. A case study of a specific area (a ‘locus study’) would be particularly valuable, where the various issues, actors and tools are operating; to assess how these relate to each other, what does or does not work in practice and where the critical constraints on sustainable development and land use multifunctionality lie.

## **Chapter 1: Introduction**

### **1.1 State of play and areas of concern**

There are several key factors that shape our thinking in relation to rural land use and the past few years have seen some important shifts taking place. The most significant for our purposes is the withdrawal of the UK from the EU: ‘Brexit’. One key prompt is to reflect on Post-Brexit challenges and opportunities. The second is the increasingly mainstream concern to tackle increasing impacts from climate change and the biodiversity crisis, which are forcing a re-think and re-appraisal of land use policy, regulation and underlying priorities.

Rural and agricultural land use research and (to an extent) policy has increasingly recognised the multiple functions of the UK’s land and landscape. While the landscape has always had multiple uses and users, the range and complexity of these uses has proliferated in recent years through ostensibly competing, but often potentially complementary pressures, notably food production, farm business diversification, environmental stewardship, renewable energy generation, carbon sequestration, flood protection, amenity and leisure.

Science may be able to identify potential solutions to crucial issues, such as net zero carbon and the biodiversity crisis, but without a good understanding of the structure of landownership and the formal and informal processes of land use and landscape decision-making it will not be possible for the **Living Landscapes** programme to develop realistic and well-targeted proposals for improving landscape decision-making in ways that reflect societal priorities. This report seeks to respond to that requirement by reviewing a range of literature from academic, professional, governmental, political and stakeholder sources in order to provide an overview of these areas of policy and practice. It will also suggest ways forward appropriate to the ethos and objectives of the **Living Landscapes** programme. In particular, the report is seen as making a direct contribution to the “multifunctional land use” work strand which aims to understand the multiple benefits and trade-offs associated with different land uses.

### **1.2 The Royal Society’s approach to rural land use issues**

The report is part of the wider **Living Landscapes** policy programme and is predicated on the necessity for a holistic approach to the interconnected processes and problems that shape land use and landscape decision-making. The Royal Society is producing a series of reports covering scientific and policy aspects as part of an evidence conspectus, while also undertaking wide-ranging discussions with stakeholder interests and members of the general public. The overall aim of the programme is to inform a long-term vision for how the UK manages its land in a way that combines agricultural productivity with sound environmental stewardship.

### **1.3 The project brief: research aims, objectives and main tasks**

The Royal Society's brief requested research on both the history and current system of rural land use decision-making in the UK in order to provide a baseline understanding of the current system and help diagnose its shortcomings. The main questions posed were:

- How has the current system come to be, and how have things evolved over time?
- Who are the key stakeholders?
- Is the system effective locally, regionally and nationally?
- How might it be made more effective?

In responding to the brief, we suggested that addressing these questions required a thorough and well-informed review and discussion of:

- the role, evolution and lasting impact of past policy regimes and institutional arrangements for rural land use;
- the nature, evolution and significance of landownership patterns for rural land use decisions;
- the role, significance, interests and strategies of the key stakeholder groups involved;
- the structure, interrelationship, impact and effectiveness of current policy packages and institutional arrangements; and
- the lessons that can be learnt from relevant international examples.

These research tasks necessitated a review of existing literature on the history, structure and effectiveness of the current system and some auditing of stakeholders, current policies and proposals for change. More than 1,000 separate books, articles, reports, strategies and web-based commentaries were identified and checked for relevant information and analysis, whilst about 100 organisational web pages were searched to find policies and priorities that related to UK land use.

In an area as broad and diverse as "rural land use decision-making", some selectivity is inevitably required. In surveying and selecting material, we have tried to maintain the focus on rural land use and/or ownership and concentrate our attention on the most significant stakeholder groups and policy frameworks. The fact that land use is inherently tied to land-based activities and that these activities are part of wider processes of rural development means, however, that any effective response to rural land use issues needs to be holistic and integrative. It was with an eye on this proviso that we undertook the specified research tasks.

## **1.4 Structure and content**

The report that follows is designed to reflect the brief and spans seven chapters, beginning with a historical assessment of land and its regulation (Chapter 2). A review of the planning system in terms of its scope, limits and change over time is provided in Chapter 3 before an assessment of landownership and change is presented in Chapter 4. Chapter 5 explores recent rural policy and how land is currently regulated. A look at some international examples and a review of key publications discussing overseas experience is set out in Chapter 6, before the final substantive Chapter 7 provides a reflective assessment of trends and proposals relating to rural land, its use and regulation.

## **1.5 Research approach**

In order to structure what is a very broad and diverse topic area, we have deployed several key themes or concepts that help to organise and interrogate the materials drawn together for the study. These may be classed as “Ends” (preferred outcomes) or “Means” (modes and processes). While there is some consensus about Ends or aims for rural land there is less regarding the Means – given that these inevitably impact on interests, require resources, activate different governance arrangements and are, therefore, essentially “political”. Aas Wightman (2015) argued ‘land uses [are] not just scientific issues, but highly political...no analysis of land use could ignore the question of power relations’.

Furthermore, Ends and Means will not necessarily correspond (i.e. actions, resources and rhetoric may not match with implementation / outcomes and Ends). The question that lies beyond the scope of this report, but merits recognition is why and, for the Royal Society, how these can be reconciled. Thus, attention to processes (mechanisms and policy tools / policy fixes) plus power through institutional arrangements is important in seeking to unblock or reorient land use outcomes and this becomes a mainstay here based on the literature.

Our organising themes or strands:

- *Sustainable development (Ends)*
- *Resilience (including post-COVID19 reflections) (Ends)*
- *Multifunctionality (Ends)*
- *Ecosystem services (Ends-Means)*
- *Land ownership (property rights as Means)*
- *Neoliberalism (Means)*
- *Regulation (Means).*

This set of seven concepts is briefly explained below with the dominant or over-arching thread being provided by the requirement for sustainable outcomes to rural land use change under the organising idea of sustainable development. The other key themes either detail particular dimensions of sustainable land use (i.e. resilience, ecosystem services, multifunctionality and

effective regulation) or represent structuring factors that shape sustainable outcomes (e.g. the nature and use of private property rights, and governance arrangements under neoliberalism). Taken together, these threads weave a conceptual framework which helps us explore the material under review and allows us to reflect on the implications of what we have found in the last chapter. We now briefly outline our understanding of each thematic concept:

- a) **Sustainable development** despite the oft-quoted criticism that sustainability is an empty vessel into which anyone can tip their own definitional prejudices and interests, it retains at its core a set of principles which can assist in evaluating contemporary policy and practice and help shape future arrangements. We have previously suggested (Doak and Parker, 2012; 2018) that those principles centrally include: futurity which takes a long-term view of development and considers the impacts of current decisions on future generations; environmentalism which requires decision-makers at all levels to take into account the environmental implications of their actions; development which sees economic development as a basis for providing for people's needs and overall quality of life; social equity which asks questions about the distributional outcomes of land use and other decisions; and participation which requires the meaningful and inclusive involvement of stakeholders in decision-making. This theme has permeated our approach to the research for this report, acting as the evaluative framework for evidence collection and analysis.
- b) **Resilience** is a term used in a range of areas of political and economic life (e.g. ecology, personal well-being, engineering systems, organisations, economies). The Oxford English Dictionary Definition is, 'The capacity to recover quickly from difficulties'. A more place-based view relevant to rural communities is the ability to 'tolerate – and overcome – damage, diminished productivity, and reduced quality of life from an extreme event without significant outside assistance' (Mileti, 1999: p.4). It is closely linked to sustainable development, particularly in relation to resilience against climate change. The resilience of rural communities in the face of the current COVID-19 crisis and its aftermath is likely to be just as testing, albeit presumably over a shorter timescale. This perspective, coupled with sustainable development concerns, provided the impetus for the emergence of the neo-endogenous policymaking paradigm, with its focus on re-localising networks of production and consumption. This in turn links to ideas supporting other dimensions of localism.
- c) **Ecosystem services** refers to a range of roles and outputs that natural ecosystems support in providing for human life and habitats. Increasingly, these are being recognised and "valued" by government policy even though they have long been appreciated by many rural communities. They include such diverse services as maintenance and regeneration of habitat, prevention of soil erosion, water filtration, river flow and groundwater level regulation, waste absorption and "cultural services" such as recreational landscapes. Re-aligning rural land use decisions towards the protection and enhancement of ecosystem services has the potential to contribute to

Sustainable development and resilient communities. Such services and their connections and flows, however, cut across landownership boundaries.

- d) **Land ownership** (property rights) remains a key underpinning component of rural land use decision-making and non-decision-making. Property rights are used to control the way that land is used or not used in rural areas and this has implications for Sustainable development, resilience and ecosystem services. The dominant role of privately-owned land means that public policy is often dependent on owners to implement land use decisions in line with agreed policy objectives. But this is dependent on whether they can be reconciled with the priorities and strategies of private landowners. The structure of land ownership is changing at the margins, but some aspects of the system have shown remarkable stability over more than a century, notably the dominance of landed estates and large farming. Understanding this context and recognising the opportunities and constraints it creates is critical for shaping sustainable rural development policies.
- e) **Multifunctionality** where many different activities can be supported on land simultaneously or in series. This is where multiple benefits can be found although effective management is also needed to avoid goal conflict (e.g. recreational use on farmland). Multifunctionality is not without its critics, but it does provide a clear policy objective which potentially operationalises many of the principles of sustainability in rural land use.
- f) **Neoliberalism** market-led forms of regulation and deregulation which favour market freedoms over collective controls. This concept has become a driving force of much of contemporary policy and practice with its principles having had a significant effect on recent land use decision-making. It is not a particularly new political/economic discourse, as Section 2 illustrates, as it builds on a long history of market liberalism and support. However, the resurgence of this ideological framework provides a very important context for any attempts to build sustainable outcomes into rural land use decision-making.
- g) **Regulation** (of land) institutional arrangements created to govern the use of land. This starts with a presumption that state intervention in private decision-making about rural land use is legitimate and – in some circumstances – desirable. Indeed, much of the history of rural policy and practice can be seen as a struggle between the rights and privileges of private landowners and state intervention in the public interest. However, effective analysis of regulation needs a more sophisticated approach than this simple dualism, which we have tried to reflect in our analysis.

## **Chapter 2: The Emergent Context**

### **Historical Roots and Transformations**

#### **2.1 The Recent History of Landownership**

In reviewing land use and landscape decision-making in the UK an understanding of the recent history of landownership and the regulation of land is required. Landowners are central to the implementation of a successful land use policy (Denman, 1969; Dallimer et al, 2018) and attempts to regulate land use have been contentious. This section outlines the historical roots of land use decision-making, focusing on the significance of the evolving landownership structure and various early attempts to regulate and control the development and use of land in the UK.

##### *2.1.1 Changes in the structure of UK landownership*

There have been some significant changes in the structure of UK landownership over the last century. Since the early twentieth century, the proportion of land in public ownership has increased. For example, the Forestry Commission, established in 1919 to safeguard timber supplies, controls about 2 million acres (c.4% of the UK's land area), while the Defence Estates owns another 505,825 acres. However, since the late 1970s approximately 5 million acres of previously public land (10% of the UK's land area) has been privatised (Christophers, 2018). Furthermore, land in public ownership is not necessarily accessible to the public; indeed the Land Justice Network estimate that around 90% of the land in England and Wales is off limits to the public, despite the designation of access land under the 2000 Countryside and Rights of Way Act (Parker and Ravenscroft, 2001).

Three other significant changes in the structure of UK landownership over the last century are worth drawing attention to. Firstly, since WW2 and especially since the 1970s there has been a rapid increase in the amount of land owned by conservation organizations. The most recent available information indicates that the two largest bodies, the National Trust and the RSPB, owned nearly a million acres between them (NT = c.610,000 acres; RSPB = c.321,000 acres) although across a fragmented estate. Both let land to tenant farmers (around 1,500 such farmers in the National Trust's case) as well as managing land directly, and they have become major players in rural landownership, especially in some parts of the country (National Trust Annual Report, 2017/18; Country Life, 2010).

Secondly, the amount of land held by pension funds as an asset secure against inflation has increased considerably and numerous "new entrants" have bought rural land as investments (Ilbery et al, 2009). Many of the UK's 2,800 or so pension funds invested heavily in farmland during the 1970s and 1980s, when there was widespread concern about price inflation (given underlying falling agricultural incomes). It is thought that pension funds control as much as 550,000 acres of mainly rural land in the UK (Cohen, 2010). Thirdly, there has been a major

shift from tenancy to owner-occupancy in UK farmland. In 1911, only 12% of agricultural land in England and Wales was owner-occupied, but by 2007 this had nearly quintupled to 58% (Clemenson, 1983; Butler and Winter, 2008). Much of this shift occurred in the three years 1918 to 1921 when up to 25% of the land in England is estimated to have changed hands as landowners divested themselves of what had become a low-yielding long-term asset during a temporary upswing in agricultural prices (Thompson, 2007).

### *2.1.2 Continuities in the structure of UK landownership*

Despite these shifts, recent research on the history of landownership in the UK over the last century has increasingly emphasised that there has been far less change than at one time seemed inevitable. In the late nineteenth and early twentieth centuries, it seemed clear that large landowners (referred to by contemporaries and historians as “the aristocracy”) were declining in influence, because the twin economic and political foundations of their position had been simultaneously undermined. Farm product prices and rents had fallen during the agricultural depression of c.1873-c.1894 with only tentative signs of recovery before the First World War. Meanwhile, rising profits in that period were restricted due to rent controls (Dewey, 1989). An underlying cause of the agricultural depression was the much lower production costs of farmers in newly developed and accessible agricultural areas in North and South America and Australasia, where the low ratio of population to land and greater natural fertility provided better economic productivity. UK landowners anticipated that this long-term factor would reassert itself after the war and took advantage of the brief window of high farm product prices after the war to sell a substantial part of their agricultural holdings, mainly to sitting tenants. They were proved correct when the government withdrew subsidies in 1921 (subsequently referred to as “the great betrayal”) amid steeply falling farm product prices, which did not recover until the late 1930s (Penning-Rowsell, 1997). Thus, global competition has been a long-term issue that has influenced policy and stakeholder behaviour.

It was, however, the political circumstances confronting landowners in the late nineteenth and early twentieth centuries that caused them most anxiety. It was widely held that they were an unproductive class who exerted a drag on the economy – in 1885 Joseph Chamberlain infamously adapted words from the Sermon on the Mount to assert that they were a class who ‘toil not, and neither do they spin’. In this he was following the orthodox view of classical economists such as David Ricardo, who feared that rent would consume an increasing proportion of national income as society became wealthier. A succession of national and local franchise and constitutional reforms in the 1880s-1910s stripped the aristocracy of much of their political power. Many assumed that political democratization would be followed by economic democratization and at first this did indeed seem to be the case. Land reformers, were in the ascendant in the Liberal Party which won the 1906 general election and Lloyd George brought forward land valuation and taxation proposals in his 1909 “People’s Budget” (and Conservative resistance to this in the House of Lords provoked the Parliament Act of 1911, further curtailing landowner power). Lloyd George planned to fight the next general election

on the basis of a radical land reform which was intended to break-up great estates and produce a more equitable distribution of landed property (Cannadine, 1990).

Neither the economic nor the political reforms, however, fully materialised. A major factor was the First World War, which led to a split in the Liberal Party and to Lloyd George forming an alliance with the Conservative Party in 1916. This alliance was maintained in the 1918 “Coupon Election” and thereafter the Conservatives, resolutely opposed to land reform, dominated in power until 1945, by which time land reform had fallen off the political agenda (Cragoe and Readman, 2010).

Economically, the most authoritative analysis of the fortunes of large landowners during the twentieth century concludes that they survived because they were generous recipients of state support through tax benefits and agricultural and forestry grants (Thompson, 1993). In short, large landowners were, whether through political skill or serendipity, not only able to avoid the confiscatory taxation that Liberal land reformers had hoped to impose on them, but to garner support in their favour. This partly explains the shift from tenancy to owner occupation: much of it, especially after 1921, was driven by large landowners taking rented land back “in hand” due to the tax and subsidy advantages of farming land directly.

As a result, the structure of landownership in the UK today has changed remarkably little from Victorian times. Bateman (1883) found that just over half of England and Wales was held in estates of over 1,000 acres; Thompson (1993) estimated that over a third of England and Wales was still held in such estates over a century later and the *Country Life* survey of 2010 confirmed Thompson’s figure. At the end of the first decade of the twenty-first century, a group of 36,000 individuals – 0.6% of the population – owned half of the rural land in the UK, while astonishingly a quarter of English and Welsh agricultural land was owned by just 1,200 individuals (0.002% of the population). The concentration of Scottish landownership was, and appears to have remained, even greater. Just 421 estates covered nearly three-quarters of the country in the 1870s, falling slightly to 546 estates covering 48% of the country in 1970 – according to the Royal Commission on the Distribution of Income and Wealth (Cmnd. 7595, 1979-80).<sup>1</sup> Thus, contrary to the popular myth of aristocratic decline, old-established landed families still made up between a fifth and a quarter of the 200 wealthiest people in Britain by the early 1990s.

## **2.2 The Recent History of Land Use Decision-making**

### *2.2.1 The abandonment of land reform*

The Labour Party had never been as committed to land reform as the pre-WW1 Liberal Party, largely because the primarily urban, trade unionist interests Labour represented were more concerned with improving working-class living standards through social reform and workers’ rights. Nevertheless, Labour adopted a particular variant of land reform, land nationalisation,

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<sup>1</sup> Comparable evidence is not available for Northern Ireland.

as official party policy in 1918. This was less radical than it might seem – “tax or buy” proposals whereby landowners would be offered the alternative of selling to the state or being taxed at a high level had been part of mainstream political discourse since the 1880s. The aim was to secure for the community the so-called “unearned increment” – the increase in land values that arose from general economic development rather than investments by the landowner (a recurring theme in the planning system and its impact on land values due to change of use). Land nationalisation, in the form the Labour Party envisaged, would not have led to any immediate change in land use. The state would simply have become the universal landlord: all existing owners would become tenants. However, the state would have been able to secure for the public the unearned increment (or “betterment”) by progressively increasing rents (Smith, 1989; Grover, 2018).

During its brief periods in power between the wars (1924 and 1929-31), Labour lacked a majority and was preoccupied with profound political and economic problems. Land nationalisation was a long way down its list of priorities and, even had it not been, the Party was in no position to implement it. When Labour swept to power with a large majority in 1945, the immediate agricultural policy challenges it faced were how to guarantee food security and improve nutrition. This required increasing agricultural output and productivity. For electoral and policy-delivery reasons, the party was also keen to improve its relationship with farmers. Land nationalisation did not offer a solution to the first problem and was an obstacle to the second, and the Party therefore abandoned it in favour of a more placatory policy of encouraging ‘farming in the public interest’ (Griffiths, 2007; Tichelar, 2003).

This represented a fundamental policy shift. Given that land is one of any nation state’s fundamental assets, there are two clear ways in which government can attempt to maximise its benefits to the community. The first is through direct control (ownership), which was Labour’s policy between 1918 and 1945. The second is through some combination of regulation and incentivization, which in a somewhat halting and ad-hoc way was the approach adopted by the Conservative-dominated governments in power for most of the interwar period. This second approach now also became the Labour Party’s policy and underpinned the decisive land use legislation it introduced between 1947 and 1949, legislation that in many respects remains the cornerstone of the UK’s land use and landscape decision-making framework to this day. However, to understand the basis of this legislation it is necessary to consider issues relating to the use of land as well as its ownership. The two principal concerns in the first half of the twentieth century in this regard were the economic travails of British agriculture and the loss of rural land to urban and industrial uses. Later, recreation and to a lesser extent conservation concerns also became prominent.

### *2.2.2 The mid-twentieth century land use policy context*

*Agriculture* - Agriculture had been hard hit by the collapse of world farm product prices in 1921 and the government's ensuing "great betrayal". Gross agricultural output fell in the interwar years and the proportion of the UK labour force in farming also fell. Farmers were in a particularly difficult position as many had bought their farms with large mortgages in 1920-1 at a time when land prices were high. However, despite the Conservative Party's traditional pro-agricultural reputation, the government provided very little direct assistance to farmers in this period. Perhaps the most important measure, although one that may have benefited landowners and owner occupiers more than tenants, was the derating of agricultural land in 1929 (Cooper, 1989).

*The Depression* - the most significant change in agricultural policy between the wars came not as a result of reassessment of the merits of agricultural protectionism, but as part of the UK's general abandonment of free trade in the wake of the Wall Street Crash. The Import Duties Act of 1932 imposed a 10% tariff on almost all foreign products. However, several of the most important agricultural commodities were exempted, including wheat, livestock, meat and wool, and imperial agricultural imports were allowed free access to the British market. Britain in the late nineteenth and early twentieth century was the world's largest importer of food and since the Repeal of the Corn Laws in 1846 had pursued an import-based cheap food policy. These measures continued that, influenced by an understanding that in purchasing agricultural products on so large a scale, Britain was buying not only food, but also political influence and, ultimately, military alliances (Offer, 1989).

Instead of moving to full-scale agricultural protectionism in the 1930s the government introduced several legislative measures aimed at mitigating the most severe effects of the depression on farming. By the mid-1930s subsidies or deficiency payments existed for milk, beef, pork, butter, cheese, wheat, barley, and oats. The Milk Marketing Board (1933-2002) proved the most enduring and successful initiative of this time – it came to be highly regarded by many farmers for its success in maintaining price stability and quality control in dairy farming. In some respects, these measures anticipated the direction agricultural policy was to take after the second world war, but neither tariffs, subsidies nor the marketing schemes did more than marginally benefit farmers in the 1930s, with the volume of global imports remaining high (Whetham, 1978).

*Rural Planning* - in the interwar period agricultural land was under increasing threat from urban development. After the First World War, car ownership became more widespread among the middle class, accelerating pressure to develop beyond existing boundaries. Planning legislation (1909 and 1919) was in its infancy and was preoccupied with urban problems. Policymakers were slow to recognise the need for rural planning and responded to the problems of suburbanisation and road development through a series of ad-hoc measures targeting specific issues including roadside advertising and road improvements (1925), ribbon development (1935) and caravan sites (1936). While these were not wholly ineffective, they suffered from

two fundamental problems. In the first place, in isolating a few high-profile issues, they were incapable of contributing to, and could become an obstacle to, a comprehensive, integrated approach to land use decision-making. Secondly, they were voluntary rather than compulsory measures, so adoption depended on the willingness, administrative capacity and financial means of local authorities to implement them (Jeans, 1990).

The one exception to the ad-hoc pattern of rural planning in the interwar period was the Town and Country Planning Act of 1932. This allowed councils to prepare planning schemes (effectively master plans), but these were complex and time consuming – so much so that none were completed prior to WW2. Despite this, the Act did give local authorities an indirect influence over development and landowners took a risk if they did not seek approval from the relevant local authority (Sheail, 1981). Although still permissive and lacking in compulsory powers, this was the first major piece of legislation to provide for general planning of both town and country and pointed to the future – and the 1947 Town and Country Planning Act in particular.

*Access to the Countryside* - a third significant problem affecting rural land use in the interwar period was the question of public access to uncultivated land, which was a cause of significant friction. The first attempt to legislate for a “right to roam” over uncultivated land was the Access to Mountains (Scotland) Bill, introduced unsuccessfully in 1884 and on ten further occasions with the same result. Despite the lack of legislative progress, however, public pressure was building. The most acute conflicts were in northern England, notably the Peak District. The most infamous episode was the Kinder Scout Mass Trespass in 1932, which resulted in the imprisonment of five ramblers (Blunden and Curry, 1989). Much of the land in question was in the ownership of large private estates whose owners valued it for grouse shooting. Some land was also owned by water companies who often also regarded public access as unacceptable on health grounds.

## **2.3 Laying the Foundations of the UK’s Land Use Decision-making System in the post war period**

### *2.3.1 Reviewing rural land use*

During the second world war the most influential and far-reaching twentieth-century official report on rural land use was published – the Scott Report of 1942. There was a determination that wartime hardship, suffering and shared commitment to a common goal should bear fruit after the war in a fairer, more prosperous and more socially integrated society. The Scott Committee was appointed to provide a comprehensive review of the problems in rural areas and identify solutions. The Report identified two fundamental pressures, one internal and the other external, that threatened the future of rural Britain. The internal pressure was the economic weakness of agriculture, which it attributed primarily to foreign competition. The external threat came from urbanisation, in particular building on prime agricultural land. The Report also recognised the need to preserve landscapes of exceptional scenic or conservation value and to enable access.

The solutions the Scott Report proposed were clear: to put agriculture back on its feet through subsidies while keeping the town at bay through establishing a comprehensive, centralised system of town and country planning. At the same time, it recommended the creation of National Parks and national nature reserves. These were essentially the measures featured in the Dower report (1945) and were adopted by the post-war Labour Government. The three key pieces of legislation envisaged as complementary parts of a mutually supporting whole were the Agriculture Act (1947), the Town and Country Planning Act (1947) and the National Parks and Access to the Countryside Act (1949). It is notable that one member of the Scott Committee, the economist Sidney Dennison, could not agree with the others who assumed that a prosperous agriculture would ensure a good living for farming communities. He issued his own Minority Report arguing presciently for a more diverse rural economy (Curry and Owen, 2009). Dennison had a better appreciation of the fundamental and, in practice, irreversible role that innovation was already playing in transforming the agricultural sector. In particular, he recognised that mechanization and, to a lesser extent, improved crop varieties, fertilisers, pesticides and other forms of technological change would drastically raise labour productivity. This might mean higher wages for those farm workers still required but implied a massive reduction over the coming decades in the size of the agricultural work force.

### *2.3.2 The Agriculture Act 1947 and its consequences*

The Agriculture Act aimed to achieve low-cost, secure food supplies while maintaining price stability and farm incomes. It sought to achieve this by means of a combination of guaranteed prices, deficiency payments and production grants. Guaranteed prices were set through annual negotiations between Ministry of Agriculture and Fisheries (MAFF) civil servants and farmers' representatives, principally the National Farmers Union (NFU).<sup>2</sup> Where the world market price fell below the agreed guaranteed price, the government made up the difference to farmers. Hence consumers paid no more than the market price but farmers were protected from market fluctuations. The costs of the system were borne through general taxation, generating little public concern and proving politically highly sustainable. The Agriculture Act inaugurated an era of extraordinary output and productivity growth in British agriculture, and although historians continue to debate the strength and nature of the causal connection, it has usually been judged resoundingly successful in economic terms. The volume of farm output doubled between 1944 and 1974. Wheat yields rose from about two tonnes per hectare in 1952 to about eight tonnes in 1986, and barley yields increased nearly as fast. Milk, which constituted 20% of the value of UK agricultural output in the 1950s (and still 17% in 2020), had seen little improvement in yields before 1939 but yields rose by 60 litres per cow per annum between 1950 and 1970 and by 100 litres per cow p.a. over the next 12 years, reaching the remarkable figure of nearly 5,000 litres per cow p.a. by 1983 (Britton, 1990).

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<sup>2</sup> From 1954 the Ministry of Agriculture, Fisheries and Food (MAFF), which then became Defra in 2001.

These extraordinary productivity gains brought great benefits to consumers through cheaper food, but a high social and environmental price was paid for them. The number of farmworkers fell from 889,000 in 1946 to 286,000 in 1987, such that the proportion of the labour force employed in agriculture fell from 8% in 1931 to under 2% in 1996 and less than 1% today (Marks and Britton, 1989). What had for centuries been the largest occupational group in England, and the rich skills-based culture associated with it, virtually disappeared in less than fifty years. The preeminent social historian Alun Howkins referred to this, with some hyperbole, as “The Death of Rural England” (Howkins, 2003). The explanation was simple: the government’s concern to drive productivity growth had led to an ongoing price squeeze on farmers, forcing them to seek efficiency gains. This led to unprecedentedly rapid mechanisation, facilitated by production grants and by the elimination of unpredictable large year-on-year price fluctuations. As late as 1939, there were still about 650,000 working farm horses in the UK, constituting more than half the total draught power and doing about two thirds of the total work. There were fewer than 60,000 tractors on British farms. By 1955, however, horses had been virtually eliminated from British agriculture and by 1986 there were 532,000 tractors on British farms (Collins, 1984; Marks and Britton, 1989). The number of combine harvesters, meanwhile, had increased from 940 in 1942 to 67,000 in 1966 (MAFF, 1968).

The consequences of the 1947 Act for the environment were as devastating as its social consequences had been for farmworkers and their communities (although consumers had gained from cheaper food). Productionist incentives and pressures led farmers to expand both at the extensive and intensive margins. Farmers brought new land into use, or upgraded the use of existing agricultural land, by draining marshland, ploughing up moorland, grubbing up woods and removing hedgerows, leading to acute confrontations with conservationists, for example over the ploughing of parts of Exmoor (Porchester Inquiry, 1977) and the proposed drainage of Halvergate Marshes (Latacz-Lohmann and Hodge, 2003). The loss of habitat was particularly acute in predominantly arable areas. By 1991, for example, 88% of lowland heath and 21% of permanent grassland had been lost (Curtis, 1991; Bowers and Cheshire, 1983). By contrast, over the twentieth century as a whole there was an increase of 6% in UK woodland, from 5% to 11% of total land area, due to afforestation policies, notably the creation of the Forestry Commission in 1919 (Parry, 1991). This still left the UK as the least wooded country of its size in Europe, with only about a third as much forest cover (in proportion to land area) as France and Germany.

In terms of intensification, farmers sought to raise output mainly by increasing capital inputs (buildings, machinery, fertiliser and pesticides, for example). Maximising returns on these inputs required increasing scale, which in turn militated towards specialization, particularly in crop, dairy, egg and broiler production. This led to the virtual demise of mixed farming, which is widely regarded as more sustainable than specialised farming because the former uses endogenous nutrients and recycles waste products within the system. Specialisation in British agriculture after 1947 was strongly associated with arable monoculture, reducing habitat diversity and exacerbating the biodiversity crisis, for example in relation to farmland birds,

while also impairing the perceived visual quality of the landscape. It was responsible for rising levels of agricultural pollution, through excessive or inappropriate use of pesticides and herbicides, serious problems with nitrate run-off and ammonia emissions, and concerns about the relationship between off-farm inputs and food safety (for example in relation to Bovine Spongiform Encephalitis). Animal welfare concerns were also associated with such farming, in relation to “battery” production, especially for poultry, pigs, and calves, and high throughput/early slaughter regimes.

### *2.3.3 The Town and Country Planning Act 1947 and its consequences*

The 1947 Town and Country Planning Act had similarly mixed effects. On the one hand, some scholars have hailed it for “saving the countryside” from urban development, through its presumption that agricultural land should remain in agricultural use unless there were compelling reasons to permit development. Whereas the average rate of loss of agricultural land was running at about 25,000 ha per year in the 1930s, this fell to 15,000 ha per year in the 1950s/60s, despite the much-increased rate of economic growth (Breheny, 2002). Indeed, between 1945 and 1990 the rate of loss of agricultural land was only 0.05% per annum (Parry, 1991). Hence planning succeeded in maintaining a sharp visual distinction between town and country in Britain, unlike in large parts of the USA or some parts of continental Europe and Japan (Pickering, 1987; Pearce, 1992; Gilg, 2005; Hebbert, 1994).

Planning has not only retained much more land in agricultural use than would probably have been the case without restrictions on development – it has also done much to preserve the visual qualities of the constructed rural environment. The British countryside is almost entirely free of the roadside advertisements common in rural areas of the USA and Australia, while the listing of buildings and designation of Conservation Areas has meant that many villages retain a core of pre-twentieth century buildings (Woodruffe, 1976). While there has been significant house building in the countryside since 1947, this has often been relatively discreet. Very few new villages have been permitted and construction in existing villages has often been based around infill sites and shown sensitivity to local building materials. However, in the last few decades, large volume builders have come to dominate and there are signs that sympathetic treatment is under threat (see Chapter 5).

Although land use planning undoubtedly made a significant contribution to maintaining the outward, visual continuity of the rural landscape, it failed to prevent, and indeed in some ways exacerbated, severe social and environmental damage. Newby’s *Green and Pleasant Land?* (1979) was perhaps the most excoriating critique. The vision that had inspired the founders of rural planning, figures such as Patrick Abercrombie, Thomas Sharp and Leslie Scott, was of a revitalised rural community – a prosperous, socially integrated, democratic countryside in which poverty and extreme inequality would be a thing of the past. Newby showed that by restricting development in the countryside the opposite effect was produced. House prices had risen rapidly, pricing those on low incomes out of the countryside, including many young people who had grown up there, and turning many villages, especially in southern England,

into dormitory and retirement settlements. At the same time, restrictions on building had severely constrained the development of non-agricultural employment, leaving farmers with a near monopoly of employment in many areas and keeping rural wages much lower than they would otherwise have been (Newby, 1979). Farmworkers' wages failed to rise relative to those of other occupational groups between the 1940s and 1970s, remaining lower than those of any other major occupational group (Brown and Wingard, 1972; Newby, Bell, Rose and Saunders, 1978). While the number of full-time farm workers is now very low, the lack of alternative employment opportunities in rural areas continues to depress wages. The latest figures show that of the ten local authorities with the lowest median weekly gross pay, six were rural. Melton and North Devon were at the bottom of the table at £358.60 and £374 per week respectively, compared to a UK average of £479.10 (ONS, 2019). Very low farm wages have contributed to the re-emergence of the Victorian practice of agricultural gang labour, often under highly exploitative and sometimes dangerous conditions (Burchardt and Conford, 2011). Brexit and the COVID-19 pandemic raise major questions over the sustainability of British agriculture's current dependence on an abundant supply of low-paid migrant labour.

The damaging social consequences outlined above were not confined to rural areas. The artificial restriction on the supply of land has contributed to an extraordinary rise in the cost of land for development and housing of nearly 1,000% since 1945 and over 400% since 1995, with the cost rising to over 70% of the price paid for a dwelling in 2016. A recent estimate suggests that 74% of the increase in UK house prices between 1950 to 2012 was attributable to land price inflation, contributing to the housing affordability crisis in the South East and reversing the historical trend towards home ownership, which fell from 70% in 2002 to 64% in 2013 (Tichelar, 2019) as housing became an attractive investment option.

The failure of rural planning, or rather the scope of planning, to protect the environment was equally comprehensive. The core of the problem was that the "planner-preservationists" of the 1940s were convinced that the threat to the rural environment came entirely from urban expansion. It was for this reason that agriculture was exempted from planning controls, so long as land remained in agricultural use ('agricultural exceptionalism'). It was in one sense unfortunate that the framework of the modern British land use decision system was established just at the start of an era of unprecedented agricultural transformation. As it was, local planners could do nothing to prevent farmers (often directly incentivised by production grants from MAFF) ripping up hedgerows, polluting watercourses, draining marshes and ploughing up moorland. By 1980, when Marian Shoard published her impassioned polemic *The Theft of the Countryside*, it had become clear that there was a fatal weakness in the assumption that planning should only concern itself with "development" (building) and not with activity i.e. how land was utilised and managed within existing land use categories (Shoard, 1981; Chapter 5).

#### *2.3.4 The 1949 National Parks and Access to the Countryside Act and its consequences*

The third of the three post-war foundation stones of the UK's modern land use/landscape decision-making system, the 1949 National Parks and Access to the Countryside Act, was the least ambitious of the three. Its successes and failures were also on a less epic scale. Chief among the former were the National Parks, which have proved enduringly popular with the public, and the National Nature Reserves, which contributed to the conservation of some of the UK's rarest habitats and species. However, the second tier of landscape designation, the Areas of Outstanding Natural Beauty, has never fully realised its potential (Glover, 2019). AONBs received much less funding than National Parks and achieved much lower levels of public recognition. A further provision of the Act, the requirement that county councils should survey, record and map public footpaths, clarified and protected existing rights of way, eventually led to 140,000 miles of recorded public footpaths in England and Wales, which have become a cherished national institution much admired by many other countries across the world. Despite this, the Act fell short of achieving the long-held ambition of ramblers to achieve a "right to roam" over uncultivated land. The most fundamental flaw of the Act, however, was the implicit assumption that land must have a single exclusive function. As it was accepted that most of the countryside must be utilised for food production, both leisure and conservation were relegated to the margins. All the early national parks were in upland areas of low agricultural value, while the National Nature Reserves were, as their name implies, intended as a refuge for nature from a wider countryside where conservation would be only a by-product of its primary agricultural purpose. This approach proved increasingly inadequate in the face of the vast expansion of popular leisure interest in the countryside from the 1950s onwards, partly stimulated by mass car ownership, as the National Parks began to suffer from increased visitor pressure, leading to problems of soil erosion, contamination, damage to livestock and road congestion. Similarly, the reserves approach proved inadequate to prevent drastic biodiversity loss because many species depended on much wider, landscape-scale areas for foraging and reproduction. In both cases, what was needed was a recognition of the potential multifunctionality of agricultural landscapes, so that the whole countryside could serve leisure and conservation as well as food production needs.

#### **2.4 Wholesale Reform – or Tinkering at the Margins?**

There have of course been modifications to the UK's rural land use decision-making systems since the 1940s but the fundamental principles and structures remain largely intact, with their strengths and weaknesses. The Agriculture Acts of 1957 and 1967 sought to strengthen productivity within the framework of the 1947 Act and even entry into the EEC, and hence the Common Agricultural Policy, in 1973 initially made less difference than might have been expected. Farming continued to receive massive subsidies although the basis of support shifted from deficiency payments to a combination of market intervention and tariff barriers. This meant consumers paid higher prices, calling into question the long-term political sustainability of farm support under this dispensation. Intervention purchases to support prices led to severe overproduction by the early 1980s, and media criticism of the so-called butter mountains and

milk and wine lakes. In the longer run, overproduction prompted efforts by the EEC/EC/EU to reduce farm subsidies and decouple payments from production. A harbinger of this was the introduction of milk quotas in 1984. This was followed by the MacSharry reforms of 1992, which brought in the “set aside” policy while encouraging afforestation and other measures to take land out of production.

A further major step towards decoupling was taken with the introduction of Single Farm Payments, adopted in the UK in 2005, whereby farmers were subsidised on an area basis rather than in proportion to output. However, only about an eighth of UK farm support is agri-environmental, nor have these schemes always achieved their full potential with respect either to biodiversity or more recent climate change goals. More than 80% of UK farm support continues to be provided on an area basis through the Basic Payment Scheme. Whether the Agriculture Bill currently making its way through Parliament, which purports to replace area with “public goods” payments, will succeed in leveraging greater environmental and social benefits from landowners remains to be seen.

It is a similar story with respect to planning. The 1947 Act has been modified in numerous ways, especially as regards betterment and compensation and with respect to the regional and local structures entrusted with developing plans and implementing development control. The 1968 Town and Country Planning Act, for example, replaced development plans with structure and local plans (Cullingworth et al, 2015). Following the deregulatory market emphasis of the 1980s, a combination of central directives such as Planning Policy Guidance Notes (PPGs) and local development plans become more important, an approach taken further by the introduction of Local Development Frameworks in 2004, the Localism Act of 2011 and the National Planning Policy Framework in 2012, updated in 2019 (see Chapter 3).

Some of the specific rural policy weaknesses of the 1947 Act have been partially addressed – for example from 1960 any agricultural building over 5,000 foot square required planning permission, as did, from 1967, any such building more than 40 feet tall (Lowe et al, 1986; Blacksell and Gilg, 1981). However, other shortcomings remain. The much-criticised key settlements policy, implicated in the decline of community infrastructure and services in smaller villages, was effectively endorsed by the 2000 White Paper *Our Countryside* and by PPS7, *Sustainable development in Rural Areas*, in 2004, while the Community Infrastructure Levy introduced in 2009 falls a long way short of the betterment ambitions set out in 1947 (Cullingworth et al, 2015). Most of all, planners still have no powers to influence what landowners do with their land, apart from developing it for a non-agricultural use, but as explained in Chapter 5, since 2013 even this power has been eroded through relaxations to permitted development.

The 1949 National Parks and Access to the Countryside Act has perhaps been less modified than the other two elements of the rural legislative tripod, although again there have been numerous changes in the agencies entrusted with its implementation, and to some extent to their powers. The Sandford Principle (1974) addressed the conflict of aims between

conservation and access embodied in the original legislation, asserting the priority of the former. Management agreements were used widely to protect SSSIs following the 1981 Wildlife and Countryside Act, although the principle of compensating farmers for refraining from improvements they might not have undertaken remains open to criticism. The Environmentally Sensitive Areas (introduced 1987) and the Countryside Stewardship Scheme (1991) sought to extend conservation measures to a wider area and the latter presaged a move towards a more holistic, countryside-wide approach with the potential to transcend the limitations of the 1949 Act's reserves-based strategy (The Countryside Agency, 2001). The Environment Act of 1995 established independent National Park Authorities, which took over the functions previously exercised by local government in their areas, becoming the sole planning authorities. Perhaps the most significant change, however, was the 2000 Countryside and Rights of Way Act, which after 116 years of legislative effort conceded at least the principle of the "right to roam" over uncultivated land, although as noted above even today only about 10% of rural England and Wales is accessible to the public. Recommendations in the recent Glover report (2019) argue for a more active role for "national landscapes". These would connect existing landscape designations (including National Parks, Areas of Outstanding Natural Beauty, National Forests and National Trails), but it remains to be seen if and how this will be resourced and implemented.

## **2.5 Implications for future directions**

The historical perspective shows some long run continuities and unresolved tensions. Firstly, for well over a century British agricultural policy has been formulated in relation to globalised agricultural trade and fluctuating international commodity prices, over which UK policymakers and farmers have little or no control. This contextualises ongoing debates of the merits of free trade over protectionism. Secondly, decisions over rural land use in the UK remain largely in the hands of a small group of private landowners, whose actions whether in relation to access, conservation or community development have not always been well aligned with wider social and environmental priorities. Thirdly, policymakers have attempted to narrow this gap through agricultural subsidies, planning regimes and conservation legislation, but with more success in some respects than others. The most obvious and major failures derive from "agricultural exceptionalism": the assumption that in contrast to other economic actors, rural landowners can be exempted from virtually all planning controls so long as they retain their land in agricultural use. Furthermore, in contrast to the situation in some other countries (for example New Zealand – see Chapter 6.3.2), land use decision-making in the UK remains extremely fragmented and still insufficiently democratised. This inhibits the adoption of more pluralist approaches that could reflect a wider range of stakeholder, conservation and climate priorities and countenance useful multifunctionalities.

Since the early twentieth century, then, tensions between stakeholders, and between stakeholders and policymakers, often reflecting wider economic and social changes, have persisted against themes of development, recreation and conservation. Arguments over land reform and control of land use still appear, although not in mainstream debate (at least in

England) presently. However, many of the issues highlighted in this brief review of the history of land use decision-making in the UK over the last century remain critically significant and will need to be addressed through a more fundamental and better-integrated set of institutional arrangements if the UK is to address the climate and biodiversity crises effectively and to develop a more environmentally, socially and economically sustainable rural land use decision-making system.

## **Chapter 3: Regulate, Deregulate or Steer**

### **The Structure and Role of the Planning System**

#### **3.1 Overview of planning system and recent changes**

##### *3.1.1 Institutional continuities*

As mentioned above, the land use planning system was constructed in its modern form under the 1947 Town and Country Planning Act, which vested powers to the state to determine what development could take place on land and formalised the requirement for local plan making (see Chapter 2). The 1947 legislation was supported by other Acts for regional distribution of industry, rural development and the development of New Towns (1946) (Cullingworth et al, 2015). This comprehensive response to post-war reconstruction represented the culmination of several decades of gradual efforts to ensure that land use was regulated with well-organised development and associated infrastructure. As covered in Chapter 2, in parallel to immediate post-WWII reforms to land use planning, came a series of attempts to develop a corporatist relationship between farmers and central government through the Ministry of Agriculture Food and Fisheries (MAFF, now Defra). This resulted in a settlement that farmers and landowners be left largely unaffected by the regulatory aspects of the new planning system, except where they wished to redevelop land for uses other than agriculture, or activity ancillary to agriculture.

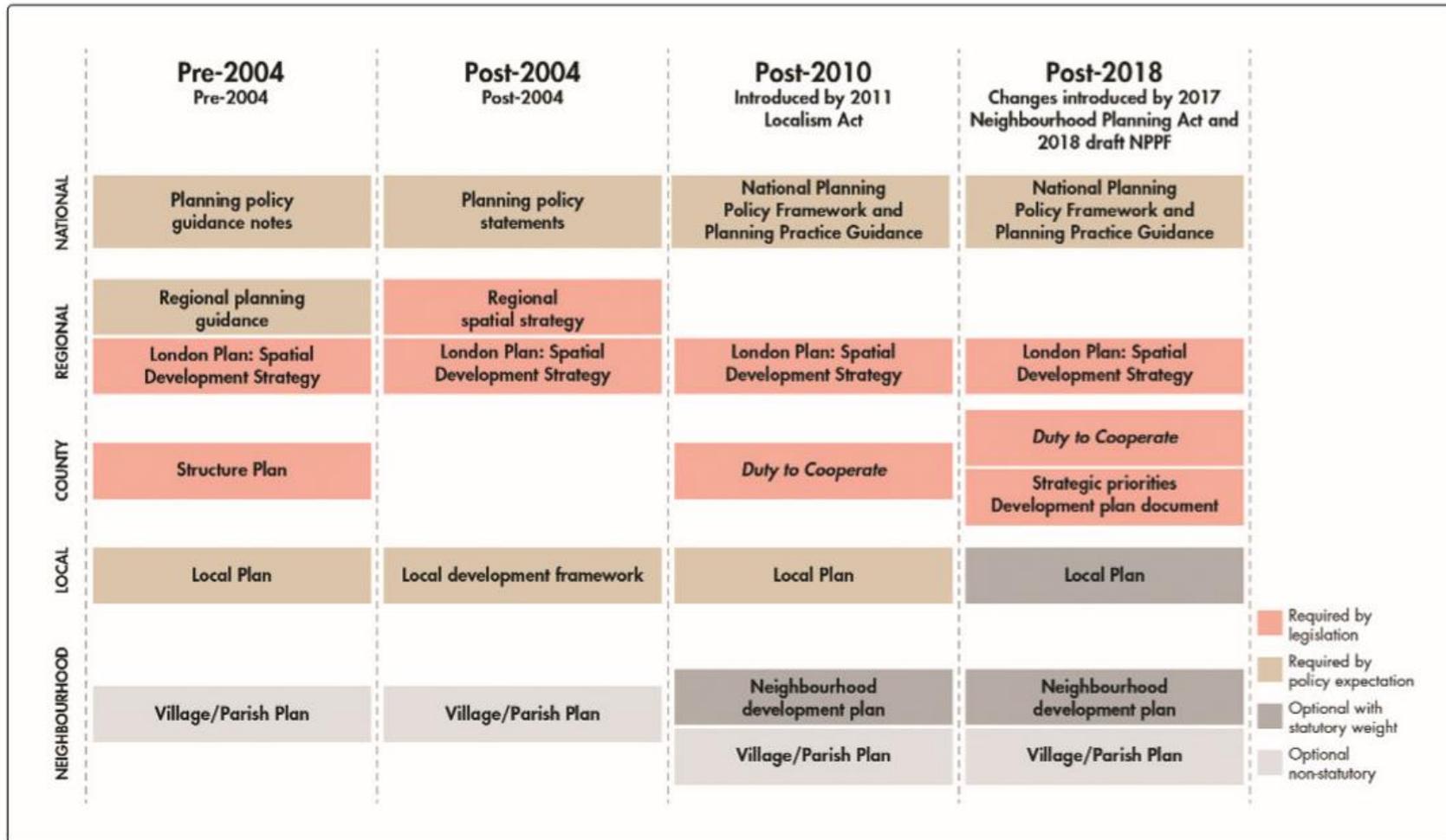
One of the key characteristics of the UK planning system is its *discretionary* nature, in which a range of “material planning considerations” are weighed against each other in order to arrive at a “balanced” view of individual proposals. This means that policy and plans weigh heavily, but act to *guide* decisions rather than codify them. This feature partially explains why a specific planning profession has grown up with analytical and synoptic skills being highly valued (Kitchen, 2007). However, the policies that act to populate the planning system are key determinants of the broad scope, or limits of possibility, for parcels of land.

The most directive aspect of the planning system is where Local Plans set out *allocations* ( i.e. marked sites likely to be acceptable for development or redevelopment). Beyond such allocations (usually driven by evidence of need), the assumption is that attendant policies will shape whether a change of use of land might be acceptable without such allocations i.e. on all other land. For both reasons the local plan plays a pivotal role in land use decisions.

##### *3.1.2 Policy and plan hierarchy*

In the UK, there are now differences between the home nations (e.g. Wales has adopted a national spatial strategy), but overall the systems are similar (see Figure 3.1). Hierarchically there are national planning policies (in England, the National Planning Policy Framework - in 2012 and then in 2019), the local plans set by the local planning authorities (LPAs) at District or County level. Since 2011 and the Localism Act some areas have created neighbourhood plans in England (around 1,000 by February 2020).

Figure 3.1: Diagram of the planning system in England



Note: there are numerous ways to represent the Planning system given the “fuzzy” approach taken over the past two decades. This is a simple depiction (Source: Raynsford report, 2018: p.24).

The UK government embarked on some major reforms to the planning system in England 2010 and indeed these had been preceded by a prior set of changes under the New Labour governments (1997-2010). This trajectory of change has seen a devolutionary process involving the creation of “soft” planning tools (i.e. that sit outside of the formal planning system – such as Local Enterprise Partnerships or LEPs mentioned below), localist policy and also some decisions regarding development being taken out of the mainstream planning system (a deregulatory trend), as well as major development projects – or Nationally Significant Infrastructure Projects (NSIPs) being dealt with under parallel processes (e.g. major rail, road, airports, power station schemes). The dominant concern of the Westminster government has been to ensure growth and to speed-up the planning system.<sup>3</sup>

Over time, strategic planning concerns have been resolved at the regional or sub-regional scale but after 2011 this tier of formal planning was removed. Instead a “duty to cooperate” was created so that LPAs should work together across boundaries and on strategic matters such as roads, as well as housing provision. The NSIPs are separately overseen by a quasi-independent body operated through the Planning Inspectorate with the parallel decision-making process enabled under the 2008 Planning Act.

Local Enterprise Partnerships (LEPs) were set up after 2011 as part of the new wave of soft or fuzzy planning introduced to oversee funds provided nationally and sub-regionally. These are based on cross-sectoral working but with no explicit planning powers or plan-making functions. LEPs replaced on the one hand Regional Spatial Strategies (RSSs) and the other the Regional Development Agencies (RDAs) that had been set up post 2004. The LEPs took on a role of coordinating and identifying key issues across sectors, adopting a soft governance approach and acting as a part replacement for the strategic planning that had prevailed since the 1960s.

The Planning and Compulsory Purchase Act of 2004 replaced the existing regional planning approach with RSSs at the English regional scale, and these were expected to incorporate an explicit sub-regional dimension. The RSSs were prepared by regional government and were intended to provide a broad development strategy for the region for a 15 to 20 year period, including articulating a spatial vision; showing how this would contribute to Sustainable development; addressing regional or sub-regional issues that often cross local authority boundaries; identifying the scale and provision of new housing; setting out priorities for the environment; and also to cover a range of matters including transport, infrastructure, economic development, minerals, and waste disposal (ODPM, 2004).

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<sup>3</sup> A planning White Paper titled ‘Planning for the future’ was published on August 6 announcing further changes to the UK planning system, however as this research paper was compiled prior to this announcement so it is not included here

[https://assets.publishing.service.gov.uk/government/uploads/system/uploads/attachment\\_data/file/907647/MHC\\_LG-Planning-Consultation.pdf](https://assets.publishing.service.gov.uk/government/uploads/system/uploads/attachment_data/file/907647/MHC_LG-Planning-Consultation.pdf)

Both RSSs and LEPs have been criticised for a lack of purchase on rural issues, reflecting the orientation towards priorities around economic competitiveness, infrastructure and housing demand. LEPs created after 2010 have been understood as being influenced by both national agendas and local circumstance:

*LEP agency was framed by the establishment of new national government priorities and policy frameworks, tasks, funding streams, geographies, organisations, staff and the uncertainty generated by the unplanned and incremental unfolding of the Coalition Government's Local Growth agenda. Exhortations of localism alongside limited resources and capability meant the LEPs had to experiment, innovate and improvise in trying to interpret and fulfil their centrally prescribed and locally inflected roles. (Pike et al, 2013: p.201)*

Pike et al also argue that: 'Given the lack of long-term vision and strategy for their development, the fundamental tensions yet to be resolved and their institutional deficits and limitations in authority, accountability, capability and resources, at this stage in their evolution... suggest that many will struggle to exercise substantive influence upon economic development at the local level' (2013: p.202). This has not augured well for explicit consideration of rural issues. Moreover, the ability to consider conceptual agendas such as ecosystem services has been limited, although efforts to alert and apply toolkits such as Local Environmental and Economic Development LEED (Sunderland and Butterworth, 2016) have been attempted. Those authors argue that an Ecosystem Services Framework:

*...can be used to make environmental evidence relevant to economic development planning, even if all the evidence cannot be fully proven or quantified. To be successful evidence must be presented in a way which connects with the decision-making framework in use. (Sunderland and Butterworth, 2016: p.197)*

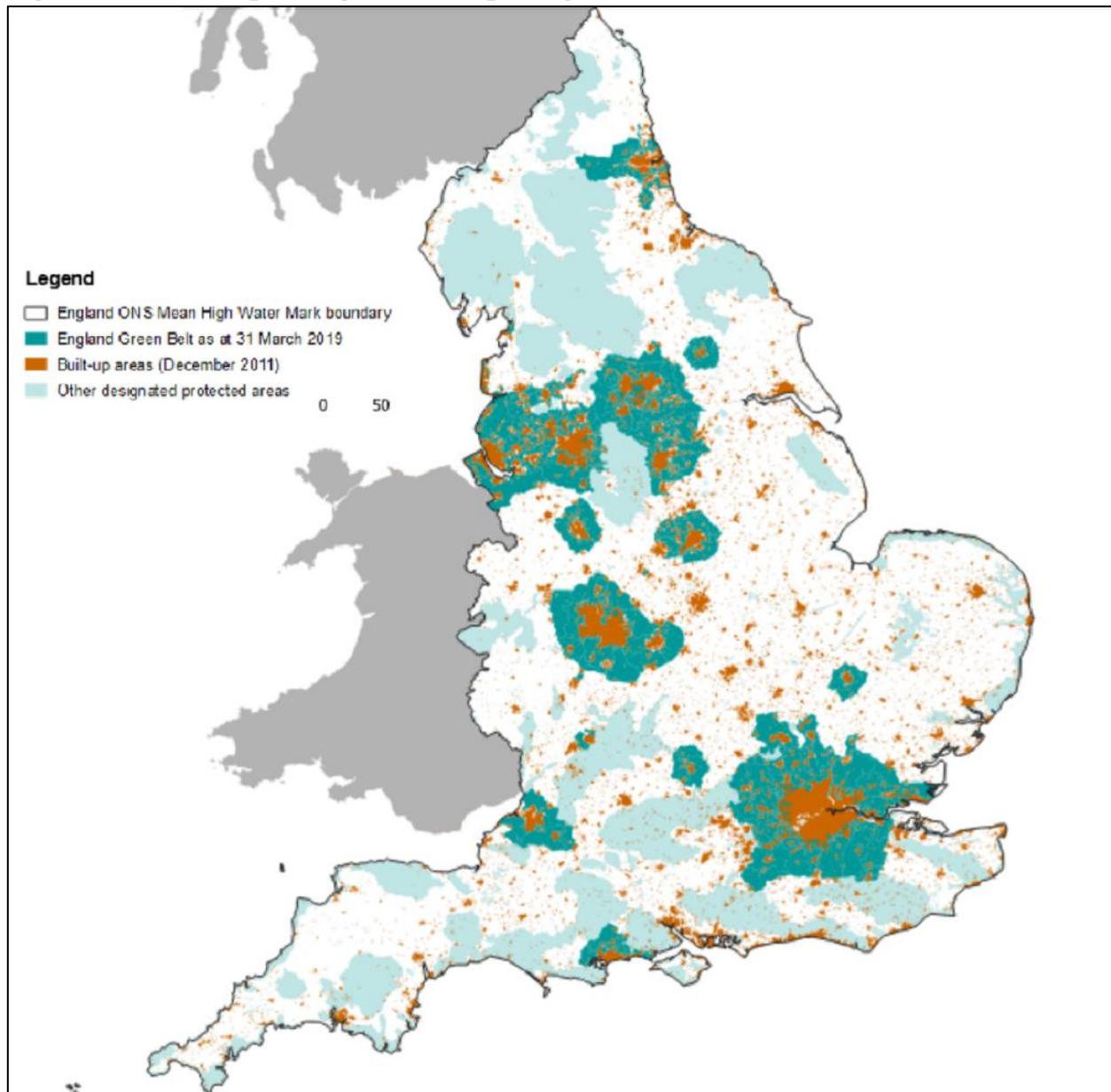
Although specific research on the role of the new tier of strategic governance in relation to rural and land use decision-making is quite scarce, a review by Pugalis et al (2015: p.2) asserted that LEPs 'operate with an opaque remit and lack firm institutional foundations' but noted that 23 of the 39 LEPs did include rural development in their list of priorities (2015: p.34-35). However for most, this critically involved influencing policy so that it was business-friendly i.e. pro-growth. The National Audit office produced an overview of LEP operation in 2019 too which provides a useful overview (NAO, 2019).

A myriad of other arrangements at sub-regional level have also developed, some with a more holistic remit, others focussing on particular cross-boundary concerns. Other tools that form part of the wider toolkit are a range of designations made nationally or, in some cases, locally.

### *3.1.3 Designations*

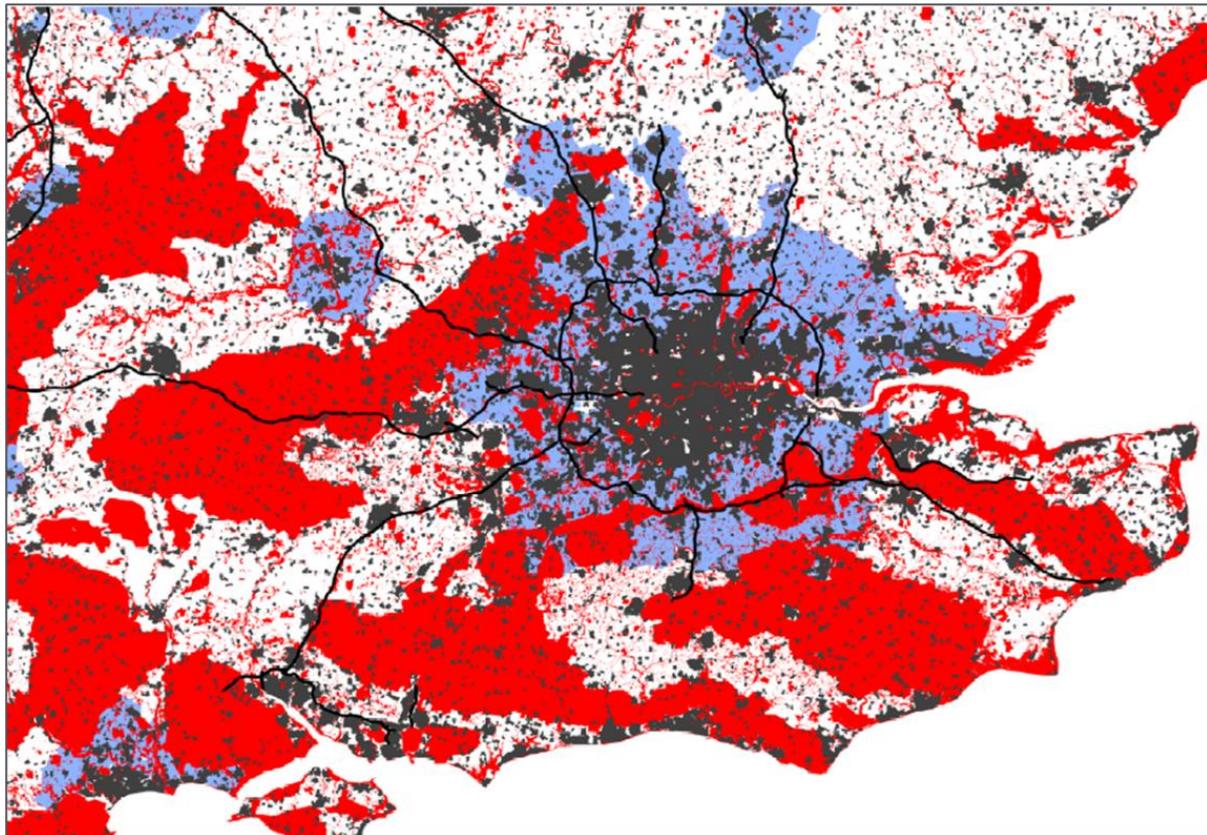
A wide range - some might say a bewildering number - of designations have been created over time with a diverse set of objects. Some are overtly the product of the planning system while others are the creation of national governments, international bodies or focussed agencies. The planning system would deem many of the designations and their attendant aims as “material considerations” when making policy and decisions on planning applications. Key designations include: green belts, National Parks, Areas of Outstanding Natural Beauty (AONBs), SSSIs (Sites of Special Scientific Interest), SAM (Scheduled Ancient Monuments), NNRs (national Nature Reserves), SACs and SPAs (Special Areas for Conservation / Special Protected Areas). Most prominent are the environmental and the landscape designations (e.g. SSSIs, SPAs/SACs, National Parks and AONBs) which act to frame the planning of those areas and signal restraint or prohibition from development in anything but exceptional circumstances. Green belts perform a similar (urban) constraint role but are not related to environmental considerations (see Figures 3.2 and 3.3).

**Figure 3.2: Landscape Designations map - England**



*Note: Landscape and Greenbelt Designations only (England)*

**Figure 3.3: South East England Ecological plus Landscape and Greenbelt designations**



*Key*

**Red** = Landscape or other environmental designations

**Blue** = Green belts

**Grey** = Built-up areas

### *3.1.4 Neighbourhood plans*

The newest wave of plans are Neighbourhood Plans, which sit below local plans in scale and need to be respectful of the strategic policies in the National Planning Policy Framework and the local plan area in which they form a part. This fact, as well as the non-mandatory and community-led aspects of the policy, places some practical as well as regulatory limitations on scope. These plans have also come under scrutiny for the burdens placed on the volunteers undertaking the work (Parker et al, 2015; 2017). Conversely, while there are some signs of the innovation and alternative thinking that some had hoped for (Brownill and Bradley, 2017; Cowie, 2017; Field and Layard, 2017), with some Plans seeking to address climate change agendas or promote innovation in housing, this tends to be the exception. They have in the main been constrained by the limits of knowledge and resource available. There is scope to infuse more exploratory and innovative sets of aims, particularly in rural areas where there is a feeling that they have been more concerned with maintaining local amenity (Parker et al, 2017; Vigar et al, 2017). Advocates for this tier of planning to embrace environmental considerations are present (see, for example; CSE, 2017; Bradley et al, 2017; Yu and Fischer, 2019).

Overall, the arena is crowded with different tools and institutional arrangements that act to inform and shape decisions but can also lead to a lack of integration. Moreover as we detail elsewhere here (see Chapters 4 and 5), they tend to be shaped around first-order assumptions about private property rights operating with path dependent assumptions about what is legitimate or possible – the combinations of climate emergency, or food security concerns, of Brexit and now global pandemic lessons may re-open longer run debates over regulation, use of land and the social contract. However recent indications are that a deregulatory path will be pursued in England at least.

What makes the UK planning system so interesting is how in 1947 the government of the time decided to make some critical inroads to the ‘freedoms’ or rights of landowners, to use their land as they wished, via the planning system. However, in terms of rural land and, particularly, agricultural functions the limits of this intervention were found. The conflictual legacy of the 1947 Act has meant that mainstream politics has had little appetite to extend planning control, rather an uneven withdrawal has been a feature of the past 20 years or so.

### **3.2 The role of the planning system**

While labelling and terminology has altered over time, the explicit role of the planning system has evolved around a long established if opaque and contested idea. The substantive aim is to deliver *Sustainable development* (Sustainable development) as set out now in the 2019 National Planning Policy Framework (NPPF). Overall, the planning system is set up to deliver Sustainable development but the tools and mechanisms are in near permanent reform (see Doak and Parker, 2018 for an explanation of how this has played out over time and through a variety of tools and mechanisms). Sustainable development forms a central strand of this report, whether achieved through direct regulation by the planning system, or through other means. In principle at least, this aim cuts across and acts as a basis for assessing decisions regarding land and its use.

The review of rural policy in Section 5 acts to give a wider perspective but the planning system features a broad statement of aims in the NPPF (paragraph 7) on its Sustainable development “lodestone”:

*The purpose of the planning system is to contribute to the achievement of Sustainable development. At a very high level, the objective of Sustainable development can be summarised as meeting the needs of the present without compromising the ability of future generations to meet their own needs.*

Paragraph 8 of the NPPF (2019) goes on to explain that:

*Achieving Sustainable development means that the planning system has three overarching objectives, which are interdependent and need to be pursued in mutually*

*supportive ways (so that opportunities can be taken to secure net gains across each of the different objectives):*

- an economic objective – to help build a strong, responsive and competitive economy, by ensuring that sufficient land of the right types is available in the right places and at the right time to support growth, innovation and improved productivity; and by identifying and coordinating the provision of infrastructure*
- a social objective – to support strong, vibrant and healthy communities, by ensuring that a sufficient number and range of homes can be provided to meet the needs of present and future generations; and by fostering a well-designed and safe built environment, with accessible services and open spaces that reflect current and future needs and support communities’ health, social and cultural well-being; and*
- an environmental objective – to contribute to protecting and enhancing our natural, built and historic environment; including making effective use of land, helping to improve biodiversity, using natural resources prudently, minimising waste and pollution, and mitigating and adapting to climate change, including moving to a low carbon economy.*

The approach taken and guidance which accompanies the NPPF document clearly reflects an emphasis on the economic aspect and attendant development, even though we should appreciate the stated commitment to “integration” of the three objectives. The policy arena that the NPPF introduced in 2012 when it was first published established the principle that development should be “presumed” to be Sustainable development if it accorded with the principles of the NPPF. As paragraph 11 of the NPPF 2019 states:

For **plan-making** this means that:

- (a) plans should positively seek opportunities to meet the development needs of their area, and be sufficiently flexible to adapt to rapid change;
- (b) strategic policies should, as a minimum, provide for objectively assessed needs for housing and other uses, as well as any needs that cannot be met within neighbouring areas, unless:
  - (i) the application of policies in this Framework that protect areas or assets of particular importance provides a strong reason for restricting the overall scale, type or distribution of development in the plan area or;
  - (ii) any adverse impacts of doing so would significantly and demonstrably outweigh the benefits, when assessed against the policies in this Framework taken as a whole.

For **decision-taking** this means:

- (c) approving development proposals that accord with an up-to-date development plan without delay or;

(d) where there are no relevant development plan policies, or the policies which are most important for determining the application are out-of-date, granting permission unless:

(i) the application of policies in this Framework that protect areas or assets of particular importance provides a clear reason for refusing the development proposed or;

(ii) any adverse impacts of doing so would significantly and demonstrably outweigh the benefits, when assessed against the policies in this Framework taken as a whole.

It is left to local planning authorities through their local plans to finesse and evidence otherwise. Sustainable development in spatial terms is shaped by the formal local plans. Thus, local plans are critical and have a significant influence on the location, scale and type and design of development. In rural areas the tension between growth and amenity preservation is often acute and neighbourhood plans, explained above, were seen as a means to help reconcile these issues and actors at scale. The main impact that local plans have on rural land, in response to implicitly and explicitly stated policy (as above), and where allocations of “greenfield” sites are made, is to encourage development involving a change of use from agricultural to other uses (e.g. residential, commercial).

In terms of decision-making and land, the role of planning has also been to decide upon appropriate uses and locations for development with reference to the “public interest”. Plans have acted as a key means to set out both policy and preferred locations for development in order to give more certainty and clarity over individual decisions of planners in Development Management as well as other interests (e.g. landowners, developers, the wider public).

Given the rather nebulous properties of the public interest concept, it has spawned a large literature and much discussion about the models and processes to be involved both in planning as plan-making and in planning as development decision-making such that public interest could be captured, understood or otherwise claimed by decision-makers. This resides under the idea of the legitimacy of planning action as it impacts both on public freedoms or amenity and on private rights and associate benefits.

### **3.3 Limits to the system**

Planning controls stopped short of intervening in agriculture and changes to the natural environment rested instead on a legal definition of development being “building work” or “a change of use in land”. This hinges on what constitutes “development”, as the system is set up to regulate that activity. The standard definition as framed in the 1947 Town and Country Planning Act (both in statutory iteration and through case law, with only modest changes) is ‘any building, engineering or mining operation’, referring also to changes of land use. The direction of travel in recent years, especially since 2013, has been to exempt certain kinds of development from requiring planning permission, while strengthening the longer run exceptionalism of agriculture. The 1990 Town & Country Planning Act (section 55) sets out

the definition and meaning of “development” and “new development”, as indicated in the text below:

- (1) *Subject to the following provisions of this section, in this Act, except where the context otherwise requires, “development” means the carrying out of building, engineering, mining or other operations in, on, over or under land, or the making of any material change in the use of any buildings or other land.*
- (1A) *For the purposes of this Act “building operations” includes—*
- (a) demolition of buildings;*
  - (b) rebuilding;*
  - (c) structural alterations of or additions to buildings; and*
  - (d) other operations normally undertaken by a person carrying on business as a builder.*
- (2) *The following operations or uses of land shall **not** be taken for the purposes of this Act to involve development of the land—*
- (a) the carrying out for the maintenance, improvement or other alteration of any building or works which—*
    - (i) affect only the interior of the building, or*
    - (ii) do not materially affect the external appearance of the building, and are not works for making good war damage or works begun after 5th December 1968 for the alteration of a building by providing additional space in it underground;*
  - (b) the carrying out on land within the boundaries of a road by a ... highway authority of any works required for the maintenance or improvement of the road but, in the case of any such works which are not exclusively for the maintenance of the road, not including any works which may have significant adverse effects on the environment;*
  - (c) the carrying out by a local authority or statutory undertakers of any works for the purpose of inspecting, repairing or renewing any sewers, mains, pipes, cables or other apparatus, including the breaking open of any street or other land for that purpose;*
  - (d) the use of any buildings or other land within the curtilage of a dwellinghouse for any purpose incidental to the enjoyment of the dwellinghouse as such;*
  - (e) **the use of any land for the purposes of agriculture or forestry (including afforestation) and the use for any of those purposes of any building occupied together with land so used.***

So where rural land is most shaped by planning is where permissions are given for development to switch use e.g. from agricultural use to residential use. The system does not have any role in relation to types of uses or activity within the agricultural classification and therefore has little or nothing to say in regulating the impacts of agricultural activity. This has been dealt with through separate regulatory frameworks, notably since 1973 through European directives and

provisions of the Common Agricultural Policy. The UK's exit from the EU opens up a new space for regulatory review and rethink, although this will take some time to work through given the fact that all existing EU regulation has been subsumed in to the European Union (Withdrawal) Act of 2018 and will remain in force until changed by primary or secondary UK legislation.

Some voices have called for an extension of “planning control” rather than simply using existing policy parameters. Notably the recent policy paper *Land for the Many* produced by the Labour Party in 2019 argued that:

*To democratise decision-making and arrest the rapid collapse of wildlife and ecosystems, we suggest that the English Land Commission be charged with investigating the possibility of extending the planning system to cover major farming and forestry decisions. (Labour Party, 2019: p.9)*

There is also a groundswell of support for more community-led initiatives such as Community Land Trusts (CLTs) and community ownership of key environmental assets (see also Chapter 4). *Land for the Many* argues that that policy should, ‘encourage Community Land Trusts to buy rural land, for farming, forestry, conservation, rewilding and the protection of catchments. To this end, we propose creating a Community Land Fund.’ (Labour Party, 2019: p.9)

There are numerous urban fringe and rural “land management agreements” (and associated plan policies) providing “soft planning tools” for encouraging multifunctional land use, notably Entry Level Stewardship (ESS) and Higher Level Stewardship (HLS), as well as commercially-led diversification. However, there are clearly limits to this approach, such as a dependency on the willingness of landowners to agree to these agreements (see also Chapter 5).

### **3.4 Implications for key themes**

Sustainable development as the narrative for planning is such a broadly conceived idea that it is best to break it down into more tractable components and issues. Moreover, the above structure and basic tenets of the planning system also respect several key ideas but these key ideas are malleable given the need to apply them in context, and the difficulty of doing so. Thirdly, multiple reforms and policy shifts over time indicate that different interpretations of means and mechanisms to deliver Sustainable development are apparent.

The response of planning authorities to the ecosystem services paradigm has been rather limited to date, reflecting the emphasis on land use, development and (still) on urban questions. Furthermore, in a context of reduced capacity in resources and structural reorganisation, the ability of local institutions to embrace the implications of ecosystem services thinking has been somewhat stymied.

The UK planning system has been subject to *regular changes* in its institutional form, policy objectives and procedural arrangements as mentioned above. This sets up a relatively fluid policy arena. The current arrangements are of relatively recent vintage and so there are some longer-run as well as newer issues which impact both on the principles and scope as well as the practice of effecting decisions over land use via the planning system, discernible as:

- *(dis)Continuities* – in terms of understanding the system and its potentials (and limits). This means that the operation of the system is never settled and different actors are unsure about the limits or extent of the reach of formal planning.
- *Ideological tensions* – the substantive aims of planning are adjusted by governments of different hues to suit their purposes; this relates largely to modality or how to achieve outcomes (e.g. deregulation, markets-based measures, neoliberalisation – see below), played out through policy wording, funding and the abolition or creation of new policy tools or institutional arrangements.
- *Deregulation / Neoliberalisation* – placing more responsibility on individuals to make appropriate decisions based on their own interests, market signals or wider feedback and whereby the state role is changed (re-regulation / “roll-out”) or reduced (“roll-back”, deregulation, liberalisation) to enable markets, the private sector and civil society to flourish (localism). These measures can have detrimental impacts on public goods and environmental assets in the short and long term. Most notable have been the relaxation of permitted development rights, and as above the principle of presuming Sustainable development where a local plan is absent. Hence the role of regulation is critical but the planning system as a key means to direct sustainable outcomes has been eroded following agendas to deregulate and/or create a more market-oriented and growth-friendly policy environment.
- *Scope* – what range of issues are deemed relevant; also the extent or reach of land use planning, and what is not in its ambit. There are countervailing pressures for extension and reduction in scope which are present in current policy discussions (i.e. more or less “planning”, more, or less, or different regulation regimes).
- *Fragmentation* – of activity and knowledge areas, adding also to issue of discontinuities in understanding and possible system disintegration (i.e. not recognising interconnectedness). This is reflected in the loss of regional planning and in the additional requirements placed on the planning system as new issues and priorities are overlain e.g. climate change, financial viability, health impacts (see Parker et al, 2018).
- *Multifunctionality* – this has not been a strong suite, as much of the early planning aims were to provide effective segregation of uses. The decisions made leading to the 1947 Town and Country Planning Act also left land use planning short of intervening

or encouraging multifunctional rural land use. As a footnote, however, difficulties with mixed-use development in urban areas have been encountered since a policy push in the late 1990s, where developer/landowner interests have preferred single use or segregation of uses on single sites.

- *Localism* – this is the area of policy which holds promise for provoking innovation and a democratisation of land use decision-making. Neighbourhood planning is only one example and in its current form is restricted. However greater communication and ties across rural actors and inhabitants locally could prove fruitful in brokering more sustainable, possibly multifunctional, landscapes. One idea would be rural partnerships that bring together for example; neighbourhood planners, EU’s LEADER (Links between Actions for the Development of the Rural Economy) programme, farming associations, retail outlets and environmental bodies locally to oversee and orchestrate local policy and practice geared towards sustainable development and beneficial forms of multifunctionality.

This means that when it comes to delivering on Sustainable development and associated priorities such as the ecosystem services agenda, multifunctional land use and climate resilience, the planning system can be powerful in some aspects but also quite modest in its ability to deliver public goods on rural land. It does however provide a break against landscapes and open land being developed without careful thought and the application of policy principles such as sequential testing and constraints mapping. A more positive dimension is the creation of new policy tools such as Biodiversity Net Gain, which involves brokering development, ‘that leaves biodiversity in a better state than before. It is also an approach where developers work with local governments, wildlife groups, landowners and other stakeholders in order to support their priorities for nature conservation.’ (CIEEM, 2016).

Biodiversity Net Gain is included in the 2019 National Policy Planning Framework (paragraph 170) and new tools such as this provide scope for the system to help deliver environmental goods. But how resilient such policies will prove in practice is still in question given the variety of pressures on the system and in the light of past evidence indicating how the development industry has been adept at negotiating away or otherwise circumventing measures regarded as “planning costs” (see McAllister, 2017).

## **Chapter 4: Contemporary Patterns of Land Use, Ownership, Control and Interest**

### **4.1 Land Use**

This chapter also builds on the historical background in Chapter 2 to examine and report upon contemporary patterns of land use and ownership in the UK. This analysis provides important contextual understandings that will help develop a platform for the critique and review in Chapter 7. It should be emphasised that when talking about land use we need to distinguish between the “use” of land and the “activities” taking place on it. For example, agricultural land may be classed as “pasture”, but it could be home to a whole array of activities, from grazing, through informal recreation to commercial events.

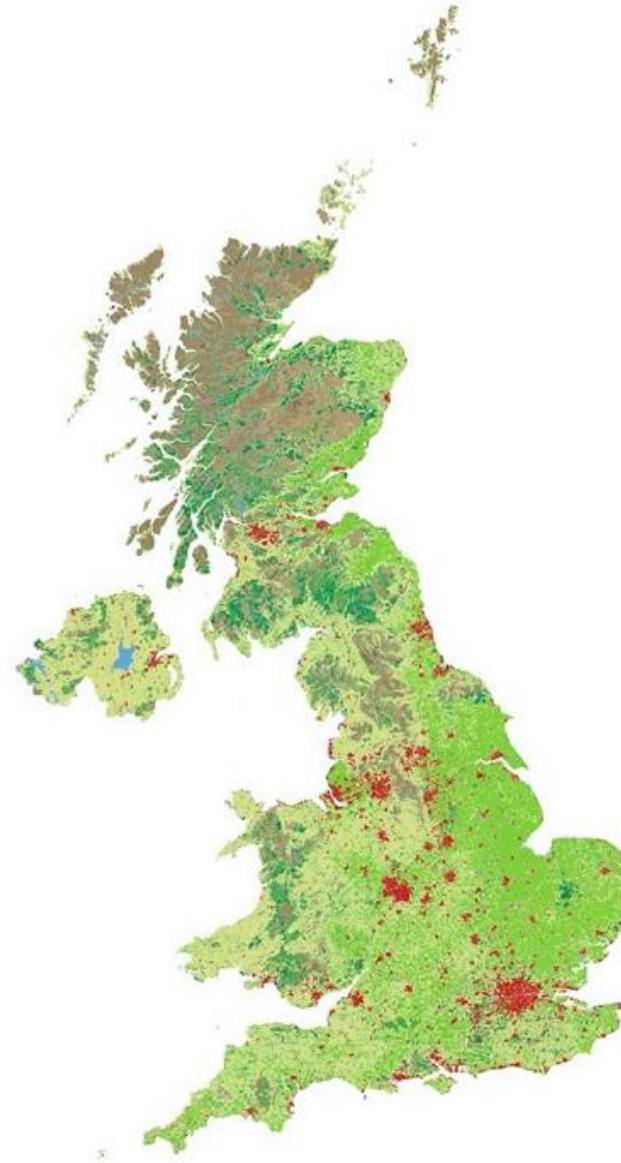
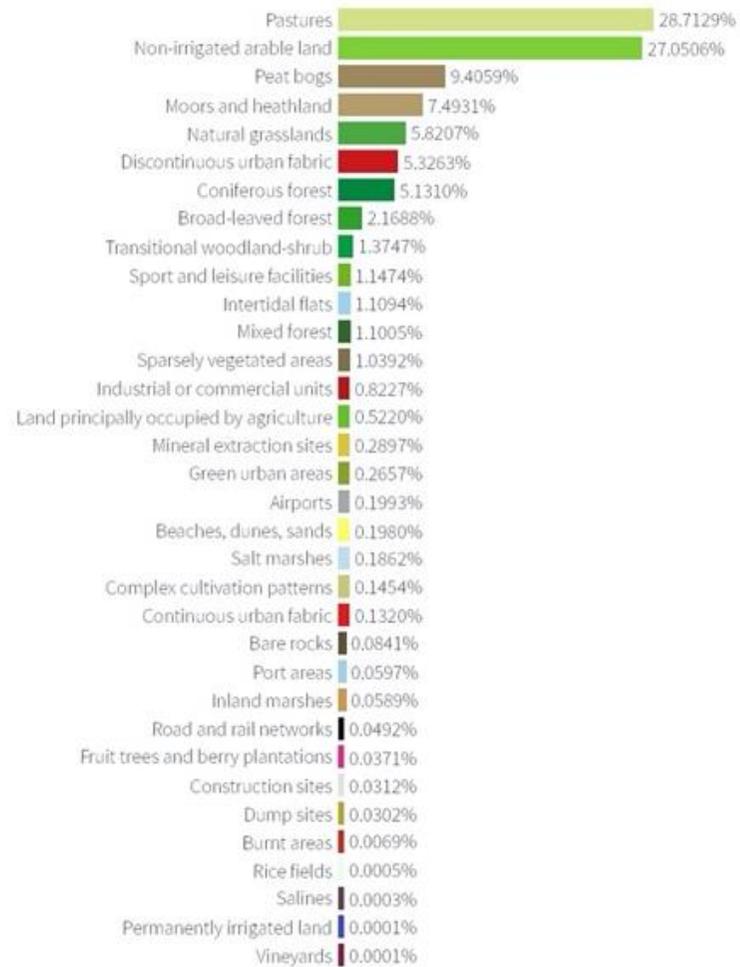
Figure 4.1 indicates a broad 50:50 split in agricultural land between arable and pasture, with Eastern England having the highest concentration of arable use and the western parts of the UK being predominantly pasture-based. Together, these two agricultural land uses cover nearly 56% of the UK. The contribution of forests and semi-natural areas (24.4%) and wetlands (10.8%) pushes up the “rural” land uses to just over 90% of the total land surface of the UK. This leaves only about 8.35% of the UK as urban (defined here as “artificial surfaces”). England is the most urbanised part of the UK, with 12.1% of land under artificial surfaces, whilst Northern Ireland, Scotland and Wales remain more dominated by “rural” land uses.

This pattern of land use is a reflection of geology and soils but also a product of the history of national economic development, industrialisation and urbanisation, along with dominant landownership patterns and the uses facilitated or constrained by this. For instance, much of the farmland is owned or tenanted by commercial farmers who take a predominantly commercial approach to the use of their land resource, thereby contributing to either arable or pasture land use rather than other more extensive or non-agricultural uses.

These national statistics and patterns can mask local diversity of land use. When one looks at local authority areas, Dumfries and Galloway in the south of Scotland contains 29 different Corine Land Cover classes. This is followed by Perth and Kinross (28), Aberdeenshire (28), Cornwall (27), Highland (27), Northumberland (26), Angus (26) and Argyll and Bute (25). In more urbanised areas a number of towns and cities also include quite a mix of “non-urban” land uses such as green urban areas, sport and leisure facilities, woodland, peat bogs and conventional agricultural pasture or arable land. Leeds, for instance, has nineteen different land use classes and the largest of these is “non-irrigated arable land”, at 32.5% of the total land area.

Figure 4.1: Map of UK Land Use

# UK Corine Land Cover



(Source: Cole et al, 2015)

**Table 4.1 UK Land Use**

<b>Class</b>	<b>Sub-Class</b>	<b>%</b>	
<b>1. Artificial surfaces</b>	1.1.1. Continuous urban fabric	0.13	
	1.1.2. Discontinuous urban fabric	5.33	
	1.2.1. Industrial or commercial units	0.82	
	1.2.2. Road and rail networks and associated land	0.05	
	1.2.3. Port areas	0.06	
	1.2.4. Airports	0.20	
	1.3.1. Mineral extraction sites	0.29	
	1.3.2. Dump sites	0.03	
	1.3.3. Construction sites	0.03	
	1.4.1. Green urban areas	0.27	
	1.4.2. Sport and leisure facilities	1.15	
	<b>TOTAL</b>	<b>8.35</b>	
	<b>2. Agricultural areas</b>	2.1.1. Non-irrigated arable land	27.05
		2.1.2. Permanently irrigated land	0.00
2.1.3. Rice fields		0.00	
2.2.1. Vineyards		0.00	
2.2.2. Fruit trees and berry plantations		0.04	
2.2.3. Olive groves		0.00	
2.3.1. Pastures		28.71	
2.4.1. Annual crops associated with permanent crops		0.00	
2.4.2. Complex cultivation		0.15	
2.4.3. Land principally occupied by agriculture, with significant areas of natural vegetation		0.52	
2.4.4. Agro-forestry areas		0.00	
<b>TOTAL</b>		<b>56.47</b>	
<b>3. Forests and semi-natural areas</b>		3.1.1. Broad-leaved forest	2.17
		3.1.2. Coniferous forest	5.13
	3.1.3. Mixed forest	1.10	
	3.2.1. Natural grassland	5.82	
	3.2.2. Moors and heathland	7.49	
	3.2.3. Sclerophyllous vegetation	0.00	
	3.2.4. Transitional woodland/shrub	1.37	
	3.3.1. Beaches, dunes, and sand plains	0.20	
	3.3.2. Bare rock	0.08	
	3.3.3. Sparsely vegetated areas	1.04	
	3.3.4. Burnt areas	0.01	
	3.3.5. Glaciers and perpetual snow	0.00	
	<b>TOTAL</b>	<b>24.42</b>	
	<b>4. Wetlands</b>	4.1. 1. Inland marshes	0.06
4.1.2. Peatbogs		9.41	
4.2.1. Salt marshes		0.19	
4.2.2. Salines		0.00	
4.2.3. Intertidal flats		1.11	
<b>TOTAL</b>		<b>10.76</b>	
<b>TOTAL</b>	<b>100.00</b>		

(Source: Rae, 2017)

This compares to a figure of 27.5% classed as “discontinuous urban fabric”. This diversity at the local level reminds us that “rural” land use penetrates and mixes with urban uses, where 80% of the UK population resides (Rae 2017, p. 4 and 8). The division between rural and urban land use is therefore somewhat indistinct and arbitrary, echoing policy debates about the importance of the urban-rural interface and the need for strategic planning in city-regions (Gallent and Gkartzios, 2019; Ravetz, 2008).

## **4.2 Landownership**

Landownership data is notoriously difficult to obtain in the UK and even today information on who owns rural land in the country remains clouded in secrecy and difficulties (Shrubsole 2018, p.1). Church and Ravenscroft (2007, p.6) point towards, ‘the problems of identifying owners, especially in areas where land registration is incomplete (many areas of rural England) and land is rarely bought and sold (registration only taking place as a result of such a transaction)’. A number of authors have attempted to dissect the patterns of UK landownership over the years (e.g. Massey and Catalano, 1978; Shoard, 1987; Cahill, 2001; Munton, 2009; Meek, 2014; Wightman 1996 and 2015; and Shrubsole 2018), but the overall picture still remains partial. The current (2018) landownership structure of England is outlined in Table 4.2, whilst data for Scotland is given in Table 4.3. Unfortunately, the categories used in each table are different, except for the “private landowners” of Scotland

This data shows a number of dimensions relevant to rural land use decision-making. As mentioned in Chapter 2, the persistence of landed estates is a feature of current land ownership structures. Despite the slight erosion and adaptation of that type of landownership, it retains control over a significant area of rural Britain. Much of this land is farmed for agricultural purposes or, in upland areas particularly, for forestry and game sports.

Government departments, state agencies and local authorities retain a sizable portfolio of rural land, despite recent reductions in that portfolio due to financial austerity and neoliberal policy regimes encouraging privatisation. Much of this is owned by the forestry agencies for England and Scotland and the Ministry of Defence, who utilise large tracts of the uplands for military training. Theoretically at least, state ownership brings the use of rural land under democratic control. This provides an opportunity for wider community and environmental interests to influence the utilisation and management of these land areas.

Land estates and the government are well-established landowners but the increasing role of rural land for investment purposes has led to an expansion of other private and corporate landowners, particularly since the 1980s liberalisation of financial markets and state privatisation programmes. This has also increased the number and significance of overseas owners, ranging from the Danish clothing magnate Anders Holch Povlsen, who owns 220,000 acres spread across twelve Scottish estates, to Sheikh Mohammed bin Rashid al-Maktoum, owner of 100,000 acres in various parts of Britain including farms in East Anglia, horse-racing studs in West Berkshire and a grouse moor in the North Pennines (Shrubsole, 2019: p.121).

**Table 4.2: Landownership in England (rural and urban)**

<b>Landowner</b>	<b>Area (ha)</b>	<b>% of England</b>
<b>The Public Sector</b>	<b>1,098,071</b>	<b>8.5%</b>
Forestry Commission	198,223	
Ministry of Defence	160,702	
Highways England	46,262	
Network Rail	40,681	
Other Whitehall departments	64,328	
Local authorities (E&W)	536,884	
Oxbridge colleges	50,991	
<b>The Crown</b>	<b>184,734</b>	<b>1.4%</b>
The Crown Estate	106,932	
Duchy of Cornwall	52,971	
Duchy of Lancaster	16,839	
Sandringham Estate	8,094	
<b>Church of England</b>	<b>70,821</b>	<b>0.5%</b>
Church Commissioners	42,492	
Diocesan Boards of Finance	28,328	
<b>Conservation charities</b>	<b>257,348</b>	<b>2.0%</b>
National Trust for England & Wales	192,082	
RSPB	51,409	
Woodland Trust	13,857	
<b>Private Estates (aristocracy and gentry)</b>	<b>3,988,140</b>	<b>30.0%</b>
<b>Other Private Owners*</b>	<b>2,259,946</b>	<b>17.0%</b>
<b>Companies (estimate for England)</b>	<b>2,392,884</b>	<b>18.0%</b>
UK limited companies and LLPs**	2,580,557	
Overseas & offshore companies**	113,120	
<b>Homeowners</b>	<b>664,690</b>	<b>5.0%</b>
<b>Unregistered</b>	<b>2,259,946</b>	<b>17.0%</b>
<b>TOTAL</b>	<b>13,176,579</b>	<b>100.0%</b>

\* Defined as “new investors”, made up of a group of individuals who have acquired wealth since the industrial revolution

\*\* Includes Wales

(Source: based on data in Shrubsole 2019)

**Table 4.3: Rural Landownership in Scotland**

<b>Landowner</b>	<b>Area (ha.)</b>	<b>% of Scotland</b>
Private Estates*	4,140,460	57.1%
Public Bodies (including the National Forest Estate and MoD land)	914,000	12.6%
Community	227,526	3.1%
Environmental Organisations	182,438	2.5%
<b>TOTAL</b>	<b>5,464,424</b>	<b>75.4%**</b>

\* “estates” are defined as landholdings with a range of interests that may include in-hand farming, let farms, sporting interests, forestry, residential property, workspaces, tourism and community facilities. The owners are mostly established aristocracy/gentry or “new investors” as defined in Table 4.2.

\*\* the remaining 24.6% of rural land not accounted for in the table includes farms and smaller estates that do not match the multifunctional “estates” description given above.

(Source: Glass et al 2019, p. 12)

At about the same time as foreign investors were buying large tracks of rural land in the UK because of its investment potential, other UK-based investors and operators were doing likewise. The privatisation of state utilities and other land assets helped with this process as land moved from state to private corporate ownership. Many investment, development, retail, utility, mining and other companies expanded their property portfolios, either as a relatively low-risk investment asset or for future use or development. This process has also spurred the growth of off-shore corporate entities seeking the available tax benefits.

Although a relatively small and selective form of landownership, wildlife, heritage and environmental organisations do control the use of 2% of land in the UK and most of this is in rural locations. These organisations tend to have conservation objectives at the heart of their land use strategies, which provides both opportunities and some constraints in terms of multifunctional land use.

In terms of land ownership in the individual countries of the UK, the picture is somewhat different. Scotland has one of the highest percentages of private land ownership in Europe, and much of Scotland is owned by a limited number of families. Wightman (2010) has estimated that 30% of private rural land in Scotland is owned by just 115 landowners, with seventeen owners controlling of 10% of that. Land reform in Scotland has been long proposed and partially implemented over the last twenty years through a series of Scottish parliamentary Acts (see Daniel 2018, p.7, for details). More tentative reforms have been adopted in England and Wales, with the Community Right to Buy and Assets of Community Value under the Localism Act 2011. Progress on both these initiatives has been rather stuttering and the outcomes have been questioned with respect to the scale of their impact and the outcomes in terms of sustainability benefits (Lynn, 2018; Bovaird, n.d.; Rolfe 2016).

Based upon the above overview and looking across the home nations, a number of processes can be identified which are restructuring landownership patterns and relationships in rural (and urban) areas of the UK. These include:

- The increasing use of land as a financial asset and the expansion of financial institutions and other businesses into rural landownership (Gunnoe, 2018; Christophers, 2017 and 2019; Gallent et al, 2019)
- The policies and practices of land reform in Scotland (Hoffman, 2013) and also other parts of the UK (Maye et al, 2009) with community stakeholders gaining a greater toe-hold in the package of property rights over rural areas, but resulting questions about their effectiveness in delivering more equitable and sustainable landownership and land use decision-making;
- The expansion of neoliberal forms of governance and the “institutional blending” of property rights through various mechanisms such as recomposing property, assigning property rights, developing partnership arrangements and engaging with non-profit organisations (Hodge and Adams, 2012 and 2014). This has produced numerous co-ownership models and relations (e.g. Community Land Trusts);
- Christophers (2017) and Layard (2019) have drawn attention to the sale of public land and property assets under neoliberal legislation and policy, and the implications of that;
- Traditional family estates have been adapting to new economic, political and cultural conditions by “manipulating property rights” in order to survive, as illustrated in Table 4.4 (Jackson, 1998); and
- The reduction in both the number and acreage of tenanted farms, most notably seen in the erosion of the former county council smallholdings (Ilbery et al, 2009), as local authorities are forced to withdraw under pressure from both central government policy and financial cut-backs.

Whilst there are some obvious economic benefits to private land ownership, as implied above, a number of problems and issues also arise from these patterns and dynamics of land ownership. The most prominent issue identified by land reform campaigners is that of inequality in wealth and opportunity that arises from the concentration of land ownership (Cahill, 2001; Shrubsole, 2019; Labour Party, 2019). This has profound effects on the structure of social and economic relations in rural areas, contributing to persistent poverty, dependency and other social problems from which many rural areas have struggled to escape. Attention has also been drawn to the tax-avoidance strategies of off-shore ownership and the influence that landownership bestows given the limited regulation that rural land use is subjected to. The pattern of subsidies under the Common Agricultural Policy has also been seen to be part of this problem, with significant sums of EU money going to the richest landowners and farmers through the single farm payment scheme (Bateman and Balmford, 2018).

**Table 4.4: Manipulations of Property Rights by Landed Estates**

<i>Rights holders</i>	<i>Principal property rights</i>	<i>Concentration of rights</i>	<i>Dispersal of rights</i>
Owner	Transfer	Family head as estate owner	Estate, wholly or in part: gifted, placed in trust, accepted as security by lenders, or alienated.
Occupier	Exclude	Family as sole residents of house	House let, or entrusted; owners wholly, or in part excluded.
		Owner as owner-occupier of farmed estate	Fiscal or family tenancy; traditional secure tenancy
User	Use	House for private family consumption	House open to the public, and restrictions on private access
		Sporting rights for private family consumption	Managed commercial shoot; or sporting rights let
		Countryside access for private family consumption	Public access through management agreement, customary use, rights of way, or open provision
		Owner as direct farmer	Farming through a form of joint management or tenure arrangement, or rights held in common

(Source: Jackson, 1998: p.77)

Secondly, the control of land use decision-making by private landowners has created a dependency relation, wherein the effectiveness of policy implementation (economic, environmental, welfare and social) is variable at best. This has been evident in relation to environmental policy where the variable outcomes of the EU agri-environment regime are seen to be heavily dependent on landowner/farmer attitudes or strategies (Hauck et al, 2014: p.59).

Thirdly, that variability is illustrated by the continuum in the approach of investors in rural land as a financial asset. Using a binary division of direct and active versus indirect and passive, investors will have variable drivers, strategies and impacts. These different place-impacts are shown in Table 4.5 where different drivers (and combinations thereof) are likely to produce different effects and outcomes (Gallent et al, 2019). Although many of these impacts are likely to be long term, reflecting the long termism of financial institutions and other investors, and some of them might be seen as positive (for example under institutional or personal social/environmental responsibility drivers), the financial bottom line will usually require strong emphasis on economic exploitation of the assets and land use changes which secure an effective return (Table 4.5).

**Table 4.5: Range of Potential Investment Drivers and Outcomes for Rural Land as a Financial Asset**

Investment Drivers	Investment Outcomes
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Structural (market): long-term value of farmland</li> <li>• Structural (market): income from agricultural production</li> <li>• Structural (regulatory): tax treatment of land ownership</li> <li>• Loss of democratic sovereignty and control of land by “transnational networks”</li> <li>• Structural (regulatory): territorial drivers</li> <li>• Agency: personal motivation</li> <li>• Agency: economic diversification</li> <li>• Agency: structure of investment vehicle/financial services provider</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Loss of democratic sovereignty and control of land by “transnational networks”</li> <li>• Change of rural land use, rural products and productivity and productive processes</li> <li>• Change in land management practices</li> <li>• Economic (productive) diversification</li> <li>• Changes to patterns of local employment -levels and types of jobs</li> <li>• New landed/landless relationships, signalled, for example, by land access rights or by switch from land ownership to land leasing</li> </ul> <p>Other changes determined by nature of investment and investor</p>

(Source: Gallent et al, 2019: p.18. Note: there is no necessary direct relationship between any particular driver and specific outcomes)

Lastly, Layard (2019) points towards a number of impacts arising from neoliberalism and the “denationalisation” of state land and property ownership including: the erosion of restraints (both legal and discursive) on private landowners’ exploitation of their land; the increased lack of transparency of land ownership as public land disappears from public scrutiny; the loss of social rented housing, particularly impactful in “attractive” rural areas, through the “right to buy” regime; the erosion of state-owned open and recreational space (particularly relevant in urban fringe areas); and the pervasive impact of dominant discourses which emphasise the private over public interests in land use decision-making.

### **4.3 Stakeholder Audit**

The stakeholder audit provided in Appendix 2 illustrates the complex mix of organisations that control, influence or are affected by rural land use change. Broadly, we can group the stakeholders into governmental, private, community and special interest, as depicted in the Appendix. However, these groupings are not always the most useful for analytical purposes given that the institutional merging and blending of rural policy and practice have blurred the divisions between interests. For instance, an organisation like the Royal Society for the Protection of Birds (RSPB) is a special interest organisation that represents a section of the

community committed to the protection and enhancement of birdlife and it is also a landowner and at times an initiator and implementor of government policy. Similarly, farmers are usually embedded in their rural communities, they may own their land or not and they are also often the implementor of agricultural and environmental policy. These overlapping roles and interests suggest that we should be more fluid in our categorising and less simple in our labelling of interests.

As suggested in Section 2, the history of rural land use decision-making has been characterised by the dominance of private land ownership. Landowners remain one of the most influential stakeholders in rural areas. Although their almost absolute control of the local economy and government has waned during the last century, land (albeit not always agriculture) remains fundamental to the rural economy and their persistence and significance continues. This has led to a dependent or inter-dependent relationship with state agencies and other stakeholders who wish to promote policy objectives that run counter to their interests.

The increasing presence of financial institutions in the structure of UK rural landownership has led to some discussion about their influence. The conclusion from the brief analysis above is that the strategies and actions of these landowners is likely to be quite varied, so any consideration of their role and impact needs to be sensitive to this. There might even be opportunities to draw upon their variable commitment to environmental and social governance principles to persuade them to operate more sustainably in their land management activities. Of course, the issue remains that they control decision-making as private landowners and have target returns to achieve through the exploitation of their assets.

We should, however, make some distinction between ownership and management. This goes beyond the division between owner occupation and farm tenancy. In the past each land owner with let land might have had multiple tenants, but increasingly it is the case that to assemble sufficient land to make a family income each tenant may be renting from many owners. In parallel there are now - especially in the arable sector - other forms of joint ventures, especially contract farming (Otsuka et al 2016). It is happening primarily for economic reasons but has a number of social and environmental consequences (see, for example, Winter and Lobley 2016). These structural developments are on-going and will develop further in the new post Brexit regime.

The main organisation that represents rural landowners in England and Wales is the Country Land and Business Association (abbreviated to CLA) who claim to be the only organisation solely dedicated to landownership. CLA members own or manage 10 million acres, over 50% of the rural land in England and Wales. Its 33,000-strong membership includes landowners, farmers and rural businesses. Although the CLA represent some of the largest landowners in the UK, a quarter of the members own less than 100 acres and many own less than 10 acres (CLA 2020). In Scotland a similar role is played by the Scottish Land & Estates, which has diversified its membership in recent years to include a greater number of smaller landowners. The other organisation representing and lobbying for agricultural landowners is the National

Farmers Union. The NFU has a strong presence at local and regional levels and also lobbies effectively with central government, being one of the main consultees on Defra's list. Although it also includes tenant farmers in its membership, the NFU is strongly orientated towards owner occupiers. In 1981 this led to the formation of a separate Tenant Farmers' Association.

We should also include a mention of the upstream and downstream industries which land managers and farmers have to interact with. Upstream suppliers of machinery, fertilisers, crop and animal protection products, finance, etc, and downstream processors of food and other agricultural produce, food services and retailers all exert a great influence on how land is managed (Rosi et. al. 2019). They often supply the technology and the new technological developments, and they can exert considerable power of what is grown and how it is grown. Many of these companies and organisations are seeking to make ongoing returns from the sale of their goods and services and are likely to take a long-term view of the sectors in which they operate. On that basis it is possible that they could be engaged more positively with the wider social and environmental aspects of land management. As both constrainers and facilitators, they remain influential players in land use and land management debates.

There is a long list of governmental organisations that can be involved in rural land use decision-making but two stand out for their significance: Defra and the Ministry of Housing, Communities and Local Government. Defra provides a key locus for policymaking, policy implementation and political lobbying for non-state organisations. Feeding directly into the Cabinet through the Secretary of State (currently George Eustice MP), it both controls and mediates the negotiation of legislation, policy and influence. Withdrawal from the EU provides this department with even greater power to structure rural policy and practice, although as we noted earlier, the state is usually dependent on others (particularly landowners) to carry out much of governmental policy on rural land use.

The Environment Agency, Natural England and the Forestry Commission, all sitting within Defra, provide other spaces for the mediation of conflicts over aspects of rural land use in England, whilst their Scottish and Welsh counterparts (see Appendix 2) do the same in the devolved nations. The Environment Agency orchestrates key sections of environmental policy and regulates issues that impinge on land use such as flood defence and management, contaminated land, pollution control and waste management. It has also been the promoter and author of river basin management plans, which are currently being reviewed (EA, 2019). Natural England is involved in a range of government services in rural areas including the designation and management of protected landscapes, overseeing public access to rural land and managing environmental land management. The Forestry Commission is the government department responsible for protecting, expanding and promoting the sustainable management of woodlands.

The other key government department overseeing the planning of land use change and development is the Ministry of Housing, Communities and Local Government (MHCLG). As mentioned in Chapter 3, the limits placed on planning regulation in rural areas mean that it has

relatively limited power to influence land use within agriculture. This tends to focus MHCLG's attention towards rural settlement planning, with local authorities determining the outcome of planning applications for new buildings and changes of use and the Ministry guiding (via the NPPF) and policing (via the Planning Inspectorate) this process.

At the local level there is a patchwork of local authorities (county and/or district) which deliver a range of services in rural areas, undertake land use planning functions and draw up strategies (for example for spatial planning, recreation, tourism, economic development and transport) that impinge on the use and development of land. Local authorities play an important part in representing local communities and facilitating their involvement in decision-making, although the limited influence over rural/agricultural land leaves something of a gap in this process. National Park authorities provide a slightly different role, sitting as they do on top of existing local authority areas. They focus on managing the various pressures and stakeholders in order to conserve and enhance the special landscape character of each park and to promote understanding and enjoyment of the area, while permitting or even promoting sustainable economic development.

There are numerous organisations and interests based on concerns for the environment, leisure and wildlife. The most influential of these, such as Friends of the Earth, Greenpeace and the World Wildlife Fund (WWF), operate at a national or even international scale. Thousands of others are more locally focused and, although they might interact with and shape the policy or practice of local authorities, their influence on strategic policy is more often funnelled through national or international NGO coalitions. These organisations have increasingly formed coalitions, both with each other (such as the Wildlife and Countryside LINK or the Green Alliance) and with other sectors (for example through various forms of partnership working) in order to increase their influence and impact. Some of them (notably the National Trust, the RSPB and the WWF) have taken control of certain areas of land through the acquisition of property rights and this adds to their power, at least in the areas where they own land. Local wildlife trusts have had a notable presence in the implementation of environmental schemes and have often built workable relationships with farmers and land managers. However, many of these organisations remain inherently dependent on government and/or other production-based sectors to leverage influence on most of the UK's countryside.

#### **4.4 Implications and Issues**

Evaluating this context in terms of Sustainable development, it is worth highlighting that the stated aims of many organisations and interest groups operating in or for the rural parts of Britain explicitly include statements about and commitments to Sustainable development. This provides a useful point of purchase on which to hang any evaluation, critique or lobbying for more sustainable outcomes in rural policy and practice.

The proviso to that is that the defining principles of sustainability are regularly adopted selectively, manipulated or even simply ignored by many such actors, especially when they

come into conflict with other priorities that are perceived to be more important. The optimal policy strategy within such debates and actions is to find approaches that lead to win-win-win outcomes in which the integration of the key principles of Sustainable development is achieved.

Such an integrated approach is implied or claimed for multifunctional land use, ecosystem service provision and other strategies drawing on the concept of natural capital. It is possibly encouraging that, at present, most organisations and interests across the economic-environmental-social spectrum have formally stated their support for such approaches. At one end are those (such as the WWF or the Natural Capital Commission) who fully subscribe to a “systems” view of the sustainability of rural land and advocate circular processes and the integration of environmental considerations in all areas of decision-making, whilst others (including the CLA and the NFU) see the benefits of monetising ecosystem resources and services in order to increase their business opportunities or state subsidies. Whatever the reasons for this support, however, its prevalence does open the door to greater prominence being given to environmental costs and benefits in decision-making.

Even though there is debate about the short and longer term implications of this type of approach, given the current dominance of neoliberal ideas, it provides a way to increase the integration of sustainability principles through market mechanisms. It is arguable that these could be built upon in the future and widened to include more participatory, egalitarian and, where appropriate, regulatory components. Furthermore, the more fundamental questions around property rights and landownership are likely to re-emerge in England, Wales and Northern Ireland (they have never gone away in Scotland) if market-orientated strategies fail to deliver ambitious but urgent climate change and biodiversity targets.

## **Chapter 5: Rural Policy**

### **The Search for a Vision**

This chapter sets out the way in which land use in rural areas has been placed and organised through various tiers and types of policy. Firstly, at the macro level is international policy, which has been negotiated, agreed and enacted through membership institutions such as the UN and EU. These policy commitments are then usually taken up by national governments. In the case of the UK, there are also national level policy frameworks that are relevant to rural land use with a further element of devolution to the Scottish, Welsh and Northern Irish national assemblies. Without an obvious regional level of decision-making, the final policy arena is at the local level. Here, unitary authorities or county/district combinations draw up and implement plans and policies on issues relevant to local rural land use. The most obvious gap in this framework – apart from regional policy – is that there is no integrated plan or strategy for rural areas or city-regions.

#### **5.1 International strategies relevant to rural land use**

At the international level, strategies, agreements and policy statements coming from the United Nations (UN) and European Union (EU) have had the most impact on UK policy and practice for rural land use. These two organisations have set the strategic framework through which UK central and local government policy has been structured in a number of key areas.

##### *5.1.1 The UN and International Trade Organisations*

Since 1986, the UN has produced a range of policy documents linked to sustainable land use and the protection of key natural resources. Perhaps the clearest statement of agreed UN policy at the present time is the 2030 Agenda for sustainable development (UN, 2015), which revolves around the seventeen Sustainable Development Goals outlined in Appendix 2 and illustrated in Figure 5.1.

Whilst all the sustainable development Goals have some bearing on rural land use policy and practice, possibly the most relevant are numbers:

- 2 End Hunger
- 15 Life on Land
- 13 Climate Action
- 12 Responsible Consumption and Production
- 14 Life Below Water (for rural water courses)

The detailing of these goals includes reference to maintaining and improving native ecosystems and building resilience in response to climate change and other environmental shocks, but multifunctional land use is not given any prominence. This was seen to be a gap and missed opportunity by German researchers who have called for the mainstreaming of “sustainable land use” (based on multifunctionality) in relevant UN Sustainable Development Goals and related conventions (Fritsche et al, 2015).

The goals have also been criticised for being idealistic, anthropocentric and too dependent on existing economic models of resource exploitation (see French and Kotze, 2018). However, they do provide an agreed strategic international framework within which countries like the UK can work. Indeed, the UK Government has allocated parts of its website to the monitoring and implementation of these goals, although their deeper impact on decision-making is more debateable (HM Government, 2020b; UKSSD, 2018).

**Figure 5.1: United Nations Sustainable development Goals** (source: UN 2015)



Other influential organisations and treaties, such as the World Trade Organisation and the General Agreement on Tariffs and Trade, determine the rules of international trade, which since 1995 have included food and agriculture. Mention should also be made of the Intergovernmental Panel on Climate Change, the Convention on Biological Diversity, the World Organisation for Animal Health, and the Codex Alimentarius Commission (Codex, dealing with food standards). These all help construct and oversee international regulations in their relevant area which provide detailed rules and standards, most of which are enshrined in EU and UK regulation. These rules/standards shape land management and agricultural practice on a day-to-day basis in a way that broad-based “sustainable development goals” might find difficult.

### *5.1.2 EU Common Agricultural Policy (CAP)*

It is apparent that UK agricultural policy (and rural policy more generally) has been dominated by the EU's Common Agricultural Policy (CAP) for over 40 years (Bateman and Balmford, 2018). The approach has been subject to numerous rounds of incremental reform. This has been in response to waves of criticism over time. In summary the critiques have focussed on:

- economic cost (of subsidies for taxpayers)
- environmental cost (imbalanced payments towards production over environment)
- consumer cost (increasing food prices)
- over-production (food mountains)
- inequity (between large farmers and the rest)
- short-term inducements and associated short term or non-permanent gains in environmental or social terms.

The CAP is now being phased out as the UK withdraws from the EU and the importance of its measures will decline as the new policy regime is introduced. However, it remains both an important international context for UK policy and a baseline of influence and impact that will shape rural land use for some time.

### *5.1.3 EU - Environment*

In terms of the environment, the EU's policy and implementation has been driven by the various Environmental Action Plans (EAPs). The EU's 7<sup>th</sup> Environmental Action Plan (running between 2014 and 2020) places emphasis on the protection of natural capital and developing a low-carbon economy (often through the application and use of new technology). Three main policy themes are covered:

- to protect, conserve and enhance the EU's natural capital;
- to turn the EU into a resource-efficient, green, and competitive low-carbon economy;
- to safeguard the EU's citizens from environment-related pressures and risks to health and wellbeing.

With respect to rural land use, the most significant policies and initiatives fit within the first and third theme above (relating to natural capital and safeguarding against environmental risks). This includes the policy priorities and implementation of a number of EU directives such as the Water Framework Directive, the Marine Strategy Framework Directive, the Nitrates Directive, the Floods Directive, the Birds and Habitats Directive, the Priority Substances Directive, and the Air Quality Directive. Also relevant are the EU regulations on the use of pesticides and the development and use of genetically modified organisms (GMOs).

The 7<sup>th</sup> EAP includes a specific commitment to, 'halt the loss of biodiversity and the degradation of ecosystem services in the Union by 2020 and restore them in so far as

feasible...’ (EU, 2014: p.7). It also emphasises a “natural capital” approach to land use decision-making and contains implicit (rather than explicit) support for a multifunctional approach in the following two policy statements:

*Protecting, conserving, enhancing and valuing the Union’s natural capital therefore also requires tackling problems at source through, inter alia, better integration of natural capital objectives in the development and implementation of other policies, and ensuring that policies are coherent and **deliver mutual benefits**.* (ibid: p.25, emphasis added)

*To reduce the most significant man-made pressures on land, soil and other ecosystems in Europe, action will be taken to ensure that decisions, relating to land use, at all relevant levels **give proper consideration to environmental as well as social and economic impacts**.* (ibid: p.28, emphasis added)

#### *5.1.4 EU - Rural Development*

Although not directly focused on rural land use, the EU’s rural development programme has had a significant role in organising and facilitating stakeholder efforts towards the sustainable economic and social development of UK rural areas. In recent years the EU’s LEADER (Links between Actions for the Development of the Rural Economy) Programme - an EU initiative – has become the flagship programme for such approaches. This is based on strong partnership working and explicit involvement of local communities (see European Network for Rural Development, 2016), aiming to build a bottom-up endogenous model of development which integrates a range of actors and policy priorities. Possibly the one absentee from this mix has been agricultural interests and the policy priorities set by the CAP. Despite some tweaking of CAP to bend in this direction, critics have pointed out that it has been, and remains, a key reason for a disintegrated approach to rural policy in Europe (Shucksmith, 2011 and LDNet, 2020).

#### *5.1.5 EU - Trade and Tariff Agreements*

Under-pinning and shaping the balance of agricultural and other rural land use have been the various trade agreements negotiated within and outside of the European community. In recent years between 60-65% of the UK’s total agricultural exports and around 70% of imports have been with other EU countries (van Berkum et. al. 2016), especially Ireland, France, the Netherlands and Germany. The EU Customs Union and related trade agreements have eliminated customs duties on bilateral trade and, along with the subsidies provided through the CAP, have protected British farmers from the rigours of international trade. With Brexit, those trade arrangements are being remade and renegotiated and, even if the UK adopts the “fall-back” World Trade Organisation rules, the resulting land use implications are likely to be significant.

## **5.2 Current and post-Brexit UK national policy for rural land use**

Post-Brexit UK policy is driven by principle that public funding should be restricted to the provision of public goods (Bateman and Balmford 2018, p.293). Foremost is the Agriculture Bill (HM Government, 2020a) which provides the financial tools for the current government policy on agricultural support. Although this is an evolving policy stance, yet to be confirmed, the Bill states that, when enacted, it will allow the Secretary of State to give financial assistance to farmers for a range of purposes linked to rural land use. Most of these are targeted at the protection, conservation or management of environmental resources and ecosystem services, although there are additional economic priorities aimed at increasing agricultural productivity and diversification. The overall package is to be guided by a regard for ‘the need to encourage production of food by producers in England and its production by them in an environmentally sustainable way’ (ibid: p.2 point 4), a clause added to the Bill in response to concerns raised by farming interests.

It is anticipated that the Agriculture Bill will operationalise this financial support through the production and implementation of a seven-year “multi-annual financial assistance plan”, which will set out the Government’s strategic priorities and detail the Environmental Land Management (ELM) schemes to be funded. This plan is to be annually monitored and updated on a five-year rolling basis (ibid: p.5). The detailing of the scheme and its updates are likely to have significant implications for rural land use in England and for the rest of the UK through the amendment and adoption by devolved administrations. Their importance means that they are likely to become a focus for stakeholder lobbying and influence through the consultation processes around their drafting and adoption.

The ELM schemes are also meant to incorporate the policies and priorities outlined in the Government’s policy statement ‘A Green Future: Our 25 Year Plan to Improve the Environment’, which was introduced to parliament in January 2020 will be enacted through the Environment Bill (HM Government, 2020c). This includes commitments to rural land use in England (only). The policies in the 25 Year Environment Plan, the first of the Government’s proposed “Environmental Improvement Plans” under the Environment Bill, are grouped into six key “action areas” (HM Government, 2018: p.10):

- using and managing land sustainably (in Chapter 1);
- recovering nature and enhancing the beauty of landscapes (Chapter 2);
- connecting people to the environment to improve health and wellbeing (Chapter 3);
- increasing resource efficiency, and reducing pollution and waste (Chapter 4);
- securing clean, productive and biologically diverse seas and oceans (Chapter 5); and
- protecting and improving the global environment (Chapter 6).

The most significant policies for the future of rural land use are contained in Chapters 1 and 2 of the document and are detailed in Appendix 2. Combined, they draw upon and operationalise a “natural capital” approach to land management. The Executive Summary states ‘We will also

set gold standards in protecting and growing natural capital – leading the world in using this approach as a tool in decision-making’ (ibid: p.9). The government has made a manifesto commitment to maintain and even raise environmental standards, as well as those relating to workers’ rights, food quality and animal welfare (Conservative and Unionist Party 2019).

The Environment Bill also proposes to fill the Brexit “governance gap” with the establishment of an Office for Environmental Protection’ (OEP) which will have powers of scrutiny, advice and enforcement, with amendments expanding its remit to include climate change (HoC 2020). Water resource planning is given some space in the Bill with a commitment to develop joint regional plans for longer term water resource management and a statutory duty for water companies to produce drainage management plans. On the planning front, the Bill includes proposals to introduce a biodiversity net gain requirement in England of 10% for new development schemes. It will also legislate for the introduction of voluntary (but legally binding) conservation covenants between landowners and “responsible bodies” which will seek to conserve the natural or heritage features of the land.

Although the Environment Bill is taking forward the policies of the 25 Year Plan, an evaluation of post-Brexit environmental policy risks commissioned by Friends of the Earth (Burns et al, 2020) reflected many of the concerns raised by environmental and wildlife groups. It looked at various scenarios (Norwegian, Canadian, Turkish, as well as planned and chaotic “no deal” Brexit approaches) and identified a number of potential high level risks in the areas of governance gaps, coordination problems between Westminster and the devolved nations, and the level of protection offered by international environmental commitments. The authors judged that nature protection policies are particularly at risk under all four scenarios.

The current government has also produced two other major policy documents which are claimed to mesh with ‘A Green Future’ and the Environment Bill: ‘The Industrial Strategy’ (HM Government, 2018) and ‘The Clean Growth Strategy’ (HM Government, 2018). The main policies and initiatives from these documents related to rural land use are outlined in Appendix 2, but it is of note that the “natural capital” approach is mentioned in both documents and is given centre stage in sections of the Clean Growth Strategy concerned with agriculture and rural land use. It is encouraging to note this attempt at policy integration, although all three documents have been subject to criticism for being under-specified, under-resourced and too centralised (Jacobs, 2017; Fai, 2018; WWF, 2017). The promises and commitments they contain could also be undermined by post-Brexit (and now post-COVID) trade deals.

In the area of spatial planning, the latest version of the National Planning Policy Framework (NPPF) (MCHLG 2019) includes sections on achieving sustainable development, making effective use of land, protecting green belt land, meeting the challenge of climate change, conserving the natural and historic environment and facilitating the sustainable use of minerals. All these themes and their related policy statements are relevant to rural land use in as far as planning controls allow. It is encouraging from an integrated rural land use perspective that the current NPPF states that:

*Achieving sustainable development means that the planning system has three overarching objectives, which **are interdependent and need to be pursued in mutually supportive ways** (so that opportunities can be taken to secure net gains across each of the different objectives).... (MHCLG, 2019: para. 8, emphasis added)*

Following on from this, the NPPF expands on the economic, social and environmental dimensions of sustainable development. The key development principle for decision-making on planning applications is the ‘presumption in favour of sustainable development’ (ibid: para. 11). As mentioned in Chapter 3, although this supports the integrating theme mentioned above, it can be criticised for its practical effect of providing landowners and developers with a strong presumption in favour of development.

With regard to agricultural land use and farming as an economic activity, the NPPF reiterates the well-established policies of protecting the best and most versatile agricultural land, allowing development in the green belt that provides for the needs of agriculture and enabling farm diversification and land-based rural businesses. There are few mentions of rural land use *per se* but one of the most interesting sections concerns ‘making the most effective use of land’. This states that planning policies and decisions should:

*... encourage multiple benefits from both urban and rural land, including through mixed use schemes and taking opportunities to achieve net environmental gains – such as developments that would enable new habitat creation or improve public access to the countryside... (ibid: para 118).*

This at least provides a policy hook on which multifunctional land use development and management can be promoted, as does the biodiversity new gain requirement alluded to above.

In Scotland, the Scottish Government have set in motion a significant change in national policy and practice for managing rural land use and farming support. Along with a programme of land reform, the devolved administration has prepared and begun to implement a national, and statutorily “required”, Land Use Strategy (Scottish Government 2011 and 2016). This has been widely seen as a radical initiative that attempts to establish an integrated policy and implementation framework for managing Scotland’s land in a sustainable way. The current (2016) strategy is built on three core objectives, which are detailed in nine policies and five proposals (see Appendix 2). A set of ten ‘principles of sustainable land use’ are advocated as a day-to-day checklist for all individuals and organisations with significant land management responsibilities. The Strategy puts considerable emphasis on the protection, maintenance and enhancement of ecosystem services. The fourth principle of sustainable land use states that, ‘land use decisions should be informed by an understanding of the functioning of the ecosystems which they affect in order to maintain the benefits of the ecosystem services which they provide’ (ibid: p.9). The Strategy also hints strongly at multifunctional land use, regularly mentioning the “multiple benefits” to be derived from Scotland’s land resources.

The early stages of implementing the Land Use Strategy have been evaluated based upon selective case study research (Phillips et al, 2014). This suggested that existing mechanisms have been adapted and/or applied effectively in line with the Land Use Strategy principles and that the ecosystem services and multiple benefit principles have been two of the most comprehensively applied. Other principles had been implemented more implicitly, indicating that “embedded” understandings and “ways of doing things” can be as valuable as formal requirements and procedures. However, the report identified a number of “barriers” to policy implementation, the most significant of which concerned the lack of data and techniques to support the planning process, the availability of financial resources (grants/incentives) to support delivery of integrated land use, and difficulties around the “soft infrastructure” of partnership working and leadership. Other commentaries (e.g. Scottish Wildlife Trust, 2018) have claimed that the Land Use Strategy has suffered political neglect and not received the investment needed to make it work for all parts of Scotland. Following through on the findings of the evaluation, they argue that Regional Land Use Partnerships could provide an important forum for resolving conflicts of interest and a governance mechanism to coordinate local action.

With regard to agricultural support, both the Scottish and Welsh governments are also working on their own post-Brexit arrangements. The Scottish Government has introduced the Agriculture (Retained EU Law and Data) (Scotland) Bill (Scottish Government, 2020) this year to create powers to ensure CAP projects continue. Scotland is working on a transition period until 2024, during which it will introduce measures to streamline, simplify and free up resources to pilot and test activities for future farming and rural support policy beyond that date. This work is being undertaken by the Farming and Food Production Future Policy Group (Scottish Government, 2020).

In Wales, the devolved government are moving ahead with their ‘Sustainable Farming Scheme’ (Welsh Government, 2019; and also NAW, 2019) which sets out a proposed scheme similar to the one for England. As was the case with the English version, many respondents to the consultation argued that the proposed scheme was heavily environment-focused and did not give enough attention to ensuring food security through (sustainable) food production. This debate is currently being taken through into a “co-design” programme in which stakeholders are being involved in the detailed design of the scheme.

One further dimension of the Welsh Government’s approach to rural land use is provided by their Well-being of Future Generations (Wales) Act 2015 (Welsh Government, 2015), which provides a general power of well-being and a duty on public bodies to carry out sustainable development. The range of aspects covered by this power/duty is significant, covering economic, social, environmental and cultural components of community well-being. The Act and the institutional arrangements set-up to implement it are likely to shape rural land use policy for the foreseeable future.

Given the Welsh Government's focus on community well-being, it is telling that a recent review of government policy from an "equality" (i.e. "social sustainability") perspective (UK2070 Commission, 2020) has criticised existing policy and practice across the country arguing that continuing with fragmented, underpowered and short-term initiatives will not work. They state that there is a need for a large-scale, comprehensive, long-term and devolved plan of action to deliver change. There must be a shared endeavour across the political parties, the devolved administrations (at regional and local levels) and involving the public, private and voluntary sector.

The key actions they urge are:

- A Spatially Just Transition to Zero Carbon.
- Delivering a Connectivity Revolution.
- Creating New Global Centres of Excellence.
- Strengthening the Foundations of Local Economies.
- Rethinking the Housing Crisis.
- Harnessing Cultural and Environmental Assets.
- Implementing a Comprehensive Framework for Inclusive Devolution.
- Future Skilling the United Kingdom.
- Levelling the Playing Field: Fairer Access to Funds.
- Shaping the Future: A National Spatial Plan for England.

This review responds to the "equity" principle within sustainable development and links very closely to the UN's sustainable development Goal (#10) of reducing inequalities. In those ways, it flags inequality and social sustainability as a concern for any policy framework seeking to deliver sustainable rural land use.

At the time of writing this report, the Northern Irish Government had only just come back from suspension. There are now plans to develop an independent agricultural policy to replace CAP, but we have not covered them here.

### **5.3 Local Policy**

The main policy documents at the local level with significant implications for rural land use decision-making are:

- Local Development Plans (including Neighbourhood Plans).
- National Park Land Management Plans.
- River Basin Management Plans.
- Other types of land management plan (e.g. for the Defence Estate and urban fringe land management).

The first of these, local development plans, is discussed more extensively in Chapter 3, but it should be noted here that they provide an important framework for changes of land use and development in some parts (but some parts only) of the countryside and will often be used as a baseline or context for other non-statutory plans and strategies, such as land use management plans for areas of open countryside or sector-specific tourism strategies. Along with Neighbourhood Plans, they provide an important, if flawed, vehicle for community involvement in decision-making and a space for the construction of local visions for the future development and use of land.

One of the most interesting local planning frameworks for land use change are the Land Management Plans prepared for the 15 National Parks. The significance of these is that they extend beyond the normal reach of the land use planning system to cover the use and management of agricultural and other open land. They have been in operation since 1995 and have adapted to the sustainability agenda as it has penetrated policy and practice (Carter et al, 2003). The plans are designed to guide the actions of a range of local stakeholders and this is reflected in the fact that many of the plans take the form of “partnership plans”. The plans have been praised for providing an effective mechanism for conflict mediation (Allen, 2009) but they remain heavily dependent on landowners and farmers for effective implementation of the policies and agreements. Despite this, they provide a well-established and moderately effective example of integrated land use decision-making in open countryside.

The policy agenda for the English National Parks (and AONBs) is currently being reconsidered in the light of the Glover review of protected landscapes (Glover, 2019, summarised in Appendix 2). The report provides a wide-ranging assessment of the role and operation of England’s designated landscape areas and 27 proposals for the future. It has been unanimously lauded as a radical shake-up of the system, although some wonder whether the proposals for new legislation, new resources and new organisational arrangements can weather the current political storms around Brexit and more recently, COVID-19 (Bell and Garrod, 2019).

Planning the land use and development of river basins has a similarly long lineage as that for National Parks. Catchment Area Management Plans came into operation on the back of the privatisation of the water industry and the establishment of the National Rivers Authority (NRA) in 1989. Since then the Environment Agency, as the successor body to the NRA and in response to the EU’s Water Framework Directive, has developed the approach under the current applet ‘River Basin Management Plans’. These plans are meant to provide an integrated framework for water management within the nation’s river basins. Like National Parks, they cross local authority boundaries and draw in local councils and other relevant stakeholders in partnership arrangements. The significance of these plans for this report is that they are resource-based and underpinned by an ecosystem services philosophy. They therefore have some resonance in the kind of approach that could be used to plan for rural land resources. It is salutary to note however, that one of the biggest problems faced in recent years has been ongoing institutional fragmentation. This has led researchers to conclude that the current

‘complex governance arrangement actually demonstrates de-coherence over time’ (Benson and Lorenzoni, 2017: p.1921).

Although in a period of transition and uncertainty, the policy map outlined in Appendix 2 shows that the main policy themes currently shaping rural and-use policy are:

- the pursuit of sustainability, with the concept often expressed as an integrated entity in which environmental, social and economic objectives need to be delivered at the same time;
- the increasing use of evaluation and appraisal frameworks based on ecosystem services and natural capital, with subsequent policy development moving in this direction;
- the continued support for agricultural production and security of food supply, with a commitment to pay for public goods through forms of subsidy and support;
- a stated commitment to community participation and partnership working, even though there are difficulties and barriers constraining that; and
- increasing willingness to organise planning and management arrangements in an integrated way, focused on resource use, but (again) significant problems in trying to deliver that.

#### **5.4 Thematic reflections**

The overarching theme of sustainable development permeates all levels of policy, at least in terms of policy rhetoric. It can be seen from the UN-level all the way down to the local level. The definition of the term has been manipulated and shaped to fit many different interest perspectives, but the central tenets remain as a policy beacon around which rural land use decisions are meant to be directed.

The policy priority afforded to resilience is regularly mentioned in many of the policy documents reviewed, whilst multifunctional land use is a little less well covered. It is encouraging nonetheless that all the UK government policy documents reviewed give some support to this policy objective in their pages.

One of the political projects which has blended with and modified the concept of sustainability has been that advocating a neoliberal (market-based) trajectory for economic, social and environmental policy, creating policy statements and implementation mechanisms that are either dependent on, or utilise, market mechanisms to deliver sustainable outcomes. Neoliberalism also places considerable emphasis on private property rights, thereby giving landowners and farmers a prominent role in both shaping policy and its implementation. Linked to this discourse is the dominant role given to incentives rather than regulation. However, regulation (at least in terms of the preservation and conservation of environmental and heritage resources in rural areas) remains an important part of the implementation tool kit. Whether this produces an appropriately holistic approach to resource management is questionable. Given

the above, a more integrated framework might be available from the “systems” approach in terms of ecosystem services. The policy statements reviewed are increasingly including this concept, at least as part of the rationale for policy intervention, if only rarely, as a fully-fledged framework for decision-making. The best example of this at present is provided by the Scottish Government’s Land Use Strategy, which places ecosystem services at the heart of policy and practice.

## **Chapter 6: How Others Tackle It**

### **International Comparisons and Contexts**

This chapter sets out what the wider literature indicates about land use policy and decision-making in other countries. This is necessarily brief but does give an indication of different issues and outcomes. It also provides three examples from around the world in a little more detail to highlight how land use and land use decisions are very often the product of long run, complex sets of factors and relations. The following overview is certainly not comprehensive, but it gives a flavour of the breadth of countries analysed and forms the basis for the selection of the extended case studies that follow.

#### **6.1 Context is (almost) everything**

##### **The limitations and value of comparative analysis**

As Keenleyside et al (2009) have emphasised, the simplistic transfer of policy and practices between countries is fraught with problems. They state that, '(t)he direct lifting of individual policies and practices has not proved successful in the past' (ibid: p.18), suggesting that it is more useful to focus on the principles behind practice rather than the specific policies and initiatives deployed. In doing so they recognise that every nation (and often every region) has its own character, made up of variations in the planning system, institutional structures, socio-cultural characteristics, population pressures and environmental priorities. Furthermore, they end with the warning that, '(w)hen drawing conclusions from this review it is important to bear in mind the effect of differences in bio-geographic factors, socio-economic conditions and political culture, both in other countries and within the UK' (ibid: p.14).

Given these limitations, we offer up the following review of international experience with some caution. However, we have tried to provide both a relatively wide sample in the summary of the literature and a more selective set of short case studies to illustrate certain principles that might be useful in considering the best approach in the UK. Of course, we would also point to the recent experience within the UK, particularly the more integrated approaches to land use decision-making in Scotland and to rural development more generally through the EU's LEADER (Links between Actions for the Development of the Rural Economy) programme.

#### **6.2 Existing research on international case studies of rural land use**

A number of academic studies have been undertaken over recent years which have examined different approaches to rural land use. Keenleyside et al (2009) examined land use planning and management in Germany, Japan, the Netherlands, New Zealand and Sweden. Their study was part of the *Land Use Futures* project (GOS 2010) which looked at the approaches required to tackle emergent land use challenges faced by the UK. They concluded that other European countries seemed to provide models of more pro-active and indicative land use planning, with

more developed and effective regional level policies. They noted that this made it easier to implement related policies, for example on renewable energy. There was also evidence of relevant examples involving the liberalisation of agricultural markets and the promotion of environmentally sustainable farming. Cutting across these themes is the issue of governance, and Sweden's emphasis on environmental sustainability, international responsibility and a consistency of direction was highlighted as impressive.

McMorran et al (2020) explored international experience of community and municipal land ownership as part of the Scottish Land Commission's work on land reform. They reported on examples of:

- collective properties and commons (common land in England and Wales; communal property regimes in Italy; and communal agrarian tenure in Mexico);
- municipal ownership and commonage (state/community commons in Norway; municipal control of collective tenure in France; common property in Europe's forests; municipal commonages in South Africa; and municipal land administration in Germany);
- third sector and Community Land Trusts (Community Land Trusts in the USA); and
- customary tenure and indigenous groups (provision of collective title in Kenya; indigenous rights in Norway; and indigenous partnerships in Canada).

They concluded that the legal ownership of title is often not the only defining characteristic of communal and community ownership at a global level, suggesting that there are more subtle forms of land reform than wholesale state or community ownership. Policy and legislative mechanisms were also seen to play an important role in establishing and protecting communal and community land systems whilst the level of security of tenure and the degree of local control was found to vary within and between the different categories of tenure. As an important contextual point, they argue that the historical development of land rights illustrated the importance of power relations and the role of markets in influencing land reform over time.

France-Hudson (2017) looked in depth at the influence of the "social obligation norm" of property in New Zealand in relation to effective environmental policy implementation, in this case for fisheries quotas and emissions trading. He concluded that:

*In developing new tools to respond to environmental crises the aim should be to explicitly recognise and articulate that private property already has inherent obligations and these can be exploited to achieve particular outcomes. If we choose, we can put the environment front and centre while also using private property and the happy effect it has on how we behave. (ibid: p.127)*

Franks and McGloin (2007), meanwhile, evaluated the potential of environmental co-operatives to deliver environmental benefits in an integrated way. Using evidence of experience in the Netherlands, they argued that this arrangement had the potential to be

developed in the UK but it required a level of political and financial support that was, at that time, lacking.

Porras et al (2013) evaluated the long-term use of ecosystem service payments in Costa Rica. The longevity and effectiveness of the scheme concerned was said to be due to ongoing financial support from governments of different political persuasions and buy-in from the full range of stakeholders. However, this required active engagement with private sector interests and seeking out other grant aid from national and international sources. The scheme complements regulatory instruments which prevent land being changed from forest to agriculture or urban use. A consistency of institutional management and key personnel has also helped, along with a relatively favourable economic context. At one stage there was a developing bias in favour of payments to the larger farms, in part due to increasing corporate landownership, but that has been corrected somewhat by tweaking the eligibility criteria for payments.

Von Haaren and Reich (2006) focused on how the German government tackles the implementation of the EU Habitats Directive, specifically the creation of a national habitat network based on multifunctional “greenways”. They concluded that there was a gap between scientific knowledge (of habitat requirements) and practical implementation and that, ‘(t)he structure of landownership in Germany is probably one of the major reasons. Publicly owned land is scarce and, especially in West Germany, the size of privately owned properties is small’ (ibid: p.19).

This means that nature conservationists must negotiate with numerous private landowners, who are forced into quite intensive forms of agriculture in order to survive economically. This leads to an opportunistic approach to policy implementation in which land availability, rather than scientific criteria, determines which areas are included in the networks.

A further lesson from the German “greenways” policy is the fragmented and partial approach to defining and implementing these networks due to the different approaches and priorities of the federal states. This leads the authors to recommend that a stronger national steer be provided both through legislation and policy. The landownership problem is felt to require more focused financial incentives, preferably through the reform of CAP.

Marr et al (2016) compared rural land management practice in England to that in Ontario, Canada. They suggest that a more “productionist” approach has been evident in Ontario with a preference towards land-sparing, whereas England has developed a more “post-productionist” (land-sharing) policy package, based on EU policy requirements.

Rivera et al (2019) assessed the role of “social capital” in facilitating effective and sustainable agricultural/rural development in seven countries (Germany, Spain, Italy, Lithuania, Latvia, Denmark and Israel). They reaffirmed the importance of trust and the quality of relations, common interests and cooperation as essential, whilst a sense of community and culture and

tradition also play supportive roles. However, they emphasise that these relationships and values take many years to grow and manifest themselves and that they can be difficult to measure and incorporate into policy objectives.

Finally, Lago et al (2010) were commissioned by the Scottish Government to see if there were any lessons from practices outside Scotland that could inform the development of the country's Land Use Strategy. They analysed four case studies from Europe (Austria, Germany, Switzerland and Helsinki, Finland) and one from Australia. The case studies showed few similarities as they tended to be shaped by their own regional or local context. They concluded that:

*Each case study clearly demonstrates the development of the land use strategy as a complex process that involves different levels, sectors and stakeholders. The strategies incorporated an iterative process based on the dialogue amongst all participants in order to successfully define common goals as well as to reach them. A core element in the development of these land use strategies was the dialogue amongst all participants to reach decisions based on consensus. A major challenge in their development was to facilitate and motivate stakeholders to participate in order to attain a conciliation of interests concerning land resources, types and extent of land use. (ibid: p.ii)*

This chimes somewhat with the analysis in the previous chapter of the current state of Scotland's Land Use Strategy, noting difficulties in sustaining the motivation and commitment of politicians and other stakeholders.

### **6.3 Selected international cases potentially relevant to the UK context**

Based on the review above and in discussion with the Project Steering Group, three international examples were selected for further analysis. The reasons for their selection are explained at the start of each section.

#### *6.3.1 Japan*

Japan makes for useful comparison due to several key similarities to the UK, as well as some distinct differences. An island nation that is not part of a larger trading pact, Japan is part of the G8 group of countries. Japan has a scarce economically useable land supply and pattern of intensive agriculture. The dense population of around 125 million is both falling and aging.

Notable structuring factors which differ from the UK include the nation being prone to natural disasters (earthquakes, landslips and floods) and hence a concern for resilience features strongly in its policy measures. The history and subsequent change to the structure of Japan's economy means that most farmers work part-time with incomes being supplemented, or often

supplanted, by non-agricultural incomes. Japan has in recent decades looked to the EU for policy ideas to address both economic and environmental policy for rural areas.

By way of historical context, Japan's major post-WW2 land reform programme created around 6 million land-owning farmers by breaking up the large landowners' holdings. This process was part of political and economic restructuring efforts led by the US (Parker and Amati, 2009; Dower, 1999). This had the effect of reinforcing cooperatives and structures of collaboration (both consumer and producer cooperatives) as well as promoting one party (centre-right) political stability from 1950 until the 1990s. The ownership fragmentation post-1949 has also led to widespread landscape change (Hebbert, 1994). This post-war legacy has also fostered strong local community ties and institutional arrangements to manage common-pool resources (e.g. water and forests) which then aided social sustainability. However, the conditions of operation have not delivered strong environmental sustainability (Yamashita, 2006; Kiminami and Kiminami, 2006).

A protectionist agricultural policy predominated until the 2000s, largely to protect domestic rice markets. Around this time Japan also started to explore how to deliver stronger environmental performance and began embarking on environmental land management schemes derived from European experience after 2007 (Nishizawa, 2015). The planning system is a zoning-based system with codification of regulations and tight control over urban development (Millward, 2006). Development is restricted in rural (agricultural) zones, but farmers may build houses on their land for their own occupation (Waswo, 2002; Sorensen, 2002).

Key lessons here relate to ownership structures and both the intentional and unintentional outcomes for sustainable development derived from a more fragmented land ownership. It also highlights how land reform does not equate with nationalisation: in this case the process created many new private owners with a number of intended and unintended consequences, ranging from political shifts to environmental neglect, as well as fostering interesting forms of collaboration and cooperatisation.

Japan is also interesting as the structure of ownership gave rise to the first Community Supported Agriculture (CSA) initiatives in the early 1970s. Small groups of farmers were able to negotiate with groups of consumers who would effectively guarantee their harvest on the basis that the produce had been grown according to standards agreed between the producers and consumers directly (see Parker, 2005). Subsequently, experiments with this form of shortened food chain with direct consumer-producer relations have become more widespread around the world (Henderson and Van En, 2007) and their encouragement could aid the localisation and quality/eco-credentials drive in UK agriculture.

### 6.3.2 New Zealand

Another island nation, New Zealand has historically had close ties to the UK, but these were challenged by the UK's entry into the EEC in 1973, which introduced tariff barriers to New Zealand's UK-bound agricultural exports, previously one of the mainstays of its economy. A range of agricultural subsidies were introduced, constituting 40% of farm income by the early 1980s. However, these were withdrawn in 1984 under the influence of a neoliberal reform agenda. This resulted in major changes in New Zealand farming – for example a decline in sheep farming – and agricultural intensification, including greater use of fertilisers, pesticides and food stock inputs. Although there was also some increase in forestry, researchers have questioned the sustainability of this trajectory (MacLeod, 2006). Rural communities and towns also suffered declining employment and population in the wake of the 1984 reforms (Wilson, 2013).

Although the New Zealand context is very different from the UK, with a much lower density of population and a larger agricultural sector, these changes do raise concerns about the consequences of any post-Brexit withdrawal or drastic reduction in UK farm support in relation to the environmental and social sustainability of British agriculture. However, a more positive lesson from New Zealand's agricultural policy is a measure of success in achieving more multifunctional rural landscapes, particularly through better integration of livestock farming and forestry. This was initially driven in part by concerns over soil erosion (Tustin et al, 1979).

The second respect in which New Zealand may have important lessons for UK land use policy is in relation to the distinctive approach taken to rural planning. At first, a strong colonial legacy meant that the country's planning system was largely modelled on UK legislation. However, the Town and Country Planning Acts of 1953 and 1977 began to take New Zealand down a different path, with an emphasis on Matters of National Importance (MNIs), including protection of high-value agricultural land, preserving heritage and amenity assets and maintaining the natural character of coasts, lakes and rivers (Miller, 2015).

The radical change of approach came in 1991 with the Resource Management Act (RMA), which sought to bring all aspects of environmental planning, including land, air, coastal and water-related resources, within a single framework. The key principle of the RMA is sustainable management (rather than the more ambitious goal of sustainable development). At a time when deregulatory neoliberal policies were in the ascendant globally, the RMA drew on New Zealand's strong landscape and environmental heritage and identity to put the environment at the apex of the land use planning system.

The government claimed that the RMA would both strengthen environmental protections and streamline planning decisions, but critics have argued that this represented an uneasy compromise between environmentalism and neoliberalism (Grundy et al, 1996). Both environmental organizations and business interests have been critical of the RMA, as have Maori advocates, but it remains the basis of New Zealand's land use system. Some critics have

argued that its environmental goals could be more effectively achieved by a stronger spatial focus with better integration at a local/neighbourhood level (Coombes, 2003), while others have emphasised that greater investment in capacity and training within the planning system might have enabled the ambitious principles of the RMA to inform land use decision-making on the ground more effectively (Miller, 2015).

### *6.3.3 Sweden*

Sweden is sparsely populated, with around 85% of its nine million population living in towns and cities. Forests cover over 50% of the land area, and timber industries are economically significant. Many remote areas are threatened by economic stagnation and population decline. Keenleyside et al (2009) highlight how the Swedish approach could be of interest to policymakers in the UK given its attention to developing multifunctional countryside and how the Swedes have more recently put this principle into their national food strategy, with attention to all links in the food value chain (Scott et al, 2018).

The reforms since the 1990s to the CAP had, over time, produced a trend of agricultural intensification on higher grade land and “idling” in other areas of Sweden (Trubins, 2013). This outcome presented a policy challenge which has involved encouraging diversification and multifunctionality (Granvik et al, 2012; Gren and Andersson, 2018). A key shift was initiated in 2008 with an integrated regional development approach that linked actions across a variety of rural policy headings. This has embraced the idea of the “new rurality” involving a localised agri-food systems approach (Ryttonen, 2014).

The regional approach to rural development is also influenced by the orientation that Sweden has adopted regarding the environment since the 1970s (Keenleyside et al, 2009). This in turn has been shaped by the cultural place of nature in Swedish life. The cultural and historical conditions prevailing in Sweden have informed a more consensual political disposition towards the environment and this has surely informed their rural policy development in the last two decades.

Overall, political continuities and the degree of consensus over land use and planning are rooted in cultural attitudes that have enabled a more progressive set of policies towards the environment. This in turn has fostered the approach adopted to facilitate integrated rural development in Sweden following unwanted trends prompted by the incentives derived from CAP funding.

## **6.4 Implications for key themes**

The international experience briefly summarised here suggests that efforts to diversify and render not only land use but farm incomes more diverse have been matched with a concern to deliver greater environmental sustainability. The Japan example demonstrates countervailing questions about the structure of landownership, indicating how smaller producers can

cooperate where there is a need, and how relations between consumers and producers can be closer under such circumstances.

Some of the most impressive progress towards sustainable development has been achieved by countries that have successfully mobilised strong existing cultures of environmental responsibility to implement integrated nature-based land use frameworks. Sweden and New Zealand are perhaps the best examples. While the UK arguably does not have such strong ecological traditions, it does have other cultural resources that could be mobilised in favour of an ambitious, ecologically driven integrated rural land use policy. These include the powerful, deep-rooted connections between landscape and national identity in each of the UK nations, strong traditions of wildlife protection and conservation, and the more recent groundswell of climate and biodiversity concern, especially among young people.

International comparisons also underline the crucial importance of involving and achieving consensus between all key stakeholders, especially at a local level, if sustainable development goals are to be achieved. This takes time, patience and resources, and where this ongoing commitment wanes, as appears to have been the case to some degree in Scotland and perhaps New Zealand, ambitious policy goals may not be fully achieved. As well as good local integration, effective regional planning appears to be critical to the achievement of landscape-scale sustainable development goals (especially in relation to renewable energy), and here the trajectory of UK policy over the last few years may be a concern. Finally, international comparisons suggest that a mix of policy tools may be necessary to achieve optimal results. In Costa Rica, for example, private landowners were successfully incentivised towards ecosystem services goals, but only in a context of strong regulation, full stakeholder buy-in, international financial support and ongoing political commitment.

## **Chapter 7: The Challenges and Opportunities: Into the Future**

### **7.1 Key questions**

This chapter explores the ideas being put forward for post-Brexit rural policy/practice in the UK, based on our review. A range of these ideas are posed explicitly in relation to sustainable development and variously cite the other key themes or concepts as outlined. These are organised around questions the following questions:

- a) What will a post-Brexit **rural policy package** look like and which institutions are likely to be involved in its coordination and delivery?
- b) How can the attributes and benefits of **strategic management and political devolution** be most effectively combined?
- c) What role should the **planning system** play in rural land use decision-making?
- d) Which **stakeholders** are likely to be most influential in post-Brexit rural land use decision-making?
- e) What **proposals and ideas** could help shape more effective (sustainable) rural land use policy and practice?

### **7.2 Rural policy**

As we outlined in Chapter 4 above, UK rural policy is at a key juncture and the post-Brexit policy package is currently being created. Arguments about the strengths and weaknesses of the CAP are slipping into the shadows and new instruments are taking centre stage. The Agriculture Bill is establishing the financial tools to take forward the principle that public funding should be restricted to the provision of public goods.

In England, the new ‘Environmental Land Management Scheme’ will specify exactly what those public goods should be. This builds on efforts to re-orient CAP payments since the early 1990s.

Meanwhile, north of the border, the devolved Scottish Assembly is pushing forward with its land reform programme and developing a more holistic approach tied to its Land Use Strategy. This has been both radical in approach and difficult in implementation. However, it remains a comparator if not a potential “template” for the rest of the UK, placing land use decision-making at the centre of policy and seeking to integrate other policy frameworks and stakeholders around a shared vision and set of decision-making principles.

Similarly, the Welsh Government's 'Well-being of Future Generations Act' puts sustainability at the centre of the decision-making process by providing general powers and specific duties that allow public bodies to explore innovative approaches to new forms of land management, albeit within the constraints faced by all public sector actors in an age of COVID-19 and financial austerity.

To some extent, the same can be said of the relatively innovative and holistic resource (and ecosystem services) focus of more local level policy frameworks developed for the National Parks and river basins/catchments. These two examples cut across political boundaries and feature efforts to build a partnership approach that incorporates a wider set of stakeholders, including landowners and farmers who have practical control over many day-to-day land use decisions.

The recent review of the policy for National Parks and other protected landscapes (Glover 2019) provides a further set of ideas and proposals. It seeks to widen the range of stakeholders and arrange legislation, institutions and resources to provide for their (and the planet's) needs under changing climatic conditions and other future uncertainties.

When joined with policy approaches and lessons from other countries with similar geographical, economic and demographic contexts, these fledging ideas for an integrated approach to rural land management allow us to suggest tentative ways forward, including agreed principles across government, an orientation that fosters both localism and localisation in rural economy and society, building on initiatives that have been popular in many rural areas such as neighbourhood planning with more co-production involved in policy development and decision-making as well as a greater emphasis on diversification and innovation in the rural economy (and see 7.6 and 7.7 below).

### **7.3 Management and political arrangements**

The exit from the EU and the CAP is the clearest and most obvious change and it carries multiple **challenges** and opportunities. Most UK farms are highly dependent on CAP payments. In 2018-19, 62% of farm business income was derived from the Basic Payment Scheme (BPS) and other agri-environment payments (DEFRA, 2020). Many, perhaps even most, UK farmers would be forced to quit the agricultural sector if subsidies were withdrawn without replacement income streams being developed. At the same time, current indications are that the government is considering weakening food protection standards on imports, which would undermine the already fragile market position of UK agriculture (*Guardian*, 21 May 2020) and, as Chapter 2 indicates, there is a sometimes bitter history of instability and crisis associated with similar approaches in the past.

The implications of Brexit are particularly dire for certain sectors of UK agriculture. The Basic Payment Scheme (BPS) contributed 87% of farm business income for the average cereal farm in 2016, while grazing farms in less favoured areas (LFAs) are even more exposed, with the

BPS contributing 93% of farm business income (CLA, 2017). Small farms are much more dependent on subsidies than large farms, with 78% of their profits deriving from subsidies in 2014-15, as opposed to 46% for large farms. In recent years many sectors of UK agriculture including cereal, livestock and mixed farming have made often heavy losses from their purely agricultural activity exclusive of subsidies, agri-environmental payments and diversification (*Full Fact*, 11th August 2016).

If large numbers of farmers were forced to quit farming post-Brexit, it would be difficult to avoid a range of major social and environmental harms. The most direct effect would be on farming families directly affected by their loss of livelihood and way of life. Notably, farmers are already at high relative risk of suicide accounting for approximately 1% of all suicides while constituting only 0.2% of the population (Booth et al, 2000). Furthermore, in some parts of the country, agriculture (although not a major employer) is nevertheless central to a wider rural economy, landscape maintenance, social networks and community provision. One of the original motivations of the CAP was to recognise the special role of agriculture across these headings, although the CAP has never been especially effective in achieving integrated or multiple benefits across that range.

A likely consequence of a large number of farmers being forced to sell land could be an increase in the concentration of landownership, with fewer, larger units – a trend that has been discernible for at least a generation (Walford, 2005; Bartolini and Viaggi, 2013). This could have a range of harmful social and environmental consequences including a reduction in rural employment, more traffic on the roads, greater soil compaction, larger farm buildings, and an exacerbation of many of the problems associated with large-scale, market-driven “agri-business”. Conversely, in some parts of the country it could also lead to land going out of production. There is debate over the consequences of this – advocates of “rewilding” might see advantages, but there has been a long tradition of arguing that many of the most cherished features of the rural landscape depend on active farming and that if land were left unfarmed it would “tumble down” to scrub resulting in a much more uniform landscape (Scott Report, 1942). Certainly, it is true that many of the UK’s most cherished ecosystems (featuring a high proportion of the UK’s endangered and other declining species) are dependent on active agricultural management - chalk downland and grazing marshes are good examples. There is also a question mark over the UK’s post-Brexit food security in an uncertain, increasingly protectionist, post-COVID-19 world.

Brexit also offers remarkable opportunities. For nearly half a century, UK rural policy has been – to some extent – constrained by the CAP, which has been repeatedly pilloried for its vast expense, failure to achieve its social objectives, negative impact on development goals outside the EU, and environmental shortcomings. Seven-eighths of CAP payments are still not tied to specific environmental/social goals beyond a basic compliance with regulations (*Science*, 17 Jan. 2020). Most of these payments continue to go to large farmers, including millions of pounds of public subsidy to billionaires. For decades, agriculture has been out of line with other sectors of the economy in retaining subsidies, long after they were withdrawn from other industries such as mining and shipbuilding. If these are to continue post-Brexit, it seems clear

they will have to be tied much more closely to social and environmental “public goods”. Brexit offers allows for a rethink of UK rural policy. The Agriculture Bill, currently making its way through Parliament, purports to replace CAP-style production/acreage payments with public goods payments of this kind. However, it remains unclear how ambitious these payments will be in relation to climate, biodiversity, animal welfare, food safety and security and rural community goals. Perhaps most crucially, there is uncertainty over what the scale of the funding will be. On the other side of the equation, government attempts to incentivise farmers and landowners to secure policy objectives have had a mixed record of unintended consequences and partial achievement, in which private actors have proved themselves adept at drawing subsidies in ways that have not necessarily resulted in commensurate public benefits, and that have sometimes been implicated in public harms (see Chapters 2 and 4).

## **7.4 The Planning System**

The planning system has been a site of almost continual reform (Allmendinger and Haughton, 2015; Parker et al, 2018) for the past 30 years. This reflects the contested nature of decisions over land use and the role it plays in influencing how different interests benefit from change and continuity. The direction of travel has been doggedly towards orienting planning towards market needs and to make it more responsive – sometimes labelled a “consumer orientation”. Part of this has been to look to a combination of cross-sectoral partnership working, target setting and of deregulation – i.e. taking certain decisions out of the system. The deregulatory trend has impaired some aspects of strategic planning, notably the 2011 removal of Regional Spatial Strategies (RSS) and the regional development agencies (RDAs), introducing a new approach of soft tools and obligations which have provoked sustained criticism. Since 2011, the system has also been “rescaled” (Gallent et al, 2013), featuring attempts to devolve power and responsibility which are reflected in neighbourhood planning and local enterprise partnerships. Overall, the changes have been viewed as hampering the ability to identify and organise decisions on a strategic level resulting in impedance of long-term policy objectives, e.g. regarding regional economies or climate change.

Despite reforms to process, targets and policy orientation, the structures established in 1947 remain recognisably intact. The planning system retains its plan-led orientation with local plans and to some extent neighbourhood plans forming the primary decision-making tools with Sustainable development being the organising aim. However, resource cuts under austerity and a focus on growth in national policy has meant that pressure to produce quantity of development permissions (particularly housing) has been ratcheted-up.

The planning system is a very important part of our institutional arrangements given the attempt to provide a synoptic process and integrated set of policies that relate to land use decisions. Moreover, it reflects a paradigm which gives primacy to public interest determined through the state. As indicated in Chapter 5, this stops short of managing land use activity on rural land. Hence, the most regulated areas of countryside provide useful case study sites to examine

closely how stakeholders, institutional arrangements and rural land uses are managed and decisions shaped.

Debates over the future role of planning have featured oppositional ideas – this reflects Planning’s position astride a wide ideological rift. On the one side, the current trajectory has seen voices arguing for further deregulation and a move to simplification through zoning, moving more decisions out of the development management function (Airey and Doughty, 2019; Jenrick, 2020). This perspective sees planning as a barrier to business through the creation of uncertainty. On the other hand, advocates of planning see the potential for its extension if public policy and wider strategic objectives are to be met. Notably, this was expressed through The Labour Party’s commissioned report, *Land for the Many* (Monbiot, 2019), which argues for more innovation through planning and for planning control to be extended into rural land activity. The most concise and arguably persuasive case for planning as both a necessary and positive force was produced by Adams and Watkins (2014). Proponents of enhanced planning cite the need to look in a balanced and simultaneous fashion at economic, environmental and social needs and impacts. They argue that market forces and actors are not sufficiently incentivised to make such integrated and long-term choices.

## **7.5 Stakeholders**

A theme that permeates this report is the pivotal position of private landowners at the centre of past and future land use decisions in rural areas. Be they landed estates, freehold farmers or financial institutions, their interests and investment strategies will largely determine the land use structure of the country in the foreseeable future. That is why they are regularly consulted during the drafting of relevant state policies, be they at the central or local level. Their influence extends beyond government consultation: since they are the owners of the key resources required to implement policy, any government department or local authority must recognise on the one hand, the extensive scope for constructive partnerships with landowners to amplify policy impacts, and on the other that where policies fail to achieve landowner buy-in, they may gain little traction on the ground.

We noted that there is some variety in the approach that landowners can take in managing their land assets despite a broad economic bottom line of investment returns and profit (i.e. economic “survival”). This variety is likely to be both a problem (in that there may be no great consistency in the response of landowners to financial or policy triggers) and an opportunity (in that not all owners will apply narrow economic criteria in their decision-making). This provides space for those, like the Royal Society, who wish to strengthen environmental or social criteria into the decision-making process.

This leads on to central government, one of the other key players in rural land use. Under the current financial and policy regime, it can be argued that central government helps shape rural land use decisions at the margins. However, it should not be forgotten that government departments not only own significant areas of rural land, but they also dominate the policy

landscape through which the public interest is inserted into decision-making. We noted above that the land use planning system's role is rather stymied in the day-to-day regulation of rural land use change, but it does have some influence when "development" is proposed. When the resources and policies applied to agricultural support are added to the national designations for national parks, wildlife and other landscape protection and the strategic/national control over major infrastructure and mineral working, it can be argued that government policy and practice remain as important determinants of land use decision-making. This conclusion should not ignore the devolved administrations for Wales and Scotland, which have developed a moderately independent and innovative approach to their rural areas with respect to agricultural support and land reform.

The core department for rural areas in England remains DEFRA. Although weakened by staff and financial cutbacks until a recent upturn due to Brexit, it is the institutional means by which much of rural policy is constructed and implemented. Along with its delegated agencies (particularly the Environment Agency, Forestry Commission and Natural England, and similar agencies in the devolved nations), it provides a focus for communication of rural affairs, consultation on the drafting of rural policy, spending on rural development programmes, and lobbying by stakeholder interests. For those who wish to influence rural land use, engaging in these processes is a necessity. Secondly, MHCLG oversees the planning system and can act through policy nationally to relax or tighten constraints on development to deliver changes in the use of land. Trajectories of change here require monitoring and representation.

This identification of key stakeholders in the coordination and delivery of rural policy should not omit the important role played by the array of NGOs that represent a range of environmental, community and wildlife interests. Although they remain somewhat dependent upon the willingness of private landowners and government organisations to listen to their arguments, they have developed sophisticated lobbying strategies and tactics, often in coalition, to further those arguments and shape practice. Some of them are the holders of key information, intelligence and insight that give them more influence than their dependent position would suggest. It should not be forgotten that some of them are significant landowners in their own right, utilising this resource to further their diverse aims, many of which support sustainable rural land use. Overall, they remain potential allies and a source of creative ideas that should not be ignored.

## **7.6 Ideas and proposals**

Some of those ideas produced by NGOs have surfaced in the form of published reports or policy manifestos. These can be compared and contrasted with the outputs produced by government, private organisations and academics. We do not have much space to expand upon these future visions (summarised in Appendix 3), but we have presented a selection from each group, which seek to address sustainability as well as other contextual themes we have used to structure this report.

### *7.6.1 Political visions*

Reviewing party political and governmental statements, several overarching themes come through the array of outputs touching on questions about governance, markets and how to ensure that public and environmental values are accounted for, as well as maintaining economic stability needed to support environmental priorities.

Government-initiated studies of rural futures can be quite robust and grounded. Arguably the most developed and expansive was the ‘Future Rural Land Use’ project which reported in 2010. This created a sophisticated understanding of the rural land use system and argued for a reassessment of how land use benefits are valued.

Party political statements or reports have reflected the respective party’s position on the spectrum of thought. The recent Labour Party report *Land for the Many* provides a well-developed and relatively radical perspective on the way forward which gives a useful counterpoint to much mainstream thinking and its inherent assumptions as found in current UK government policy. The mainstream discussions have focussed on market-based tools to deliver environmental goods and the Agriculture Bill sticks to this paradigm.

Key points relate to increased pressure on land and a need for action and integration of policy and institutional arrangements. In terms of planning, a deregulatory and localist turn has continued. Looking at how communities can be more actively involved in policy, local economic activity and environmental action appears to provide one bridge across the differing perspectives. The ongoing need to consolidate and organise institutional arrangements has common currency too.

The report by the Committee on Climate Change (2018) provides a radical agenda for land use change. This places emphasis on increasing forestry, bioenergy crops, wetted peat and a corresponding large reduction (20%) in the area use for agriculture, especially for grazing. The report’s rationale of adapting to climate change is likely to drive policy debate in the foreseeable future, so the agenda may quite quickly become mainstream.

### *7.6.2 The Private sector*

Private sector and interest-based organisations representing landowning, farming and forestry accept that UK rural policy can, should and will undergo major changes post-Brexit. There is a considerable measure of acceptance that the sector should become more market-driven and that direct-payment public subsidies, at least those based on production or landholding, should be phased out. However, there is an emphasis that there must be a significant transition period. One of the primary goals of post-Brexit rural policy should be to achieve rapid productivity growth in the sector to allow producers to maintain incomes, while also building in greater resilience, particularly to climate change. Public investment in research and development and

in infrastructure such as universal rural broadband and mobile coverage is seen as crucial to this.

There is agreement that post-Brexit support to the sector should aim to achieve social and environmental as well as economic goals and that an integrated, overarching policy framework is essential to deliver on this agenda. Several frameworks have been proposed including a Land Management Contract (CLA) and a Common Countryside Policy (CONFOR). These proposals share many features, including a basic tier that would be available to all rural land managers and that more targeted support would also be available for meeting specific or larger-scale environmental and social goals. There is an acceptance that rural land use payments should not be restricted to agriculture but should be open to a wider range of rural land uses, with forestry seen as particularly important in delivering ecosystem services. However, the Tenant Farmers Association cautions that smaller-scale producers may face significant barriers in reallocating resources to climate change and biodiversity goals and argues that food security and income maintenance considerations should remain a major aim of UK rural policy post-Brexit.

### *7.6.3 Non-governmental and other not-for-profit organisations*

These share an emphasis that post-Brexit rural policy should not merely avoid environmental harms but should be actively regenerative. These organisations, including the Royal Society, the Royal Society of Arts, the RSPB and the Food and Land Use Coalition, recognise that the scale of biodiversity loss since the mid-twentieth century and the urgency of the climate crisis are such that nature-based solutions need to be at the centre of rural policy and must actively seek to restore destroyed and damaged habitats. A key element of this is a landscape-scale approach that will reconnect fragmented habitats, recognising the insufficiency and indeed in some respects harmfulness of the reserves-based approach to conservation that underpinned the 1949 National Parks and Access to the Countryside Act and continued to inform conservation policy as late as the 1981 Wildlife and Countryside Act and beyond. Landscape-scale regenerative agricultural policy seeks to restore natural capital through measures such as woodland planting and there is a recognition that this can and must be informed by a multifunctional land use approach. Increased woodland, for example, can provide carbon storage, wildlife habitats and flood mitigation, as well as recreational access.

There is a recognition among NGOs and not-for-profit organizations that the scale of changes required in UK agricultural and land use policy will also require changes in consumption towards more sustainable dietary preferences, with plant-based diets being a primary focus. This will need to be encouraged and supported by policy. While there has been an encouragingly rapid growth in the vegan, non-meat and alternative protein markets in the last few years, consumers need better labelling and affordability. Public procurement policies could be helpful in stimulating the required shift.

Putting the environment at the heart of the UK's post-Brexit rural land use system is not only essential to achieve climate change and biodiversity progress but, given the strong policy

consensus in favour of it, is also the most effective way of securing a long-term funding settlement for the agricultural sector. NGOs and not-for-profit organizations also emphasise the need for a transition plan, over perhaps ten years, to shift towards a sustainable agro-ecological farming system in the UK. Support for innovation, independent advice for farmers and greater cooperation will be required.

Again, different tiers of support are suggested – basic environmental payments available to all land managers able and willing to meet them should be combined with targeted environmental land management contracts. Additionally, there is a consistent emphasis on the need for a strong regulatory framework including a more humane, more sustainable agriculture. This, however, should work together with imaginative ideas to foster innovation such as a National Agroecological Development Bank and strong public engagement, for example through a National Nature Service to draw on the energy of young people to drive the new regenerative rural economy forwards. Brexit, whatever its merits or demerits, is therefore seen as an exceptional opportunity to develop and implement an ecologically and socially transformative rural land use policy.

#### *7.6.4 Academic research*

Academic studies tend to overlap with the other groups above, probably because those groups have contracted academics as researchers, advisers or consultants. There is certainly much criticism of the current neoliberal approach to rural policy and practice, with many arguing for a greater role for state agencies in facilitating and supporting more sustainable forms of land use and development. A number of the critiques advocate a “networked” approach in which more bottom-up solutions are developed using a framework of stakeholder partnership, but with a key role for the state in providing an overarching arena for conflict mediation and policy development.

Some of the academics are explicitly holistic in their analysis and this supports the use of ecosystem services as a key framework for land use decision-making. It also leads some of the authors to advocate greater integration of the various rural agencies and policies and regional-level planning and coordination of urban and rural areas (city regions).

The resource issue is often eschewed in discussions, but Dieter Helm makes this a central plank of his vision for rural Britain. Here he sees an opportunity to coordinate and add to the current package of funds to create a “Nature Fund” of at least £10 million. This would be used to fund partner organisations (from the private, state and voluntary sectors) to undertake important work in progressing sustainable land use and development in rural areas.

It is not surprising that some academic commentators place strong emphasis on utilising an improving data set to provide thorough monitoring and evaluation of policy. It is argued that this will improve the quality of the selective state intervention and partnership working

proposed in the networked model and allow for policy and programme review to maintain focus on the principles of sustainable development.

Finally, it is of note that the concept of resilience is often implicit in the reports, articles and books reviewed. Although it is rarely placed centre stage, it regularly underpins the various proposals and is seen as a natural by-product of a more network-orientated approach to analysis, governance, policy formulation and implementation.

## **7.7 Conclusion and synthesis**

Given the range and diversity of issues and ideas considered in this report, it is no easy task to draw them all together. This is one reason why we adopted some key concepts as organising threads (see Chapter 1), these also underpin and affect the sustainable development goal that, while somewhat nebulous, has garnered some consensus as the aim for the future use of rural land in the UK

While such consensus regarding sustainable development is contingent on some possibly self-serving definitions or parameters for the concept, the substantive discussions revolve around means – the mechanisms, tools as well as processes, to be applied to the task. Some appear more radical and some are progressions or continuations of established approaches. As such we have elected to make our penultimate comments cohere around the strands of sustainable development but also of: *Resilience, Regulation, Multifunctionality, Landownership and property rights, Ecosystems Services and Neoliberalism*. Drawing on these reflections and ideas, we then briefly revisit the five research questions posited at the beginning of this chapter.

### *7.7.1 Sustainable development*

The basis of this meta-concept was outlined in Chapter 1. The overarching positioning of sustainable development provides a relevant framework of principles and a form of political/stakeholder legitimacy that can assist in building collective responses to current and future challenges. Key considerations include:

- The inherent integration required by sustainable development is both important and useful for policy development, institutional arrangements and delivery mechanisms;
- Sustainable development is a social construct and is therefore defined and negotiated by different interests leading to different interpretations and emphases, but it is politically healthy that this discussion and debate takes place. Political, media and public debate over the meaning and content of sustainable development should be welcomed and encouraged rather than wished away, as only through such debate can a durable consensus be built; and
- Sustainable development requires integrative strategies at different levels. There is some potential in the examples we have reviewed (e.g. Scottish LUS, National Parks

Management Plans), but these need to be integrated with local development plans more effectively.

### *7.7.2 Resilience*

Resilience provides a frame of reference that can be usefully applied to a range of changes (e.g. climate change, pandemics, economic crisis, technological change) at different (inter-connected) spatial levels (global, national, regional and local). Resilience is often operationalised at a local level and the review of policy and practice suggests that it is most effectively built upon networked relations which respond flexibly to change, drawing on local resources supported by high level interventions. This draws upon a “glocal” perspective to land use change and the responses required to deal with it. The implication of this is that institutional arrangements and integrated strategies need to replicate and build on these relationships to respond effectively to short- and long-term change

### *7.7.3 Regulation*

This remains an important dimension as how we choose to regulate landowners (and other actors) is critical – to what extent private rights are to be curtailed is a long run issue. There are arguments that revolve around how regulation sits with individual freedoms, but it should be pointed out that regulation is a continuum from the more to less formal and these forms can be combined, often in quite creative ways, to act in a wider public interest. Specific tools already exist, from statutory spatial development plans with some statutory power and Land Management Plans which rely on negotiation and partnership. The reach and efficacy of such tools are constantly in flux and lack of monitoring or evaluation is quite common. So, regulation is already present in rural Britain and simplistic questions or arguments over “more” or “less” regulation ignore how it acts to create markets as much as destroy them and how the legitimacy of different forms or impacts (on particular stakeholders) shift frequently and are shared between stakeholders. Furthermore, it is possible to argue that to approach land use in the future with a regulatory approach featuring strongly may also be less costly and more effective to use than other (neoliberal) approaches or other forms of state intervention in terms of producing sustainable development goals.

### *7.7.4 Multifunctionality*

Land use multifunctionality is often implicit in concepts like the provision of “multiple benefits” from land use. It has also been intermittently deployed and is routinely seen as a solution to many rural land use problems, especially how to make better economic use of land (Mather et. al., 2006). How to implement beneficial multifunctional landscapes has remained rather elusive. Different stakeholders have strong views about the desirability and implications of multifunctionality.

Typically, this idea has been viewed by landowners and farmers as centrally involving the use of land for different productive purposes. In this narrower view, there is an implicit assumption that land can be better used simultaneously for different uses or activities. In this sense, the term has a close association with varying forms of rural diversification. However more broadly multifunctionality may involve attempting to reconcile different economic, environmental and social purposes. This opens-up the concept and links it more strongly with the principles of sustainable development, with its emphasis on integration and win-win outcomes. It also introduces the idea that multifunctionality might have a range of benefits (and possibly disbenefits) for different stakeholders and there is a need, therefore, to build consensus around policy frameworks that specify the particular approaches and mixes being sought. Putting this together, we can see (as indicated in Figure below) that seeking-out sustainable outcomes from forms of multifunctionality requires a process of stakeholder negotiation, policy formulation and implementation.

The network of stakeholders and the skills, insights, powers and resources they bring provide both opportunities for effective partnership-building, but also potential constraints on developing and implementing agreed policy. As research has found, imposition of particular interests, lack of support, withdrawal of resources or the deployment of legal requirements are quite capable of undermining or shaping the process towards unsustainable outcomes (see Sayer et. al. 2013). What this tells us is that some formulations of multifunctionality can bring win-win outcomes, but many other permutations could involve trade-offs for some or all interests affected.

As Figure 7.1 suggests, there are different possible combinations of activity, land use and function that characterise multifunctional land use and these can be assembled at different scales (e.g. in buildings, fields, farms, settlements, landscape areas, regions, nations) over a range of times (e.g. hours, days, weeks, seasons, years). It is necessary to stress that a “land use” (agriculture, housing, etc.) is not the same as an activity (e.g. ploughing, walking) and different from a function (e.g. to generate food, sequester carbon, filter water, provide a sense of wellbeing). It follows from this that uses, activities and functions can be accommodated on land units of variable size/scale for different lengths of time. So, for example, a rural land parcel can be “used” for grazing cows for daily milk production, include a coppice that provides biofuels annually, includes a footpath which is part of a local two-hour circular walk, is glimpsed and appreciated for one second from a passing train and is the venue for a three-day summer music festival that attracts people nationally. Add to this the range of ecosystem services that take place over hours, days, years and decades and it can be seen that the life of multifunctional land uses is temporally complex.

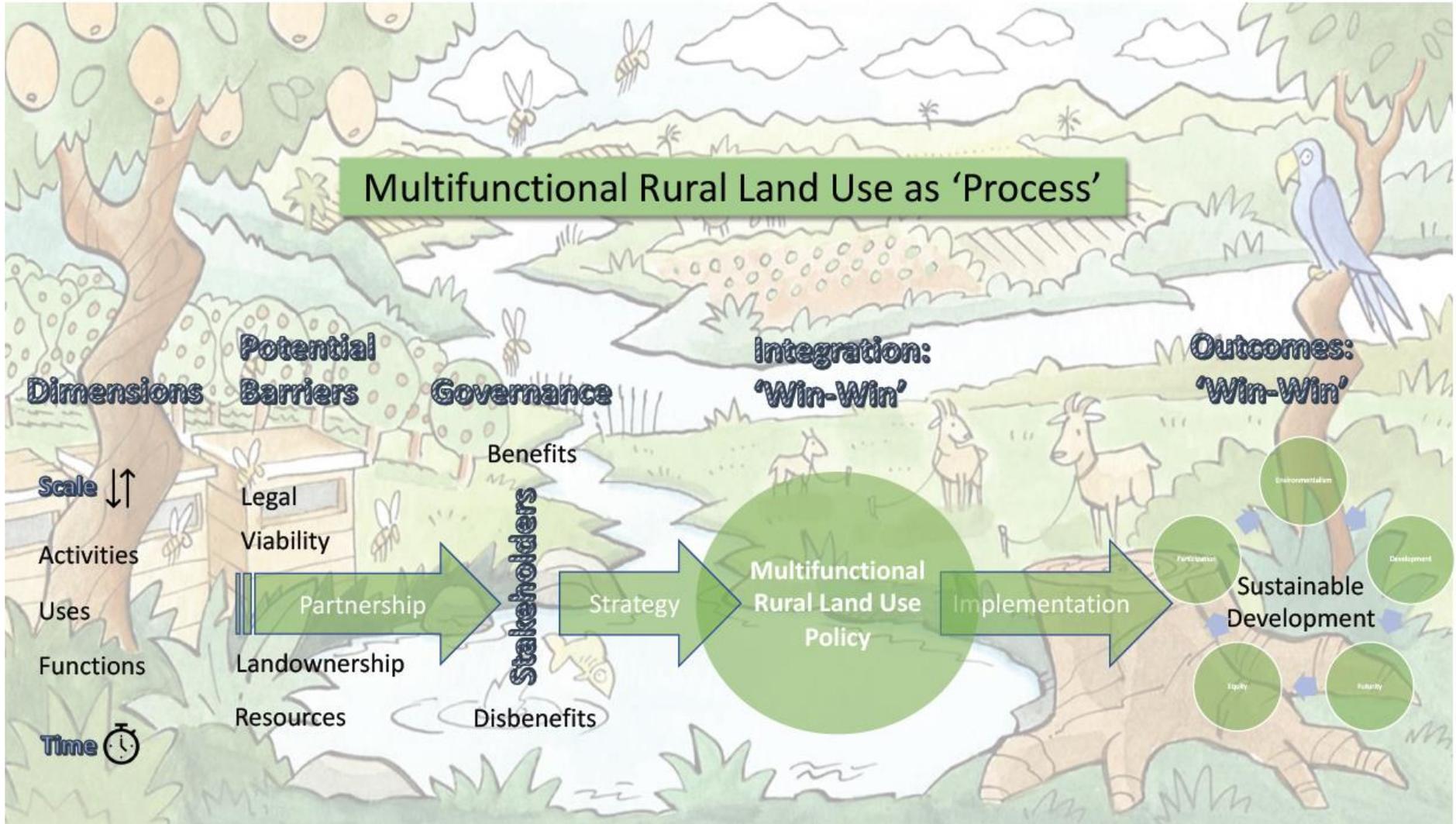
Assembling and orchestrating the whole process and enabling desirable or tolerable features of multifunctional assemblages is a challenge of governance. Building agreement and commitment runs right through it but it is particularly important in the early stages of stakeholder negotiation and policy formulation. The use of discussion spaces and workshops for the co-creation of policy is something we have seen in some areas of rural policymaking

and implementation, with the EU's LEADER (Links between Actions for the Development of the Rural Economy) programme and the recent experience of the Welsh approach to post-CAP policy specifically mentioned in Chapter 5.

Putting this altogether, Figure 7.1 attempts to show how different elements and considerations need to be recognised and brokered to effect beneficial multifunctionality that passes some test of sustainability and or resilience.

On a positive note, and as mentioned above, it is encouraging that under the guise of “rural diversification” and economic survival farmers have already moved towards multifunctional land use (Clark 2009). Sometimes this has been agriculture and food related (e.g. farm shops or farm contracting), but increasingly this has been through the development of non-agricultural businesses often operating from redundant farm buildings converted to other uses. Larger farms and estates have long had multiple enterprises: farming, forestry, food processing or retailing, minerals, water storage, letting out buildings, cottage rents, holiday accommodation, farm shops, weddings, heritage related activities, camping and so on. They have long seen themselves as rural resource managers and they have not been slow to see the opportunity for being paid for hereto unpaid ecosystem services: habitat management, biodiversity provision, water filtration, flood prevention, and carbon sequestration. In short multifunctionality is not a new concept for UK farmers or their organisations.

Figure 7.1: Conceptualising Multifunctional Rural Land Use (as a process)



### *7.7.5 Property Rights / Landownership*

Perhaps predictably, this aspect of rural land was found to be an underpinning feature and important in shaping rural land use outcomes. Hence, it needs to be considered and addressed deliberately given the latent power to enable and frustrate that lies with the private owner (see 7.7.3 and the tension here with regulation). It is clear that private ownership of land in UK has been diversified at the margins and has adapted as new types of owner have invested in land as an asset.

Significantly, the historical regularity of debates on the topic of land reform exist along a continuum of interventions and arrangements, and is being undertaken at the margins in the UK (most notably Scotland's land reform measures but also and indirectly in various legislative changes over the past two decades, with the 2011 Localism Act and Community Right to Buy, and the Countryside and Rights of Way Act 2000 and access land rights as examples). The form, intent and outcomes of land reform are not always straightforward or predictable, as the example of Japan demonstrates, but it remains an important part of the tool kit.

### *7.7.6 Ecosystem Services*

The conceptual lens of ecosystem services is given a high profile in many land use strategies, approaches and organisational priorities. Yet rarely do the means of orienting different siloed organisations or other actors appear to be confronted. However, substantial academic effort has been expended to make the concept work in theory and practice.

It has been argued by academic critics that the ecosystem services model fits within a neoliberal policy package (see below), along with the closely related concept of natural capital, but this provides an opportunity to insert integrative environmental priorities into current policy and practice. However, it should also be recognised as a constraint in that it marketises the environment in a rather narrow and potentially unsustainable way.

### *7.7.7 Neoliberalism*

The dominant political and ideological thread that has come to inform many countries' policy decisions is the lens of neoliberalism, with its emphasis on deregulation, markets and individual responsibility. This, in various forms, is another pervasive influence informing dominant institutional logics and the contemporary policy environment and shapes the current UK government's approach to rural issues, including land use. An illustration is the narrow focus of the Agriculture Bill on restricting public subsidy to a set of public goods and ruling out many other possible interventions that alternative policy frameworks recognise.

Many commentators (academic, professional and political) have criticised the neoliberalisation of rural policy and judge it to be one of the causes of current problems. The emphasis on market solutions means that any form of regulation or state intervention is both difficult politically and

needs to be carefully orchestrated and presented. Policy and practice need to be “smart” in their construction and the benefits must be clear and demonstrable where they seek to extend beyond neo-classical economics.

#### *7.7.8 Responses to the Five Key Questions*

Having reflected on the implications of the research using our thematic framework, we can turn again to the research questions that initiated this work. In responding to them, we draw on the full range of reviewed material and seek to map-out some ways forward that could be considered as part of the Royal Society’s **Living Landscapes** programme – some ideas for further exploration are also added to this (7.7.9).

*What will a post-Brexit rural policy package look like and which institutions are likely to be involved in its coordination and delivery?*

The post-Brexit trajectory seemed to be well-set along a broadly neoliberal ecosystem services line of policy, based on the Agriculture Bill (and other central government policy documents) with its commitment to pay for public goods. Even before COVID-19 this might have been seen to be a simplification given the rather divergent agendas being pursued in Scotland and Wales. Indeed, the devolved structure of UK government now guarantees a potential diversity of approaches between the UK nations. Add to this the existence of other policy networks (e.g. around National Parks) and we have a recipe for a “loose” policy package that might well move in different directions.

The post-COVID fall-out, particularly in terms of economic impact, will also destabilise any firm predictions, although a search for policy fixes that aid greater resilience may emerge. It could well be that the financial commitments required for the Agriculture Bill will disappear or be significantly reduced. The Government might be pressed to utilise a less costly mechanism which, ironically, could involve more rather than less regulation.

Irrespective of the exact mechanisms, the policy commitment to sustainable development, natural capital, ecosystem services and resilient communities seems to be well-established and embedded in many organisations’ modus operandi.

Although land reform is currently off the agenda in the rest of the UK, it remains an unfinished project in Scotland. The experiments north of the border will no doubt shape political debate in other places, along with the ongoing initiatives supporting community ownership through the Localism Act. The wider agenda of localism is also set to continue, which will shape the policy discussions and options across the UK.

*How can the attributes and benefits of strategic management and political devolution be most effectively combined?*

Taking the localism theme forward, it is likely to be an important point of departure for any institutional initiatives or reforms for current – or future – UK governments. This will have different components: some will be exploring how community involvement and even “control” can be made more effective as well as more integrated partnership forms of governance at the more granular local scale. Others will be seeking to provide a more appropriate framework for subsidiarity, almost certainly suggesting some regional framework that can handle the urban-rural interface. The learning derived from many international cases also supports this as a necessary level of decision-making for some strategic issues. Many organisations already structure their activities this way or create strategies and plans that cross local political boundaries.

We have noted the importance of devolution for the developing rural policy map of the UK, and this again seems set to continue, or even become more defined (cf. the recent UK2070 report). The issue here is whether the diversity of approaches might undermine a consistent and “integrated” approach to rural land use change or whether it will be seen as an asset, allowing for experimentation, innovation and mutual learning.

New or amended arrangements may be possible for the UK and the implications of changed governance arrangements need consideration with respect to both localism and to strategic direction and coherence through national and regional policy. Thus, leadership at different scales and the ability to consider multiple issues and factors simultaneously will remain a challenge.

*What role should the planning system play in rural land use decision-making?*

The scope and likelihood for planning system refinement or extension may seem unlikely at first glance given the direction of recent travel, but degranulation and the use of looser partnership arrangements have delivered “mixed” results. There are signs at a strategic level there may be gains to be made as well at the more granular local scale (cf. Neighbourhood planning and EU’s LEADER programmes) through better enabling of local community inputs and linkages with rural land and its use. Formal extension of planning powers across rural land use appears an unlikely option, which could carry heavy administrative and practical problems. Our view is that greater “responsibilisation” through a mix of regulation, incentive and social ties is still preferred.

*Which stakeholders are likely to be most influential in post-Brexit rural land use decision-making?*

Given what we have said above, it seems clear that local communities will, in some way, demand a seat at the decision-making tables of rural Britain. How this demand is met will shape the social sustainability of the decisions made. Significant influence will still remain with private landowners and farmers whose (varied) interests and strategies will need to be part of “the solution”. Mechanisms for resolving conflicts of interest will no doubt remain essential

and at what spatial scale these take place will need careful specification and organisation. Shaping the decision-making processes and providing democratic accountability will be government departments and bodies at all relevant levels.

It is interesting to note that an increasing role for local communities may be an emerging aspect under the aegis of both localism (in policy and action) and efforts to localise (production-consumption) as well as noting the continuities of private landowner power. The principles of co-governance developed by Ostrom (cf. 1990; 2003; 2010) and expanded by others as part of IAD (Integrated Action and Development) and SES (Socio-Ecological Systems) frameworks, with a recognition of a range of actors, roles, functions, and rights and responsibilities, provides a base from which joint decision-making and partnership working can be usefully developed. The more collaborative approach involved in new institutional theory can provide a flexible and adaptive form of governance that supports both the mediation of stakeholder interests and innovations in policy and practice.

*What proposals and ideas could help shape more effective (sustainable) rural land use policy and practice?*

An overarching challenge is the question of how to spend a possibly shrinking budget usually referred to as “agricultural support”. Standing at around £3bn, how to orient payments that deliver sustainable outcomes by establishing good measures and appropriate oversight has proved challenging since the 1990s. Clearly, there is a need to diversify and look to multiple income streams for land managers, although such efforts are more difficult in some locations.

As we have indicated through Chapters 4, 5 and 6, a set of nuanced ideas have circulated, notably community-based initiatives of various types, and a return to a more integrated national policy and institutional set-up. Much will depend on political will and determination in this respect as well as public support, but we can probably expect the continuity of the natural capital/ecosystem services discourse for the foreseeable future.

It will be conceptualised (more) by academics, drafted into policy, tested through implementation and, no doubt, revised based on experience and debate. Ideas about and political demands for some form of localism and or democratic accountability will continue to shape policy and practice. The learning from the initial experiments in various parts of the UK will need to feed into this process.

#### *7.7.9 Further research*

Beyond these suggestions – and a familiar trope in reports of this kind, particularly perhaps from academics – we recommend further research. Our review has identified many questions and also revealed a lack of recent research on the integration of land use decision-making and its governance.

i) As such we make a quite specific recommendation that a case study of a particular area (a “locus study”) should be undertaken; detailed research at a local level, where the different issues, stakeholders and institutional arrangement come together is needed.

This approach would act as an in-depth case study to look at what works and how, as well as what the limits or failings of the current arrangements are. The work would explore how actors attempt to achieve sustainable development, by what means or modalities, and what resources and barriers facilitate or obstruct this. Such a study of current land use decision-making in and for rural areas could give a sharper focus to the necessarily generalised findings of the broad overview we were asked to provide in the present study. The work would require primary data collection – primarily interviews with key actors locally and in some instances perhaps nationally from across sectors and interests.

ii) More targeted discussions with international partners from selected countries would be a possible addition, to focus in on specific objectives and tools, once the Society has established its position more firmly.

This aspect would entail telephone or online interviews to explore directly the issues and factors that enabled or have thwarted reforms in those target jurisdictions and build out both from the present report, especially material and references highlighted in Chapter 6, and from the Royal Society’s key areas of interest.

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## **Appendices**

## Appendix 1: Stakeholder Audit of Agencies, Organisations and Groups with Interest in UK Rural Land Use

(Sources: Annual reports, corporate plans, organisation web sites, ONS data and specified policy documents)

Organisation/ Group	Spatial Remit	Employees/ Members	Annual Budget	Stated Organisational Role / Objectives	Current Rural Policy Stance (where relevant)	URL
European Commission	Europe (member states)	33,000 employees / 28 member states	EUR 165.8 billion (2019)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• promote peace, its values and the well-being of its citizens</li> <li>• offer freedom, security and justice without internal borders</li> <li>• sustainable development based on balanced economic growth and price stability,</li> <li>• a highly competitive market economy with full employment and social progress, and environmental protection</li> <li>• combat social exclusion and discrimination</li> <li>• promote scientific and technological progress</li> <li>• enhance economic, social and territorial cohesion and solidarity among EU countries</li> <li>• respect its rich cultural and linguistic diversity</li> <li>• establish an economic and monetary union whose currency is the euro.</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• fostering knowledge transfer and innovation in agriculture, forestry and rural areas;</li> <li>• enhancing the viability and competitiveness of all types of agriculture, and promoting innovative farm technologies and sustainable forest management;</li> <li>• promoting food chain organisation, animal welfare and risk management in agriculture;</li> <li>• promoting resource efficiency and supporting the shift toward a low-carbon and climate resilient economy in the agriculture, food and forestry sectors;</li> <li>• restoring, preserving and enhancing ecosystems related to agriculture and forestry;</li> <li>• promoting social inclusion, poverty reduction and economic development in rural areas.</li> </ul> <p>Each of these priorities shall contribute to the cross-cutting objectives of innovation, environment and climate change mitigation and adaptation.</p>	<a href="https://ec.europa.eu/info/index_en">https://ec.europa.eu/info/index_en</a>
OECD	World	3 300 employees (of OECD Secretariat) / x37 member states across all continents	EUR 386m (2019)	<p>The Organisation for Economic Co-operation and Development (OECD) is an international organisation that seeks to, 'build better policies for better lives'. The stated goal is to shape policies that foster prosperity, equality, opportunity and well-being for all.</p> <p>Together with governments, policymakers and citizens, the OECD works on</p>	<p>OECD Principles on Rural Policy (2019):</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1. Maximise the potential of all rural areas</li> <li>2. Organise policies and governance at the relevant geographic scale</li> <li>3. Support interdependencies and co-operation between urban and rural areas</li> <li>4. Support interdependencies and co-operation between urban and rural areas</li> <li>5. Support interdependencies and co-operation between urban and rural areas</li> </ol>	<a href="http://www.oecd.org">http://www.oecd.org</a>

				<p>establishing evidence-based international standards and finding solutions to a range of social, economic and environmental challenges. From improving economic performance and creating jobs to fostering strong education and fighting international tax evasion, it provides a forum and knowledge hub for data and analysis, exchange of experiences, best-practice sharing, and advice on public policies and international standard setting.</p>	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>6. Support interdependencies and co-operation between urban and rural areas</li> <li>7. Support interdependencies and co-operation between urban and rural areas</li> <li>8. Support interdependencies and co-operation between urban and rural areas</li> <li>9. Support interdependencies and co-operation between urban and rural areas</li> <li>10. Support interdependencies and co-operation between urban and rural areas</li> <li>11. Support interdependencies and co-operation between urban and rural areas</li> </ol>	
<p>United Nations (specifically, the High-Level Political Platform on Sustainable development)</p>	<p>World</p>	<p>34,170 employees (UN Total) / x197 member states</p>	<p>\$5.4b (2018-19)</p>	<p>The UN’s High-Level Political Platform on Sustainable development replaced the Sustainable development Commission in 2013. It aims to:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• provide political leadership, guidance and recommendations for sustainable development;</li> <li>• enhance integration of the three dimensions of sustainable development in a holistic and cross-sectoral manner at all levels;</li> <li>• provide a dynamic platform for regular dialogue and for stocktaking and agenda-setting to advance sustainable development;</li> <li>• have a focused, dynamic and action-oriented agenda, ensuring the appropriate consideration of new and emerging sustainable development challenges;</li> <li>• follow up and review progress in the implementation of sustainable development commitments as well as their respective means of implementation;</li> <li>• encourage high-level system-wide participation of United Nations agencies,</li> </ul>	<p>The policy stance of the UN on rural land and development issues are embedded in 17 Sustainable development Goals (SDGs). These provide an urgent call for action by all countries - developed and developing - in a global partnership. They recognise that ending poverty and other deprivations must go hand-in-hand with strategies that improve health and education, reduce inequality, and spur economic growth – all while tackling climate change and working to preserve oceans and forests.</p> <p>The most relevant SDG for rural land use is: SDG 15 which aims to protect, restore and promote sustainable use of terrestrial ecosystems, sustainably manage forests, combat desertification, and halt and reverse land degradation and halt biodiversity loss. Other relevant SDGs are 11 (Sustainable Cities and Communities), 12 (Sustainable Consumption and Production), 13 (Climate Action) and 17 (Partnership).</p>	<p><a href="https://sustainabledevelopment.un.org/hlpf">https://sustainabledevelopment.un.org/hlpf</a></p> <p><a href="https://www.un.org/en/">https://www.un.org/en/</a></p>

				<p>funds and programmes and invite to participate, as appropriate, other relevant multilateral financial and trade institutions and treaty bodies, within their respective mandates and in accordance with United Nations rules and provisions;</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• improve cooperation and coordination within the United Nations system on sustainable development programmes and policies;</li> <li>• promote transparency and implementation by further enhancing the consultative role and participation of major groups and other relevant stakeholders at the international level in order to better make use of their expertise, while retaining the intergovernmental nature of discussions;</li> <li>• promote the sharing of best practices and experiences relating to the implementation of sustainable development and, on a voluntary basis, facilitate sharing of experiences, including successes, challenges and lessons learned;</li> <li>• strengthen the science-policy interface through review of documentation, bringing together dispersed information and assessments, including in the form of a global sustainable development report, building on existing assessments;</li> <li>• enhance evidence-based decision-making at all levels and contribute to strengthening ongoing capacity-building for data collection and analysis in developing countries; and</li> </ul>		
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				<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• promote system-wide coherence and coordination of sustainable development policies.</li> </ul>		
World Bank	World	15,907 employees / x189 member countries	Circa \$60b (2019-20)	<p>The World Bank Group has set two goals for the world to achieve by 2030:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• End extreme poverty by decreasing the percentage of people living on less than \$1.90 a day to no more than 3%</li> <li>• Promote shared prosperity by fostering the income growth of the bottom 40% for every country</li> </ul>	<p>The World Bank has x10 Environmental and Social Standards covering the follow issues:</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1) Assessment and Management of Environmental and Social Risks and Impacts;</li> <li>2) Labor and Working Conditions;</li> <li>3) Resource Efficiency and Pollution Prevention and Management;</li> <li>4) Community Health and Safety;</li> <li>5) Land Acquisition, Restrictions on Land Use and Involuntary Resettlement;</li> <li>6) Biodiversity Conservation and Sustainable Management of Living Natural Resources;</li> <li>7) Indigenous Peoples/Sub-Saharan African Historically Underserved Traditional Local Communities;</li> <li>8) Cultural Heritage;</li> <li>9) Financial Intermediaries; and</li> <li>10) Stake- holder Engagement and Information Disclosure .</li> </ol> <p>Allocation of World Bank funds requires production of an Environmental and Social Assessment and a separate Environmental and Social Commitment Plan.</p>	<a href="https://www.worldbank.org">https://www.worldbank.org</a>
Department for Environment, Food and Rural Affairs	National	3,820 employees (2020)	£2.1b (2018-19)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Deliver a smooth transition to new regulatory and delivery frameworks after we leave the EU</li> <li>• Pass on to the next generation a natural environment protected and enhanced for the future</li> <li>• Be one of the world’s leading food and farming nations, with a thriving rural economy</li> <li>• * Be the most effective and efficient department in government</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Sustainable FARMING and FOOD: We will reform the farming sector to make it more prosperous and resilient, championing productive farming underpinned by sound environmental land management and high animal welfare standards and we will develop a new food policy.</li> <li>• Pure AIR, clean RIVERS and a resilient water supply: to breathe through our Clean Air Strategy and by delivering new approaches to tackling all sources of air pollution. We will reform how our water industry works to improve the resilience of our water supply,</li> </ul>	<a href="https://www.gov.uk/government/organisations/department-for-environment-food-rural-affairs">https://www.gov.uk/government/organisations/department-for-environment-food-rural-affairs</a>

					<p>and we will work with farmers on catchment- based approaches to water management.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Healthy SEAS and OCEANS: We will take back control of our waters to restore and maintain the healthy fish stocks and marine environment which underpin a prosperous fishing sector. We will create a Blue Belt of protected areas where our rich biodiversity can flourish, and drive down our use of plastics</li> <li>• Beautiful LANDSCAPES, flourishing WILDLIFE and native species: We will drive nature’s recovery through world class legislation and the adoption of natural capital approaches and we will look afresh at how we protect and enhance the beauty of our distinctive landscapes.</li> <li>• Thriving RURAL ECONOMIES and communities: We will ensure that the needs and challenges facing rural communities and businesses are properly considered, and that people who live in the countryside have the same opportunities as those who live in our towns and cities.</li> <li>• Efficient RESOURCE USE and reduced waste: We will deliver new approaches to reducing waste, promote markets for secondary materials, incentivise producers to design better products and ensure that materials are kept in productive use for longer. We will innovate to promote sustainable and efficient use of our renewable natural resources, such as fish and timber.</li> <li>• Protecting ANIMALS and PLANTS from health risks: We will work to maintain secure imports and high standards to reduce the impact of diseases and invasive species, recognising how animals and plants sustain and enhance our health, wealth and wellbeing. We will working partnership with the public, industry, vets and colleagues across government.</li> </ul> <p>*Resilient COMMUNITIES and economies: We will lead the response and recovery to floods, other natural hazards and emergencies. We will secure stronger levels of protection from flooding by investing in</p>	
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					<p>green and physical infrastructure, and champion approaches which embed resilience in long-term investment decisions.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Great PLACES FOR LIVING for people and animals: We will ensure that Government action on housing goes hand-in-hand with investment in thriving green spaces and waterways, from urban green spaces to our great national parks and forests. We will encourage more people to spend time in nature, and lay new legislation to secure higher welfare standards for companion animals.</li> <li>• Green GLOBAL BRITAIN: We will play a global leadership role in calling for an ambitious post-2020 global biodiversity framework. We will also work to promote the continued strengthening of international agreements for further enhancing and protecting the environment and lead the way internationally by role modelling domestically best practice, and by using our UK aid to support action. We will also ensure that the high standards in food, farming and environmental protections that we pursue at home are upheld through future trade deals.</li> </ul>	
Department for Business, Energy & Industrial Strategy	National	4,420 employees (2020)	£7.5b (2018/19)	<p>Stated vision: “We are building an economy that works for everyone, so that there are great places in every part of the UK for people to work and for businesses to invest, innovate and grow.”</p> <p>The current (2019-20) departmental priorities are:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• deliver an ambitious Industrial Strategy</li> <li>• maximise investment opportunities and bolster UK interests as we leave the EU</li> <li>• promote competitive markets and responsible business practices</li> <li>• ensure the UK has a reliable, low cost and clean energy system</li> </ul>	<p>Policies for rural business and agriculture are contained in the Industrial Strategy and the Green Growth Strategy. Relevant policies from The Industrial Strategy are:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• We will put the UK at the forefront of the global move to high- efficiency agriculture Rising global demand for food and water is increasing the need for agriculture that produces more from less. Our new ‘Transforming food production: from farm to fork’ programme will put the UK at the forefront of advanced sustainable agriculture. Over the coming years, as we replace the Common Agricultural Policy, we will increase the incentives for investment in sustainable agriculture, helping to grow the markets for innovative technologies and techniques.</li> </ul>	<p><a href="https://www.gov.uk/government/organisations/department-for-business-energy-and-industrial-strategy">https://www.gov.uk/government/organisations/department-for-business-energy-and-industrial-strategy</a></p>

				<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• build a flexible, innovative, collaborative and business-facing department</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• By using precision technologies we (will) transform food production whilst reducing emissions, pollution, waste and soil erosion. By putting the UK at the forefront of this global revolution in farming, we will deliver benefits to farmers, the environment and consumers whilst driving growth, jobs and exports.</li> <li>• We will put the UK at the forefront of the AI and data revolution.</li> <li>• We will maximise the advantages for UK industry from the global shift to clean growth – through leading the world in the development, manufacture and use of low carbon technologies, systems and services that cost less than high carbon alternatives.</li> </ul> <p>Relevant policies from The Clean Growth Strategy are:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• (We) will introduce a new agri-environment system to support the future of farming and the countryside, with a strong focus on delivering better environmental outcomes, including mitigation of and adaptation to climate change.</li> <li>• We aim to support industry in strengthening farm biosecurity to improve productivity, reduce reliance on veterinary medicines and reduce emissions. To begin this, we are developing a scheme to directly tackle endemic diseases in beef and dairy herds.</li> <li>• We will work with industry to encourage the use of low-emissions fertiliser. We will review the levels of take up over the next five years using data from the British Fertiliser Practice Survey. This will provide evidence to shape our future policies.</li> <li>• We will work with industry to produce a UK Bio-economy Strategy that will bring together biological industries, academia and innovators, linking up farmers and land managers with high tech industries. Through a thriving innovation-based bioeconomy, we will develop less carbon intensive products such as bio-based chemicals, plastics and other materials.</li> </ul>	
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					<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• We will develop a new incentive structure to harness the potential for growth in forestry and renewables being supplied from within the UK, including on bioenergy, as part of our ambitions for strengthening the rural economy and encouraging diversification of farm businesses.</li> <li>• Funding from the £200 million package of Rural Development Plan for England (RDPE)274 Growth Programme and Countryside Productivity Offers, announced in July 2017, could be used to support renewable energy projects, such as solar panels or small wind turbines linked to battery storage.</li> <li>• We will develop a new network of English forests with the right incentives and rules to establish and support new regional and national community woodlands to help reach 12% woodland cover in England by 2060. We have allocated funding to woodland planting to support our commitment to plant 11 million trees276.</li> <li>• We will set up a stronger and more attractive domestic carbon offset market that will encourage more businesses to support cost-effective emissions reductions, such as through planting trees. We will also explore how we could extend this market to include other land activities.</li> <li>• We will unlock private finance to invest in forestry by establishing forestry investment zones to offer investors streamlined decision-making and more certainty, within shorter timelines.</li> <li>• We will fund larger-scale woodland and forest creation, and we will design woodland creation incentives that attract more landowners and farmers to plant on marginal land, including through agroforestry and bioenergy production, to help diversify land- based businesses and enhance the farmed environment.</li> <li>• Peatland, like woodland, forms a key part of the UK’s natural capital, but is widely degraded. We launched a £10 million capital grant scheme for</li> </ul>	
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					<p>peat restoration in July 2017 to target peatlands in England. Funds are available from April 2018 for three years<sup>277</sup>.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>We will work with industry to increase the amount of UK timber used in construction, creating a conveyor belt of locked-in carbon in our homes and buildings.</li> </ul>	
Environment Agency	England (from 2013)	10,600 employees (2020)	£1.4b (2018/19)	<p>Vision statement: Create a better place for people and wildlife                  Purpose statement: Protect the environment and promote sustainable development                  Statement of principles (How EA will make choices):</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Put people and wildlife first: our goal is to create a better place for them.</li> <li>80/20: we will focus on the 20% that makes 80% of the difference.</li> <li>Support local priorities: every place and community has its own needs.</li> </ul>	<p>The EA adheres to and/or implements governmental environmental policy, which is currently contained in <i>A Green Future: Our 25 Year Plan to Improve the Environment</i>, and the strategy for flood risk (<i>Understanding the risks, empowering communities, building resilience- the national flood and coastal erosion risk management strategy for England</i>).</p> <p>These documents are summarised in Appendix 2.</p>	
Forestry Commission	England (from 2013)	3,240 employees (undated)	£67m (2018-19) (excluding £8.1m of DEFRA grant schemes managed by FC)	<p>Forestry Commission England works with others to protect, improve and expand England's forests and woodlands, increasing their value to society and the environment.</p> <p>The organisation's objectives are:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>protecting our trees, woods and forests from increasing threats such as pests, diseases and climate change</li> <li>improving our woodland assets, making them more resilient to those threats and increasing their contribution to economic growth, people's lives and nature</li> <li>expanding our woodland resources to increase their economic, social and environmental value</li> </ul>	<p>The FC adheres to and/or implements governmental environmental policy, which is currently contained in <i>A Green Future: Our 25 Year Plan to Improve the Environment</i>, which is summarised in Appendix 2.</p> <p>The Coalition Government also produced <i>The Forestry and Woodlands Policy Statement</i> (in 2013) which includes the following policy commitments (which are further detailed in the document):</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>We fully recognise the vital importance and high value of England's trees, woods and forests. We are firmly committed to securing the maximum economic, social and environmental benefits from both public and private woodlands through a refreshed policy approach based around core priorities.</li> <li>We are fully committed to protecting our trees, woods and forests from the ever-increasing range and scale of threats, so that our woodland assets</li> </ul>	<p><a href="https://www.gov.uk/government/organisations/forestry-commission">https://www.gov.uk/government/organisations/forestry-commission</a></p>

				<p>The priorities for cross border activities focus on the following common themes:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• resilience: Protecting our woodland resource and increasing its resilience to pests, diseases and the impact of climate change so that our woodlands continue to deliver a wide range of economic, social and environmental benefits</li> <li>• evidence: Ensuring that there is a robust evidence base available to the forestry authorities across the UK to underpin their policies, decisions and advice</li> <li>• standards: Setting the standards for sustainable forest management and woodland carbon projects in the UK and promoting it domestically and internationally</li> </ul>	<p>are resilient and can continue to deliver a wide range of economic, social and environmental benefits.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• We are committed to sustaining, managing and improving our national woodland assets in ways that contribute to economic growth and realise benefits for people and nature.</li> <li>• We believe that there is scope for increasing England’s woodland cover significantly to deliver economic, social and environmental benefits.</li> <li>• We are fully committed to valuing the many social and environmental benefits of woodlands and to developing new market opportunities to realise these benefits. This approach is at the heart of developing Government policy and will generate added benefit for the sector.</li> <li>• We want strong and resilient delivery arrangements that achieve better quality outcomes for the economy, people and nature. This includes simplifying our current structures and stepping back from any unnecessary day-to-day involvement.</li> <li>• This statement is the first step on a longer journey. Working in close partnership with others, we will create healthy, resilient and sustainable woodlands that are good for people, nature and the economy. We invite the sector to work with us to achieve this common goal.</li> </ul>	
Natural Resources Wales	Wales (from 2013, formed from a merger of the Countryside Council for Wales, Environment Agency Wales, and the Forestry	1,900 employees	£180m	<p>Vision statement for NRW: “We are proud to lead the way to a better future for Wales by managing the environment and natural resources of Wales sustainably”.</p> <p>This is followed by x7 Well-being Objectives:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Champion the Welsh environment and the sustainable management of Wales’ natural resources.</li> </ul>	<p>The rural policies for NRW are encompassed in the principles of ‘sustainable management of natural resources’ (SMNR). SMNR is defined in the Environment Act (Wales) as: “using natural resources in a way and at a rate that maintains and enhances the resilience of ecosystems and the benefits they provide. In doing so, meeting the needs of present generations of people without compromising the ability of future generations to meet their needs, and contributing to the achievement of the well-being goals in the Well-being of Future Generations Act.”</p>	<a href="https://naturalresources.wales">https://naturalresources.wales</a>

	Commission Wales)			<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Ensure land and water in Wales is managed sustainably and in an integrated way</li> <li>• Improve the resilience and quality of our ecosystems.</li> <li>• Reduce the risk to people and communities from environmental hazards such as flooding and pollution.</li> <li>• Help people live healthier and more fulfilled lives.</li> <li>• Promote successful and responsible business, using natural resources without damaging them.</li> <li>• Develop NRW into an excellent organisation, delivering first-class customer service.</li> </ul>	<p>The principles of SMNR are stated to be:</p> <p>Adaptive management: manage adaptively by planning, monitoring, reviewing and where appropriate, changing action</p> <p>Scale: consider the appropriate spatial scale for action</p> <p>Collaboration and engagement promote and engage in collaboration and cooperation</p> <p>Public Participation: make appropriate arrangements for public participation in decision-making</p> <p>Evidence: take account of all relevant evidence, and gather evidence in respect of uncertainties</p> <p>Multiple benefits: take account of the benefits and intrinsic value of natural resources and ecosystems</p> <p>Long term: take account of the short, medium and long term consequences of actions</p> <p>Preventative action: take action to prevent significant damage to ecosystems</p> <p>Building resilience: take account of the resilience of ecosystems, in particular the following aspects:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>(i) diversity between and within ecosystems;</li> <li>(ii) the connections between and within ecosystems;</li> <li>(iii) the scale of ecosystems;</li> <li>(iv) the condition of ecosystems (including their structure and functioning);</li> <li>(v) the adaptability of ecosystems</li> </ul>	
Forestry and Land Scotland	Scotland	900 employees (2019)	£17.2m (2020-21)	<p>Forestry and Land Scotland manages the land owned by the Scottish Government.</p> <p>Scotland’s Forestry Strategy 2019-2029 sets out the vision for forestry in Scotland: “In 2070, Scotland will have more forests and woodlands, sustainably managed and better integrated with other land uses. These will provide a more resilient, adaptable resource, with greater natural capital value, that supports a strong economy, a thriving environment, and healthy and flourishing communities.”</p>	<p>Scotland’s Forestry Strategy 2019-2029 contains the following objectives relevant to rural land use:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Increase the contribution of forests and woodlands to Scotland’s sustainable and inclusive economic growth</li> <li>• Improve the resilience of Scotland’s forests and woodlands and increase their contribution to a healthy and high quality environment</li> <li>• Increase the use of Scotland’s forest and woodland resources to enable more people to improve their health, well-being and life chances</li> </ul> <p>And the following policy priorities:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Ensuring forests and woodlands are sustainably managed</li> </ul>	<a href="https://forestryandland.gov.scot">https://forestryandland.gov.scot</a>

				<p>FLS states it will help deliver the vision for forestry in Scotland. In so doing, the vision for FLS is as follows: “Forests and land that Scotland can be proud of.”</p> <p>FLS will work towards this vision by delivering its mission, which is: “To look after Scotland’s forests and land, for the benefit of all, now and for the future.”</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Expanding the area of forests and woodlands, recognising wider land use objectives</li> <li>• Improving efficiency and productivity, and developing markets</li> <li>• Increasing the adaptability and resilience of forests and woodlands</li> <li>• Enhancing the environmental benefits provided by forests and woodlands</li> <li>• Engaging more people, communities and businesses in the creation, management and use of forests and woodlands</li> </ul>	
Scottish Forestry	Scotland	170 employees (2019)	£47.5m (2020-21)	<p>Scottish Forestry is responsible for regulation, policy and support to private landowners. Its Corporate Plan (2020-23) states its purpose as: “The sustainable management and expansion of forests and woodlands to deliver more for Scotland.” and includes three strategic objectives:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Ensure that sustainable forest management is an integral part of public policy, particularly through leading and co-ordinating the delivery of Scotland’s Forestry Strategy</li> <li>• Develop our people and culture to improve performance and resilience, building a dynamic, flexible and modern workforce which serves the forestry sector and wider Scotland well</li> <li>• Become a more innovative, efficient and accessible organisation by delivering process improvements, and harnessing digital and technological solutions</li> </ul>	Adhere to the Forestry Strategy as outlined above.	<a href="https://forestry.gov.scot">https://forestry.gov.scot</a>
Historic England	England	1.34m members / 851 employees	£99.4m (2019-20)	<p>The Three Year Corporate Plan (2018-21) outlines HE’s mission as: To champion and protect England’s historic environment. It includes x6 corporate aims: Aim 1: Championing</p>	Adhere to (and seek to influence) Government policies for the environment and planning as covered by the 25 Year Environment Plan and NPPF (summarised in Appendix 2).	<a href="https://historicengland.org.uk">https://historicengland.org.uk</a>

				<p>Aim 2: Protecting through the listing and planning system</p> <p>Aim 3: Match funding and financial incentives to protect places</p> <p>Aim 4: Strengthening national capacity and resilience of heritage sector</p> <p>Aim 5: Oversight of the National Heritage Collection cared for by English Heritage</p> <p>Aim 6: Improving financial and organisational resilience and accountability</p>		
Ministry of Communities and Local Government	National	2,220 employees (2020)	£36b (2018-19)	The Ministry's stated role "is to create great places to live and work, and to give more power to local people to shape what happens in their area."	The MHCLG adheres to and/or implements governmental planning policy, which is currently contained in the 2018 version of the <i>NPPF</i> , which is summarised in Appendix 2.	
Ministry of Defence / Defence Infrastructure Organisation	National	36,770 employees (2020)	£43b (2018/19)	<p>The MoD works for a secure and prosperous UK with global reach and influence. MoD will protect UK people, territories, values and interests at home and overseas, through strong armed forces and in partnership with allies, to ensure UK security, support UK national interests and safeguard our prosperity.</p> <p>The Defence Infrastructure Organisation (DIO) is the estate expert for defence, supporting the armed forces to enable military capability by planning, building, maintaining, and servicing infrastructure</p>	<p>The DIO produces strategic and base-specific policy statements relating to the development, use and management of MoD land.</p> <p>In 2016 the DIO produced the 'strategic plan' for the rationalisation and selective disposal of defence estate entitled '<i>A Better Defence Estate</i>' and this was updated in 2019. The document contains a detailed list of MoD sites/land to be disposed of or retained and some information about how the sites were selected for disposal. This focused very much on military criteria and potential development value. One 'design principle' of note was that, "The Estate should be compliant with sustainability policies", but this is not elaborated upon in the rest of the document.</p> <p>An example of local base-planning is provided by the '<i>Salisbury Plain Masterplan</i>' (2014) which did acknowledge the environmental value of this MoD land and involved the use of an 'Overall Environmental Appraisal' to shape the development strategy.</p>	<p><a href="https://www.gov.uk/government/organisations/ministry-of-defence">https://www.gov.uk/government/organisations/ministry-of-defence</a></p> <p><a href="https://www.gov.uk/government/organisations/defence-infrastructure-organisation">https://www.gov.uk/government/organisations/defence-infrastructure-organisation</a></p>
Natural England	England	1,786 employees (2019)	£111.5m (2018-19)	The agency's stated role is "the government's adviser for the natural environment in England, helping to protect	Adhere to (and seek to influence) Government policies for the environment and planning as covered by the 25	<a href="https://www.gov.uk/government/organisations/natural-england">https://www.gov.uk/government/organisations/natural-england</a>

				<p>England’s nature and landscapes for people to enjoy and for the services they provide.”</p> <p>The work of the agency is now organised, “around four medium term objectives:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Greener farming and fisheries</li> <li>• Sustainable development</li> <li>• Connecting people and nature</li> <li>• Restoring nature”</li> </ul>	<p><i>Year Environment Plan and NPPF</i> (summarised in Appendix 2).</p> <p><i>‘Building Partnerships for Nature’s Recovery: Natural England Action Plan 2019/20’</i> was withdrawn in May 2020, with emphasis now being placed on the implementation of relevant policies in the <i>25 Year Environment Plan</i>.</p>	
Rural Payments Agency	National	2,060 employees (2020)	£144.3m (2018-19) (excluding £2.0bn from EU schemes administered by the agency)	<p>The RPA is responsible for:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• measures to boost the productivity of the farming industry,</li> <li>• helping to assure the provenance of UK food, and contribute to the control of disease in livestock, through the monitoring of cattle movement and inspections of abattoirs and meat cutting plants,</li> <li>• delivery of subsidies and other payments to support our farming and food industry and incentivise environmental outcomes,</li> <li>• providing import and export licenses for the agri-food sector,</li> <li>• providing subsidies to encourage uptake of milk in schools,</li> <li>• supporting free flow of trade through provision of certificates of free sale,</li> <li>• helping to regulate the markets for dairy and farm produce,</li> <li>• helping to boost the rural economy through rural development schemes and management of various funding schemes, such as the roll-out of super-fast rural broadband,</li> <li>• manage customer contact for a wide range of Defra group services.</li> </ul>	<p>The RPA is, “committed to supporting Defra deliver its vision and <i>25 Year Plan</i> of creating a great place for living. Our role in agricultural land management and in support of food security and safety are highlighted by the preparations for leaving the EU and the <i>Agriculture Bill</i>.”</p>	<p><a href="https://www.gov.uk/government/organisations/rural-payments-agency">https://www.gov.uk/government/organisations/rural-payments-agency</a></p>

				<p>The RPA's stated objectives are:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Being an outstanding organisation</li> <li>• Leading the world and enhancing our environment</li> <li>• Supporting rural communities</li> </ul>		
The Crofting Commission	Scotland	59 employees (2020)	£2.786m (2018-19)	<p>The Crofting Commission regulates and promotes the interests of crofting in Scotland to secure the future of crofting.</p>	<p>The Crofting Commission's overall aim is to secure a long term future for crofting and for communities in the crofting areas, achieved through: good regulation; promoting occupancy of crofts; active land use; and shared management by crofters as a means of sustaining and enhancing rural communities.</p> <p>In doing so the Crofting Commission helps to deliver the Scottish Government's primary purpose of increasing sustainable economic growth and aligns with the National Outcomes. The Crofting Commission contributes to many of the outcomes including:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Our public services are high quality, continually improving, efficient and responsive to local people's needs;</li> <li>• We have strong, supportive and resilient communities where people take responsibility for their own actions and how they affect others; and</li> <li>• We live in well designed, sustainable places where we are able to access the amenities and services that we need.</li> </ul> <p>The Crofting Commission also contributes to the Scottish Government's strategic objectives, in particular:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Greener - Improve Scotland's natural and built environment and the sustainable use and enjoyment of it; and</li> <li>• Safer and Stronger - Help local communities to flourish, becoming stronger, safer places to live, offering improved opportunities and a better quality of life.</li> </ul> <p>The Crofting Commission has also produced a statutory 'Policy Plan' (2017) which details the policies and guidance on detailed aspects of their work.</p>	<p><a href="https://crofting.scotland.gov.uk">https://crofting.scotland.gov.uk</a></p>

Internal Drainage Boards	England / Local	<p>x 112 IDBs in England covering 1.2 million hectares (9.7% England's landmass). The <i>Association of Drainage Authorities</i> represents member's interests and provides resources and guidance.</p>	<p>£33.9m (2018-19)</p>	<p>An Internal Drainage Board (IDB) is a type of local public authority that manages water levels in England where there is a special need for drainage. IDBs undertake works to reduce flood risk to people, property and infrastructure, and manage water levels for agricultural and environmental needs.</p>	<p>Each IDB prepares its own policy statements on issues like discharge, access, flooding risk, conservation and biodiversity, with some Boards producing their own 'Water Management Plans'.</p>	<p><a href="https://www.ada.org.uk">https://www.ada.org.uk</a></p>
Local Authorities	Local	<p>x 410 LAs in E&amp;W</p> <p>x32 LAs in Scotland / 2.01m employees (2019)</p> <p>The <i>Local Government Association</i> represents members interests and provides resources and guidance, whilst the <i>Welsh Local</i></p>	<p>E&amp;W £99.2b (2019-20)</p> <p>Scotland £10.8b (2019-20)</p>	<p>LAs provide a range of services including education, social care, housing, transport, planning and waste management. They own and manage land themselves and act as the main representative organisation for local communities. Local authorities receive funding from a range of sources, including Government grants, council tax and fees and charges. Together, council tax and business rates make up local authorities' largest source of income.</p> <p>Many of the LA responsibilities are set by statute and their conduct is regulated by statute, case law and the Local Government Ombudsman.</p> <p>Almost all LAs will produce their own corporate vision statement outlining the principles they will use to deliver their services and undertake their functions.</p>	<p>Local authorities produce a range of strategies and policies which have implications for land use in urban and rural areas. The most significant of these is probably the local development plan for the LA area, which is a statutory requirement. These are discussed in more depth in Chapter 3 above.</p>	<p><a href="https://www.local.gov.uk">https://www.local.gov.uk</a></p> <p><a href="https://www.cosla.gov.uk">https://www.cosla.gov.uk</a></p> <p><a href="https://www.wlga.wales/home">https://www.wlga.wales/home</a></p>

		<p><i>Government Association and the Convention of Scottish Local Authorities</i> provide similar services for the devolved nations.</p>		<p>Most of these will include reference to sustainable development.</p>		
<p>National Park Authorities (x15)</p>	<p>Regional/local</p>	<p>x15 NPs (x10 in England, x3 in Wales and x2 in Scotland) / unknown employees</p> <p><i>National Parks UK</i> represents NPA's interests and provides resources and guidance</p>	<p>£64m (2019-20) Including: £47.9m (England) £3.3m (Wales) £12.8m (Scotland)</p>	<p>The statutory role of the NPAs is to:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Conserve and enhance the natural beauty, wildlife and cultural heritage.</li> <li>• Promote opportunities for the understanding and enjoyment of the special qualities of national parks by the public.</li> </ul> <p>They are also required to seek to foster the economic and social well-being of local communities within the national park.</p> <p>In the case of the Norfolk Broads there is a third purpose, namely protecting the interests of navigation, and all three purposes are given equal priority.</p> <p>For the Scottish parks there are four aims for the area:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• To conserve and enhance the natural and cultural heritage of the area.</li> <li>• To promote sustainable use of the natural resources of the area.</li> <li>• To promote understanding and enjoyment (including enjoyment in the form of recreation) of the special qualities of the area by the public.</li> </ul>	<p>Each NPA is required to produce a <i>National Park Management Plan</i>. These are discussed in Chapter 4 of the main report.</p>	<p><a href="https://www.nationalparks.uk">https://www.nationalparks.uk</a></p>

				<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>To promote sustainable economic and social development of the area's communities.</li> </ul> <p>With the exception of the Broads National Park, if there's a conflict between a park's purposes, greater weight has to be given to the first purpose.</p>		
Scottish Land Commission	Scotland	x13 employees (2019)	£1.5m (2019-20)	<p>The Scottish Land Commission is leading the programme of land reform in Scotland with the aim of improving the productivity, diversity and accountability of the way Scotland's land is owned and used.</p> <p>The Commission is guided by three strategic objectives:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Productivity – to drive increased economic, social and cultural value from Scotland's land</li> <li>Diversity – to encourage a more diverse pattern of land ownership with the benefits of land spread more inclusively</li> <li>Accountability – to ensure decision-making takes account of those affected and responsibilities are met.</li> </ul> <p>Its work is focussed on four priority areas:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Land for housing and development</li> <li>Modernising land ownership</li> <li>Land use decision-making</li> <li>Agricultural Holdings</li> </ul>	<p>The Commission has produced a strategic plan entitled <i>Making More of Scotland's Land: Our Strategic Plan 2018 to 2021</i>, which restates the three strategic objectives and four work priorities mentioned in the previous column. It also puts forward eight long-term outcomes it is seeking to achieve, many of which relate to rural land ownership and use:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>There will be fewer land constraints to effective public interest-led development and place-making;</li> <li>The supply of land for housing will be less constrained by land tenure and land values;</li> <li>The net area of vacant and derelict land will be falling;</li> <li>The level of concentration in land ownership patterns will be falling;</li> <li>The level of community involvement in land management decision-making will be rising;</li> <li>The number of communities exercising ownership or control of land will be rising;</li> <li>The number of agricultural units managed through a lease or joint venture will be rising;</li> <li>The relationships between agricultural landlords and tenants will be improving.</li> </ul>	<a href="https://landcommission.gov.scot">https://landcommission.gov.scot</a>
Town and Parish Councils	Local (for England, Wales and Scotland, but not N. Ireland)	<p>x 10k parish and town councils in England</p> <p>x 1,200 active community</p>	Local council budgets vary but are usually quite limited.	<p>A local council is a universal term for community, neighbourhood, parish and town councils. They are the first tier of local government and are statutory bodies. They serve electorates and are independently elected and raise their own precept (in E &amp; W). They operate under statutory requirements and their conduct</p>	<p>Local councils often initiate neighbourhood plans, either formally under the Localism Act 2011 or informally. Details of the neighbourhood planning process, and Localism more generally, are discussed in Chapter 3 above.</p>	<p><a href="https://www.nalc.gov.uk">https://www.nalc.gov.uk</a></p> <p><a href="http://www.communitycouncils.scot">http://www.communitycouncils.scot</a></p> <p><a href="http://www.onevoicewales.org.uk">http://www.onevoicewales.org.uk</a></p>

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		<p>councils in Scotland</p> <p>x 735 community and town councils in Wales</p> <p><i>The National Association of Local Councils (NALC)</i> provides research and guidance and represents the interests of local councils in England. <i>Scottish Community Councils</i> and <i>One Voice Wales</i> undertake similar roles in Scotland and Wales.</p>		<p>is regulated by various Acts and statutory regulations.</p> <p>Local councils act as a channel for the opinions of the local community, and have the right to be notified of and respond to planning applications. They may also own land or other property rights. In practice, most lack the capacity to undertake the provision of public services, and concern themselves with local environmental, community and amenity issues (see Sandford, 2019).</p>		
Country Land and Business Association (CLA)	National	33,000 members / 106 employees (2018)	£10m (2017-18)	The CLA is the membership organisation representing the interests of the owners of land, property and businesses in rural England and Wales. CLA members own or manage around half the rural land in England and Wales and more than 250 different types of businesses.	CKLA have produced a number of policy reports as well as responding to Governmental White Papers and other proposals. The most significant policy report of recent years is probably <i>Redefining Farming</i> , which is summarised in Appendix 3.	<a href="https://www.cla.org.uk">https://www.cla.org.uk</a>
House Builders Federation (HBF)	National	300+ members /	£5.5m (2019-20)	The Home Builders Federation (HBF) is the representative body of the home building	The HBF produces regular briefing notes, consultation responses, background reports and the occasional policy	<a href="https://www.hbf.co.uk">https://www.hbf.co.uk</a>

		27 employees (+5 working for <i>Housebuilder Media</i> ) (2018)		<p>industry in England and Wales. The HBF's member firms account for some 80% of all new homes built in England and Wales, and include companies of all sizes, ranging from multi-national companies, through regionally based businesses to small local companies.</p> <p>The <i>Federation of Master Builders</i> is a similar national organisation which represents smaller house builders.</p>	<p>paper. As an example, <i>Housing Delivery and the Plan-Led System</i> (2017) reviewed the role of the private house building in helping to deliver the Welsh Government's 20,000 affordable homes target, recommending that the Welsh administration should take the following actions to address the identified issues:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Ensuring that Local Planning Authorities (LPAs) do not stop work on plan reviews while waiting for the National Development Framework or Strategic Development Plans to be adopted.</li> <li>• Utilising powers available to the Government to make certain that plans are both adopted and reviewed in a timely manner to ensure continual plan coverage.</li> <li>• Requiring LPAs, which have less than a five-year land supply, to take action to help increase the availability of deliverable housing sites, through granting permission for sustainable development or allocating additional sites for housing in a review of their Local Development Plans.</li> <li>• Clarifying the role of the Annual Monitoring Report in monitoring plan delivery and its position on 'failing' LPAs including when an LPAs does not secure a level of development in accordance with their Local Development Plans.</li> </ul>	
National Farmers Union	National	80,168 members / 797 employees (2018)	£42.1m (2017-18)	<p>The NFU is the largest organisation in England and Wales representing farmers and growers, and providing a range of professional services to its members (including insurance through a separate company, NFU Mutual). The NFU is governed by a Constitution and set of Rules. Under these the NFU maintains a number of bodies, which are responsible for the Governance of the NFU. These operate at national and regional levels, and includes a central 'Policy Board' that prepares policy papers and responds to Government consultations.</p>	<p>The NFU publishes regular policy papers on various topics, many of which are relevant to rural land use. The recent (2019) report entitled <i>The Future of Food 2040</i> is summarised in Appendix 3.</p>	<a href="https://www.nfuonline.com">https://www.nfuonline.com</a>

				<p>Since 2017 the NFU has focused on the following areas of work, which are seen as critical to the success of the organisation:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Grow our representative power</li> <li>• Grow our non-subscription income</li> <li>• Grow our services to members</li> <li>• Grow our share of voice</li> <li>• Grow our knowledge and skills</li> </ul>		
Rural Community Councils / ACRE	England	<p>38 county-based community councils in England</p> <p><i>Action with Communities in Rural England</i> (ACRE) operates as the coordinating organisation for the community councils.</p> <p>DEFRA funds the <i>Rural Community Action Network</i> (RCAN), which keeps Defra up to date with local information on the impact</p>	£2.37m (2018-19)	<p>ACRE's Vision is to be the voice of rural communities and the mission is to provide critical, evidence-based intelligence and solutions to achieve a fair deal for rural communities</p>	<p>Each community council develops its own set of local priorities and policy principles, whilst ACRE has produced a number of policy papers since 2014 covering a range of rural issues. The most relevant papers have outlined tackled: community planning; the rural economy; environment; affordable housing; and transport. ACRE has also responded to numerous Government consultations.</p>	<a href="https://acre.org.uk">https://acre.org.uk</a>

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		of policies in rural areas.				
Rural and Farming Network	England / regional	20 regional networks (with about 20 members in each)	DEFRA-funded	The Rural and Farming Network is a nationwide network of networks set-up by DEFRA in 2012. It is made up of local groups representing different areas of England, to identify and feedback local issues and concerns to the heart of Government, in order to make policies more rural-friendly. The Networks bring together people from rural communities, rural businesses and the food and farming industries. The chairs of the regional networks meet with DEFRA once a year.	No obvious policy outputs.	<a href="https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/2010-to-2015-government-policy-rural-economy-and-community">https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/2010-to-2015-government-policy-rural-economy-and-community</a>
Mineral Products Association / British Aggregates Association	National / Regional	530 member companies / 42 employees (MPA)  77 member companies / 4 employees (BAA)	£7.3m (2018-19, MPA)  £0.2m (2018-19, BAA)	These two organisations provide representation, research, advice and guidance for Britain's aggregates industry. Importantly, they represent the industry on the Regional Aggregates Working Parties (RAWPs) that coordinate the planning and extraction of aggregates from quarries and workings across England and Wales, often in sensitive landscape areas like the National Parks.  The membership of the MPA tends towards the larger national/global companies, whilst those in the BAA tend to be smaller independent companies.  A National Co-ordinating Group (NCG) provides a national forum of discussion of work undertaken by the RAWPs.	Working through the RAWPs, the aggregates industry must adhere to the policies and procedures set out in the <i>NPPF</i> , <i>Planning Policy Wales</i> and <i>Scottish Planning Policy Note 4: Planning for Minerals</i> . The <i>NPPF</i> states that great weight should be given to the benefits of mineral extraction, including to the economy and includes these relevant planning considerations: a) as far as is practical, provide for the maintenance of landbanks of non-energy minerals from outside National Parks, the Broads, Areas of Outstanding Natural Beauty and World Heritage Sites, scheduled monuments and conservation areas; b) ensure that there are no unacceptable adverse impacts on the natural and historic environment, human health or aviation safety, and take into account the cumulative effect of multiple impacts from individual sites and/or from a number of sites in a locality; c) ensure that any unavoidable noise, dust and particle emissions and any blasting vibrations are controlled, mitigated or removed at source, and establish appropriate noise limits for extraction in proximity to noise sensitive properties; d) not grant planning permission for peat extraction from new or extended sites;	<a href="https://mineralproducts.org">https://mineralproducts.org</a>  <a href="https://www.british-aggregates.co.uk">https://www.british-aggregates.co.uk</a>

					<p>e) provide for restoration and aftercare at the earliest opportunity, to be carried out to high environmental standards, through the application of appropriate conditions. Bonds or other financial guarantees to underpin planning conditions should only be sought in exceptional circumstances;</p> <p>f) consider how to meet any demand for small-scale extraction of building stone at, or close to, relic quarries needed for the repair of heritage assets, taking account of the need to protect designated sites; and</p> <p>g) recognise the small-scale nature and impact of building and roofing stone quarries, and the need for a flexible approach to the duration of planning permissions reflecting the intermittent or low rate of working at many sites.</p>	
Rural Coalition	National	x 13 national organisations as members (ACRE provides the secretariat)	Unknown	The member organisations of the Rural Coalition subscribe to a vision for a living and working countryside in England. Based on many shared values, they seek to be more influential by joining in common cause.	<p>The Rural Coalition argues that the following four principles should underpin policymaking:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Brexit discussions must recognise ‘rural’ is more than agriculture and the natural environment.</li> <li>• All Brexit negotiations and post-Brexit policies must be rural proofed.</li> <li>• Policies and funding must deliver a fair deal for rural communities.</li> <li>• Decision-making, funding and delivery must be devolved and involve rural communities.</li> </ul> <p>The Coalition puts forward four policy priorities:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• A meaningful increase in the delivery of affordable housing in villages and small towns.</li> <li>• Proper recognition of rural service delivery challenges and services designed to meet rural needs.</li> <li>• Long-term support for social action, to help communities become more resilient.</li> </ul> <p>Business support and infrastructure which reaches rural areas, so the rural economy can grow and create quality jobs.</p>	<a href="https://acre.org.uk/our-work/rural-coalition.php">https://acre.org.uk/our-work/rural-coalition.php</a>
British Association for	National	155,000 members /	£11.6m (2018,	The mission of the BASC is to promote and protect sporting shooting and the well-		<a href="https://basc.org.uk">https://basc.org.uk</a>

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Shooting and Conservation (BASC)		100 employees	calendar year)	<p>being of the countryside throughout the United Kingdom and overseas.</p> <p>It aims to:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• To build all-party support for shooting sports.</li> <li>• To secure balanced coverage in the media.</li> <li>• To ensure our members have the opportunity and the means to go shooting.</li> <li>• To promote high standards of conduct in the field and publish a number of codes of practice covering many aspects of firearms safety and use, the conduct of shooting sports, pest control and animal welfare.</li> <li>• BASC members are expected to obey the law and to observe codes of practice.</li> </ul>		
Campaign to Protect Rural England (and Wales)	National (E&W)/ Regional	40,000+ (England) / 1,000+ (Wales)	£5.1m (2018-19)	<p>CPRE claims to be 'the countryside charity'. It campaigns to promote, enhance and protect the countryside for everyone's benefit, wherever they live.</p> <p>CPRE has branches at county-level, and work with communities, businesses and government to find positive and lasting ways to help the countryside thrive - today and for generations to come.</p>		<a href="https://www.cpre.org.uk">https://www.cpre.org.uk</a>
Catchment Based Approach	England / River Basins	Exist for all 106 river basins in England	£1.4m (core funding) (2018-19)	<p>The Catchment Based Approach (CaBA) is a DEFRA-led and funded initiative which involves partnership working between Government, Local Authorities, Water Companies, businesses and more, to maximise the natural value of the environment.</p> <p>CaBA partnerships are actively working in all 100+ river catchments across England</p>		<a href="https://catchmentbasedapproach.org">https://catchmentbasedapproach.org</a>

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				and cross-border with Wales, directly supporting achievement of many of the targets under the Government's 25 Year Environment Plan. The CaBA follows a natural capital approach.		
Countryside Alliance	National	81,000	£4.5m (2017-18)	The Countryside Alliance is a campaigning organisation that claims to promote a rural way of life to Parliament, in the media and on the ground. They campaign for the countryside, for rural communities and particularly for hunting and shooting. It also operates the Countryside Alliance Foundation.		<a href="https://www.countryside-alliance.org">https://www.countryside-alliance.org</a>
Friends of the Earth (+Friends of the Earth Scotland)	World/ National/ Local	2m members (globally) / 157 local groups (+12 in Scotland)	£13.5m (2018-19) (+ £0.6m for FoE Scotland)	FoE is a campaigning and membership-based organisation that lobbies decision-makers at all levels, provides resources and information to local groups and promotes alternative solutions to create a cleaner, healthier and fairer world for everyone, for today and for generations to come.		<a href="https://friendsoftheearth.uk">https://friendsoftheearth.uk</a>
Greenpeace	World/ National/ Local	2.8m members (globally) / c130,000 members in UK	£17.4m (2018 calendar year, for UK)	Greenpeace is more of a social movement than an organisation. Members are passionate about defending the natural world from destruction. Their vision is of a greener, healthier and more peaceful planet, one that can sustain life for generations to come  They do this work by investigating, documenting and exposing the causes of environmental destruction. Greenpeace work to bring about change by lobbying, consumer pressure and mobilising members of the general public. They take direct action, often through their x60 local groups, to protect the Earth and promote solutions for a green and peaceful future.		<a href="https://www.greenpeace.org.uk">https://www.greenpeace.org.uk</a>

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Historic Houses (+ Historic Houses Scotland)	National/ Local	1,658 historic houses (+250 in Scotland) and 54,000 public members	£2.1m (2018-19)	Historic Houses is a cooperative association of independent historic houses and gardens. They lobby (mostly central) government, and provide advice and guidance to their members. Public members are provided with various benefits.	<a href="https://www.historichouses.org">https://www.historichouses.org</a>
National Association for Areas of Outstanding Natural Beauty	National	x46 AONBs in England, Wales and Northern Ireland	£291,000 (2018-19)	<p>The NAAONB is a charity with three primary objectives:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>to promote the conservation and enhancement of natural beauty in and around AONBs and other similarly protected areas;</li> <li>to advance the education, understanding and appreciation of the conservation and enhancement of the countryside; and</li> <li>to promote the efficiency and effectiveness of organisations promoting or representing Areas of Outstanding Natural Beauty.</li> </ul> <p>The NAAONB is currently undertaking a strategic review of their operations under the guise of 'The Future Landscapes Project'.</p>	<a href="https://landscapesforlife.org.uk">https://landscapesforlife.org.uk</a>
National Association for Voluntary and Community Action	National	145,000+ member organisations	£432,000 (2018-19)	The NAVCA is a national membership organisation that lobbies for and provides support to over 145,000 local charities and voluntary groups in the UK, many of which are in rural areas.	<a href="https://navca.org.uk">https://navca.org.uk</a>
National Community Land Trust	National	250+ CLTs	£2.4m (2018-19)	<p>The National CLT Network is the official charity supporting Community Land Trusts (CLTs) in England and Wales. They work with and on behalf of CLTs.</p> <p>The Network provides funding, resources, training and advice for CLTs and work with the Government, local authorities, lenders and funders to establish the best</p>	<a href="http://www.communitylandtrusts.org.uk">http://www.communitylandtrusts.org.uk</a>

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				<p>conditions for CLTs to grow and flourish. Its aim is to transform the land and housing markets in England and Wales so that CLTs are mainstream, not dependent on short-lived specialist support programmes.</p> <p>The Network is also part of a broad alliance of organisations promoting and supporting community led housing in England.</p>	
National Trust / National Trust for Scotland	National	<p>5.75m (E, W &amp; NI)</p> <p>0.36m (Scotland) (2019)</p>	<p>£71.5m (2018-19, for E, W and NI)</p> <p>£4.5m (2018-19, for Scotland)</p>	<p>The NT protect and care for places so people and nature can thrive. They own and look after land along the coastline, historic sites, countryside and green spaces, making them accessible for the general public. With their staff, members, volunteers and supporters, they claim to be the biggest conservation charity in Europe.</p> <p>The NT owns: 780 miles of coastline; 248,000 hectares of land; and over 500 historic houses, castles, ancient monuments, gardens and parks and nature reserves. NTS owns: 76 ha. of countryside and coastline; 11,000 archaeological sites; 271 listed buildings; and 38 important gardens and landscape areas.</p>	<a href="https://www.nationaltrust.org.uk">https://www.nationaltrust.org.uk</a>
Pony Club	National	50,000 members / 345 branches and 480 Centres in UK	£3.3m (2018 calendar year)	<p>The Pony Club is an international voluntary youth organisation for young people interested in ponies and riding. It encourages young people to ride and to learn to enjoy all kinds of sport connected with horses and riding. In doing this, its members own or manage significant tracts of rural land, often around or nearby to urban areas.</p>	<a href="https://pcuk.org">https://pcuk.org</a>
Rivers Trust	National	50 local river trusts in E, W, NI and	£1.6m (2018-19)	<p>The Rivers Trust is the umbrella organisation for 60 local member Trusts (in UK and Irish Republic). They claim to be the</p>	<a href="https://www.theriverstrust.org">https://www.theriverstrust.org</a>

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		southern Scotland.		only group of environmental charities in the UK and Ireland, dedicated to protecting and improving river environments for the benefit of people and wildlife. River Trusts are independent community-led charitable organisations, delivering education, water management advice and practical conservation work, improving land, rivers and wetlands at a river basin scale.		
Royal Society for the Protection of Birds (RSPB)	National	1.1 million	£99.6m (2018-19)	The RSPB is a membership organisation 'representing' the interests of birds and other wildlife. RSPB's mission is stated as: 'Our birds and wildlife are increasingly vulnerable in a rapidly-changing world. Together, we can create bigger, better, more joined-up spaces to save our wildlife, and our shared home.' In undertaking that task, they own 321,237 acres of (mostly rural) land and work in partnership with other landowners to provide for birdlife.		<a href="https://www.rspb.org.uk">https://www.rspb.org.uk</a>
Rural Housing Alliance (RHA)	National	27 member RSLs (Housing Associations)	Unknown	The Rural Housing Alliance is a group of housing associations that develop and manage affordable homes in rural areas across England. They work together to share innovation, good practice and ideas, advocate the need for affordable rural homes and provide a unified voice on key issues.		<a href="http://ruralhousingalliance.net">http://ruralhousingalliance.net</a>
Scottish Crofting Federation	Scotland	12,000 crofting households	£0.3m (2018 calendar year)	The SCF claims to be the only organisation solely dedicated to campaigning for crofters and fighting for the future of crofting. It is the largest association of small-scale food producers in the UK. Their mission is to safeguard and promote the rights, livelihoods and culture of crofters and their communities		<a href="https://www.crofting.org">https://www.crofting.org</a>
Soil Association	National	12,200 members	£15.6m (2018-19)	The Soil Association is a UK membership charity campaigning for healthy, humane and sustainable food, farming and land		<a href="https://www.soilassociation.org">https://www.soilassociation.org</a>

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				<p>use. It has a wholly owned subsidiary, Soil Association Certification Limited, which is the UK's largest organic certification body. It has also established the Soil Association Land Trust which safeguards legacies of productive farming land. Land is donated by retiring farmers and landowners, often those with no dependents, who wish to see their life's work continue into the future. It also produces regular policy reports and lobbies government on relevant issues.</p>		
The Ramblers	National	123,000	£10.1m (2017-18)	<p>The Ramblers is a charity whose goal is to protect the ability of people to enjoy the sense of freedom and benefits that come from being outdoors on foot. It is organised into 'national' groups for England, Scotland and Wales.</p> <p>They are an association of people and groups who come together to both enjoy walking and other outdoor pursuits and also to ensure that we protect and expand the infrastructure and places people go walking.</p>		<a href="https://www.ramblers.org.uk">https://www.ramblers.org.uk</a>
Wildfowl and Wetlands Trust	National	200,000	£24.8m (2018-19)	<p>WWT is a membership organisation which seeks to protect and enhance wetland areas and their wildlife. They claim to be pioneers in saving threatened wetland wildlife, a centre for excellence in conservation science and experts in wetland management and creation. 3,000 hectares of wetland habitat (concentrated in ten sites) are managed by WWT, much of it designated as nationally or internationally important for wildlife.</p>		<a href="https://www.wwt.org.uk">https://www.wwt.org.uk</a>
Wildlife Trust (x46)	Local	(850,000 linked to WWF)	No overall figures. As	<p>The Wildlife Trusts is an organisation made up of 46 local Wildlife Trusts in the United Kingdom, the Isle of Man and Alderney. The Wildlife Trusts, between them, look</p>		<a href="https://www.wildlifetrusts.org">https://www.wildlifetrusts.org</a>

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			example, Cumbria WT exp. £2.4m (2018-19)	after around 2,300 nature reserves covering more than 98,000 hectares. The vision of the WT is of people close to nature, with land and seas rich in wildlife and their mission is to bring about living landscapes, living seas and a society where nature matters.		
Woodland Trust	National	500,000	£48.2m (2018 calendar year)	The Woodland Trust is the UK's largest woodland conservation charity. They campaign and lobby, produce research and guidance, undertake tree planning and other conservation work and own and manage 1,000 woods themselves.		<a href="https://www.woodlandtrust.org.uk">https://www.woodlandtrust.org.uk</a>
World Wildlife Fund for Nature (WWF)	World/ National	572,000	£69.6m (WWF in UK, 2018-19)	WWF is the world's largest conservation organisation with over five million supporters worldwide, working in more than 100 countries and supporting around 3,000 conservation and environmental projects. With the slogan of 'take action for your world', much of the WWF's work is focused overseas but it does undertake educational, campaigning and research work in the UK on issues such as farming, food and sustainable land use.		<a href="https://www.wwf.org.uk">https://www.wwf.org.uk</a>

## Appendix 2: UK Rural Policy Map

Policy Document	Key Policy Themes	Comments	URL
United Nations (2015) <b>The 2030 Agenda for Sustainable development</b>	<p>The policy thrust of the 2015 update of the UN SD strategy is expressed through 17 Sustainable development Goals:</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1. End <b>poverty</b> in all its forms everywhere</li> <li>2. End <b>hunger</b>, achieve food security and improved nutrition and promote sustainable agriculture</li> <li>3. Ensure <b>healthy lives</b> and promote <b>well-being</b> for all at all ages</li> <li>4. Ensure inclusive and equitable quality <b>education</b> and promote lifelong learning opportunities for all</li> <li>5. Achieve <b>gender equality</b> and empower all women and girls</li> <li>6. Ensure availability and sustainable management of <b>water</b> and sanitation for all</li> <li>7. Ensure access to affordable, reliable, sustainable and modern <b>energy</b> for all</li> <li>8. Promote sustained, inclusive and sustainable <b>economic growth</b>, full and productive employment and decent work for all</li> <li>9. Build <b>resilient infrastructure</b>, promote inclusive and sustainable industrialization and foster innovation</li> <li>10. Reduce <b>inequality</b> within and among countries</li> <li>11. Make cities and human <b>settlements</b> inclusive, safe, resilient and sustainable</li> <li>12. Ensure sustainable <b>consumption and production</b> patterns</li> <li>13. Take urgent action to combat <b>climate change</b> and its impacts (Acknowledging that the United Nations Framework Convention on Climate Change is the primary international, intergovernmental forum for negotiating the global response to climate change.)</li> <li>14. Conserve and sustainably use the <b>oceans, seas and marine resources</b> for sustainable development</li> <li>15. Protect, restore and promote sustainable use of terrestrial <b>ecosystems</b>, sustainably manage forests, combat desertification, and halt and reverse land degradation and halt biodiversity loss</li> <li>16. Promote <b>peaceful and inclusive societies</b> for sustainable development, provide access to <b>justice</b> for all and build effective, accountable and inclusive institutions at all levels</li> <li>17. Strengthen the means of implementation and revitalise the <b>global partnership</b> for sustainable development</li> </ol>		<a href="https://www.un.org/sustainabledevelopment/">https://www.un.org/sustainabledevelopment/</a>

<p><b>EU Common Agricultural Policy (CAP):</b> Detailed in four main Regulations:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>rules for direct payments to farmers (<a href="https://ec.europa.eu/info/food-farming-fisheries/key-policies/common-agricultural-policy/cap-glance_en">EU regulation 1307/2013</a>);</li> <li>a common organisation of the markets in agricultural products (<a href="https://ec.europa.eu/info/food-farming-fisheries/key-policies/common-agricultural-policy/cap-glance_en">EU regulation 1308/2013</a>);</li> <li>support for rural development (<a href="https://ec.europa.eu/info/food-farming-fisheries/key-policies/common-agricultural-policy/cap-glance_en">EU regulation 1305/2013</a>);</li> <li>financing, management and monitoring of the common agricultural policy (<a href="https://ec.europa.eu/info/food-farming-fisheries/key-policies/common-agricultural-policy/cap-glance_en">EU regulation 1306/2013</a>).</li> </ul>	<p>Launched in 1962, the EU’s common agricultural policy (CAP) aims to:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>support farmers and improve agricultural productivity, ensuring a stable supply of affordable food;</li> <li>safeguard European Union farmers to make a reasonable living;</li> <li>help tackle climate change and the sustainable management of natural resources;</li> <li>maintain rural areas and landscapes across the EU;</li> <li>keep the rural economy alive by promoting jobs in farming, agri-foods industries and associated sectors.</li> </ul> <p>The CAP is a common policy for all EU countries. It is managed and funded at European level from the resources of the EU’s budget.</p>	<p>The various policies and financial programmes linked with CAP will be phased out as the UK leaves the EU. This will occur over a transition period (until the end of 2020) although the CAP funding regime could be extended ‘one or two years’ (p.8) and certain policies will be maintained or adapted within new UK legislation and policy.</p>	<p><a href="https://ec.europa.eu/info/food-farming-fisheries/key-policies/common-agricultural-policy/cap-glance_en">https://ec.europa.eu/info/food-farming-fisheries/key-policies/common-agricultural-policy/cap-glance_en</a></p>
<p>EU (2014) 7<sup>th</sup> <b>Environmental Action Plan</b></p>	<p>Running from 2014 to 2020, this document identifies three key objectives:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>to protect, conserve and enhance the EU’s <b>natural capital</b></li> <li>to turn the EU into a <b>resource-efficient</b>, green, and competitive low-carbon <b>economy</b></li> <li>to <b>safeguard</b> the EU’s citizens from <b>environment-related pressures</b> and risks to health and wellbeing.</li> </ul>	<p>The various policies and financial programmes linked with CAP will be phased out as the UK</p>	<p><a href="https://ec.europa.eu/environment/action-programme/">https://ec.europa.eu/environment/action-programme/</a></p>

	<p>Four so called ‘enablers’ will help Europe deliver on these goals:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• better <b>implementation</b> of legislation</li> <li>• better <b>information</b> by improving the knowledge base</li> <li>• more and wiser <b>investment</b> for environment and climate policy</li> <li>• full <b>integration</b> of environmental requirements and considerations into other policies</li> </ul> <p>Two additional horizontal priority objectives complete the programme:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• to <b>make</b> the Union's <b>cities more sustainable</b></li> <li>• to help the Union <b>address international environmental and climate challenges more effectively.</b></li> </ul>	<p>leaves the EU. See comment on CAP.</p>	
<p>HM Government (2020) The <b>Agriculture Bill</b> (as Amended by Committee) Update and briefing provided by HoC Library (2020) Future Farming and Countryside Programme</p>	<p>A ‘facilitating’ piece of legislation that allows the SoS to provide “financial assistance for or in connection with any one or more of the following purposes:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• managing land or water in a way that protects or improves the environment;</li> <li>• supporting public access to and enjoyment of the countryside;</li> <li>• farmland or woodland and better understanding of the environment;</li> <li>• managing land or water in a way that maintains, restores or enhances cultural or natural heritage;</li> <li>• managing land, water or livestock in a way that mitigates or adapts to climate change;</li> <li>• managing land or water in a way that prevents, reduces or protects from environmental hazards;</li> <li>• protecting or improving the health or welfare of livestock;</li> <li>• conserving native livestock, native equines or genetic resources relating to any such animal;</li> <li>• protecting or improving the health of plants;</li> <li>• conserving plants grown or used in carrying on an agricultural, horticultural or forestry activity, their wild relatives or genetic resources relating to any such plant;</li> <li>• protecting or improving the quality of soil;</li> <li>• starting, or improving the productivity of, an agricultural, horticultural or forestry activity; or</li> </ul>		<p><a href="https://services.parliament.uk/bills/2019-21/agriculture.html">https://services.parliament.uk/bills/2019-21/agriculture.html</a></p> <p><a href="https://commonslibrary.parliament.uk/research-briefings/cbp-8702/">https://commonslibrary.parliament.uk/research-briefings/cbp-8702/</a></p>

	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• supporting ancillary activities carried on, or to be carried on, by or for a producer.</li> </ul>		
<p>HM Government (2019) <i>A Green Future: Our 25 Year Plan to Improve the Environment</i></p>	<p>Policies for the rural environment are:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Embedding an ‘environmental net gain’ principle for development, including housing and infrastructure</li> <li>• Improving how we manage and incentivise land management             <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>○ Designing and delivering a new environmental land management system</li> <li>○ Introducing new farming rules for water</li> <li>○ Working with farmers to use fertilisers efficiently</li> <li>○ Protecting crops while reducing the environmental impact of pesticides</li> </ul> </li> <li>• Improving soil health and restoring and protecting our peatlands             <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>○ Developing better information on soil health</li> <li>○ Restoring vulnerable peatlands and ending peat use in horticultural products by 2030.</li> </ul> </li> <li>• Focusing on woodland to maximise its many benefits             <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>○ Supporting the development of a new Northern Forest</li> <li>○ Supporting larger scale woodland creation</li> <li>○ Appointing a national Tree Champion</li> </ul> </li> <li>• Reducing risks from flooding and coastal erosion             <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>○ Expanding the use of natural flood management solutions</li> <li>○ Putting in place more sustainable drainage systems</li> <li>○ Making ‘at-risk’ properties more resilient to flooding</li> </ul> </li> <li>• Protecting and recovering nature             <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>○ Publishing a strategy for nature</li> <li>○ Developing a Nature Recovery Network</li> <li>○ Providing opportunities for the reintroduction of native species</li> <li>○ Exploring how to give individuals the chance to deliver lasting conservation</li> <li>○ Improving biosecurity to protect and conserve nature</li> </ul> </li> <li>• Conserving and enhancing natural beauty             <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>○ Reviewing National Parks and Areas of Outstanding Natural Beauty</li> </ul> </li> <li>• Respecting nature in how we use water</li> </ul>		

	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>○ Reforming our approach to water abstraction</li> <li>○ Increasing water supply and incentivising greater water efficiency and less personal use</li> <li>● Helping people improve their health and wellbeing by using green spaces             <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>○ Considering how environmental therapies could be delivered through mental health services</li> <li>○ Promoting health and wellbeing through the natural environment</li> </ul> </li> <li>● Encouraging children to be close to nature, in and out of school             <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>○ Helping primary schools create nature-friendly grounds</li> <li>○ Supporting more pupil contact with local natural spaces</li> </ul> </li> <li>● Greening our towns and cities             <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>○ Creating more green infrastructure</li> <li>○ Planting more trees in and around our towns and cities</li> <li>○ Making 2019 a Year of Action for the environment</li> <li>○ Helping children and young people from all backgrounds to engage with nature and improve the environment.</li> <li>○ Supporting the 2019 Year of Green Action</li> </ul> </li> <li>● Maximising resource efficiency and minimising environmental impacts at end of life.             <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>○ Achieving zero avoidable plastic waste by the end of 2042 ii. Reducing food supply chain emissions and waste</li> <li>○ Reducing litter and littering</li> <li>○ Improving management of residual waste</li> <li>○ Cracking down on fly-tippers and waste criminals vi. Reducing the impact of wastewater</li> </ul> </li> <li>● Reducing pollution             <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>○ Publishing a Clean Air Strategy</li> <li>○ Curbing emissions from combustion plants and generators</li> <li>○ Publishing a Chemicals Strategy</li> <li>○ Minimising the risk of chemical contamination in our water</li> <li>○ Ensuring we continue to maintain clean recreational waters and warning about temporary pollution</li> </ul> </li> <li>● Providing international leadership and leading by example             <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>○ Tackling climate change</li> <li>○ Protecting and improving international biodiversity</li> </ul> </li> </ul>		
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	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Helping developing nations protect and improve the environment             <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>○ Providing assistance and supporting disaster planning</li> <li>○ Supporting and protecting international forests and sustainable global agriculture</li> </ul> </li> <li>• Leaving a lighter footprint on the global environment             <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>○ Enhancing sustainability</li> <li>○ Protecting and managing risks from hazards</li> <li>○ Supporting zero-deforestation supply chains</li> </ul> </li> </ul> <p>And in terms of implementation:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Consulting on setting up a new independent body to hold government to account and a new set of environmental principles to underpin policymaking.</li> <li>• Developing a set of metrics to assess progress towards our 25-year goals.</li> <li>• Refreshing the 25 Year Environment Plan regularly to ensure that collectively we are focusing on the right priorities, using the latest evidence, and delivering better value for money.</li> <li>• Strengthening leadership and delivery through better local planning, more effective partnerships and learning from our four pioneer projects.</li> <li>• Establishing a new green business council and exploring the potential for a natural environment impact fund.</li> <li>• Work closely with a large range of stakeholders over the coming year to identify their contribution to the goals set out in this Plan.</li> </ul>		
<p>DEFRA, EA and NE (2016) <i>National Parks: 8-Point Plan for England (2016 to 2020)</i></p>	<p>New priorities are listed under three themes:</p> <p><b>Inspiring natural environments</b></p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1. Connect young people with nature             <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• double the number of young people to experience a National Park as part of National Citizen Service by 2020.</li> <li>• A new package of teaching materials for schools based on National Parks</li> <li>• National Park Authorities to engage directly with over 60,000 young people per year through schools visits by 2017 to 2018</li> </ul> </li> <li>2. Create thriving natural environments             <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• National Park Authorities, with the Environment Agency and Natural England, to champion integrated management of the natural environment, showcasing the benefits that designated landscapes can bring</li> </ul> </li> </ol>	<p>Updated strategy for the English National Parks. Likely to be overtaken by Glover Review which built on this.</p>	<p><a href="https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/national-parks-8-point-plan-for-england-2016-to-2020">https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/national-parks-8-point-plan-for-england-2016-to-2020</a></p>

	<p><b>Drivers of the rural economy</b></p> <p>3. National Parks driving growth in international tourism</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• promote National Parks as world-class destinations to visitors from overseas and the UK</li> <li>• increase annual visitors from 90 million to 100 million, generating an estimated £440 million for local businesses</li> </ul> <p>4. Deliver new apprenticeships in National Parks</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• develop three new apprenticeship standards led by National Park Authorities</li> <li>• double the number of apprenticeships in National Park Authorities by 2020</li> </ul> <p>5. Promote the best of British food from National Parks</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• National Parks will be known for, and visited as, great food destinations work with National Park Authorities and the Great British Food Unit to deliver more Protected Food Names for National Park products and increase exports</li> <li>• the government will celebrate National Park produce</li> </ul> <p><b>National treasures</b></p> <p>6. Everyone’s National Parks</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• complete the designation to extend the boundaries of the Lake District and Yorkshire Dales National Parks</li> <li>• encourage more diverse visitors to National Parks</li> <li>• promote volunteering in National Parks celebrate the 70th Anniversary of National Parks’ creation</li> </ul> <p>7. Landscape and heritage in National Parks</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• work with the Heritage Lottery Fund to achieve their objective of encouraging more fundable projects in the Natural Heritage sector</li> <li>• enhance people’s involvement in the interpretation of the historic environment and natural beauty in National Parks</li> <li>• support the Lake District’s bid for UNESCO World Heritage Status</li> <li>• tell the story of cultural landscapes in England’s National Parks</li> </ul> <p>8. Health and wellbeing in National Parks</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• promote innovative schemes for National Parks to serve national health</li> <li>• realise the immense potential for outdoor recreation in National Parks</li> </ul>		
<p>DEFRA and EA 2011 - Understanding the</p>	<p>The overall aim of the strategy is to ensure the risk of flooding and coastal erosion is properly managed by using the full range of options in a co-ordinated way.</p>		<p><a href="https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/national-flood-and-coastal-">https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/national-flood-and-coastal-</a></p>

<p>risks, empowering communities, building resilience- the national flood and coastal erosion risk management strategy for England</p>	<p>Communities, individuals, voluntary groups and private and public sector organisations will work together to:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• manage the risk to people and their property;</li> <li>• facilitate decision-making and action at the appropriate level - individual, community, or local authority, river catchment, coastal cell or national;</li> <li>• • achieve environmental, social and economic benefits, consistent with the principles of sustainable development.</li> </ul> <p>The guiding principles are:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Community focus and partnership working</li> <li>• A catchment and coastal “cell” based approach</li> <li>• Sustainability</li> <li>• Proportionate, risk-based approaches</li> <li>• Multiple benefits</li> <li>• Beneficiaries should be encouraged to invest in risk management</li> </ul>		<p><a href="https://www.gov.uk/government/uploads/system/uploads/attachment_data/file/431212/erosion-risk-management-strategy-for-england.pdf">erosion-risk-management-strategy-for-england</a></p>
<p>NPPF 2019</p>	<p>Ground rules for land use decision-making on planning application, as defined under the planning acts.</p>	<p>MHCLG doc</p>	<p><a href="https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/national-planning-policy-framework--2">https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/national-planning-policy-framework--2</a></p>
<p>Glover review of nationally important landscapes (2019)</p>	<p>Government commissioned report but not 'policy'. Contains 29 proposals for improving the sustainability and effectiveness of protected landscapes in England:</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1. National landscapes should have a renewed mission to recover and enhance nature, and be supported and held to account for delivery by a new National Landscapes Service</li> <li>2. The state of nature and natural capital in our national landscapes should be regularly and robustly assessed, informing the priorities for action</li> <li>3. Strengthened Management Plans should set clear priorities and actions for nature recovery including, but not limited to, wilder areas and the response to climate change (notably tree planting and peatland restoration). Their implementation must be backed up by stronger status in law</li> <li>4. National landscapes should form the backbone of Nature Recovery Networks – joining things up within and beyond their boundaries</li> <li>5. A central place for national landscapes in new Environmental Land Management Schemes</li> </ol>	<p>Awaiting government response April 2020</p>	<p><a href="https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/designated-landscapes-national-parks-and-aonbs-2018-review">https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/designated-landscapes-national-parks-and-aonbs-2018-review</a></p>

	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>6. A strengthened place for national landscapes in the planning system with AONBs given statutory consultee status, encouragement to develop local plans and changes to the National Planning Policy Framework</li> <li>7. A stronger mission to connect all people with our national landscapes, supported and held to account by the new National Landscapes Service</li> <li>8. A night under the stars in a national landscape for every child</li> <li>9. New long-term programmes to increase the ethnic diversity of visitors</li> <li>10. Landscapes that cater for and improve the nation’s health and wellbeing</li> <li>11. Expanding volunteering in our national landscapes</li> <li>12. Better information and signs to guide visitors</li> <li>13. A ranger service in all our national landscapes, part of a national family</li> <li>14. National landscapes supported to become leaders in sustainable tourism</li> <li>15. Joining up with others to make the most of what we have, and bringing National Trails into the national landscapes family</li> <li>16. Consider expanding open access rights in national landscapes</li> <li>17. National landscapes working for vibrant communities</li> <li>18. A new National Landscapes Housing Association to build affordable homes</li> <li>19. A new approach to coordinating public transport piloted in the Lake District, and new, more sustainable ways of accessing national landscapes</li> <li>20. New designated landscapes and a new National Forest</li> <li>21. Welcoming new landscape approaches in cities and the coast, and a city park competition</li> <li>22. A better designations process</li> <li>23. Stronger purposes in law for our national landscapes</li> <li>24. AONBs strengthened with new purposes, powers and resources, renamed as National Landscapes</li> <li>25. A new National Landscapes Service bringing our 44 national landscapes together to achieve more than the sum of their parts</li> <li>26. Reformed governance to inspire and secure ambition in our national landscapes and better reflect society</li> <li>27. A new financial model – more money, more secure, more enterprising</li> </ol>		
<p>Localism Act 2011</p>	<p>Main provisions relevant to rural land use (in widest sense) are:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Require lists of ‘assets of community value’ to drawn up and, if asset sold, for local communities to have a ‘right to bid’ and ‘right to buy’</li> </ul>		<p><a href="http://www.legislation.gov.uk/ukpga/2011/20/contents/enacted">http://www.legislation.gov.uk/ukpga/2011/20/contents/enacted</a></p>

	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Includes a ‘community right to build’, allowing communities to bring forward development proposals (with some funding support)</li> <li>• Modifies Community Infrastructure Levy to allow for monies to be used for wider community benefits (than just prescribed infrastructure)</li> <li>• Allows for local communities to prepare a Neighbourhood Plan for their village/local area</li> <li>• Abolishes Regional Planning Strategies and introduces a ‘duty to cooperate’ on local planning authorities preparing local plans and other strategies</li> <li>• Abolishes Infrastructure Planning Commission and restores responsibilities to Government ministers</li> <li>• Requires housing authorities to produce a ‘tenancy strategy’ and housing ‘allocation scheme’</li> <li>• Gives local authorities a ‘general power of competence’, a legal power to do anything for their communities that is not otherwise against the law</li> <li>• Allows for a ‘community right to challenge’, providing local groups, parish councils or LA employees with opportunity to take over council services</li> </ul>		
<p>Scottish Government (2011) Getting the Best From Our Land: A Land Use Strategy for Scotland</p> <p>(Updated by: Scottish Government (2016) Getting the Best From Our Land: A Land Use Strategy for Scotland 2016-21)</p>	<p>(2016 update) The stated vision is for “a Scotland where we fully recognise, understand and value the importance of our land resources, and where our plans and decisions about land use will deliver improved and enduring benefits, enhancing the wellbeing of our nation.” (p.6). Three objectives are specified:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Land-based businesses working with nature to contribute more to Scotland’s prosperity.</li> <li>• Responsible stewardship of Scotland’s natural resources delivering more benefits to Scotland’s people.</li> <li>• Urban and rural communities better connected to the land, with more people enjoying the land and positively influencing land use.</li> </ul> <p>These are detailed in x9 policies and x5 proposals, the most relevant of which seek to:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• promote an ecosystem approach to managing natural capital (Policy 1);</li> <li>• integrate the Land Use Strategy into other key national policy documents (P2) and with the planning system (P3);</li> <li>• establish regional land use partnerships (P7) and develop regional rural land use frameworks (Proposal 1)</li> <li>• explore options for facilitation and/or mediation between landowners/managers and communities (Proposal 2);</li> </ul>	<p>Original strategy was published in 2011 and 2016 update reports on progress and tweaks policy objectives.</p>	<p><a href="https://www.gov.scot/publications/getting-best-land-land-use-strategy-scotland-2016-2021/">https://www.gov.scot/publications/getting-best-land-land-use-strategy-scotland-2016-2021/</a></p>

	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• promote climate-friendly farming and crofting (P8).</li> </ul> <p>A set of ‘principles for sustainable land use’ provide a ‘checklist’ for decision-making by public bodies, individuals, businesses and organisations with significant land management responsibilities.</p>		
Scottish land rights and responsibilities statement	The stated vision is, “A Scotland with a strong and dynamic relationship between its land and people, where all land contributes to a modern and successful country, and where rights and responsibilities in relation to land are fully recognised and fulfilled.” (p.		<a href="https://www.gov.scot/publications/scottish-land-rights-responsibilities-statement/">https://www.gov.scot/publications/scottish-land-rights-responsibilities-statement/</a>
National Food Strategy (2020 Forthcoming)	In preparation.	Due to be published in the summer of 2020.	<a href="https://www.nationalfoodstrategy.org">https://www.nationalfoodstrategy.org</a>
Welsh Government (2019) <i>Sustainable Farming and Our Land</i>	<p>Outlines the Welsh Government’s proposed approach to farming support and rural land management after Brexit. Main principles:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• future support should be designed around the principle of sustainability</li> <li>• propose to pursue an objective of Sustainable Land Management (SLM)</li> <li>• propose to provide support targeted at SLM outcomes</li> <li>• propose a new payment scheme which rewards farmers for delivering SLM outcomes</li> <li>• propose a single scheme to support farmers – the Sustainable Farming Scheme.</li> <li>• propose entry to the scheme will be through a Farm Sustainability Review and product of the Review will be a Farm Sustainability Plan</li> <li>• propose access to two complementary types of farm support - the Sustainable Farming Payment and business support.</li> </ul>	Currently being detailed through a ‘co-design’ programme with stakeholder input	<a href="https://gov.wales/sites/default/files/consultations/2019-07/brexit-consultation-document.pdf">https://gov.wales/sites/default/files/consultations/2019-07/brexit-consultation-document.pdf</a>
Rural Development Programme for England 2014 to 2020 (and similar for the devolved nations)	<p>Government’s objectives for the RDPE are to:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• improve the natural environment: this includes helping to ensure that by 2021 the natural environment is improved as set out in the Natural Environment White Paper (NEWP);</li> <li>• increase the productivity and efficiency of farming and forestry businesses, in order to improve their competitiveness and reduce the reliance of farmers and land managers on subsidies; and</li> <li>• promote strong rural economic growth.</li> </ul> <p>These objectives are then detailed through six broad programme measures:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Fostering knowledge transfer and innovation in agriculture, forestry and rural areas</li> </ul>	Still being implemented and will have ‘residual’ impact on practice into the future.	

	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Enhancing farm viability and competitiveness of all types of agriculture in all regions and promoting innovative farm technologies and the sustainable management of forests</li> <li>• Promoting food chain organisation, including processing and marketing of agricultural products, animal welfare and risk management in agriculture</li> <li>• Restoring, preserving and enhancing ecosystems related to agriculture and forestry</li> <li>• Promoting resource efficiency and supporting the shift towards a low carbon and climate resilient economy in agriculture, food and forestry sectors</li> <li>• P6: Promoting social inclusion, poverty reduction and economic development in rural areas .</li> </ul>		
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## Appendix 3: Future Visions or Policy Proposals for UK Rural Land Use

### A. Proposals by Political Parties / Think Tanks

*Labour Party / Monbiot, G. (Ed.) (2019) Land for the Many: Changing the Way our Fundamental Asset is Used, Owned and Governed. Labour, London. (Left)*  
This report was produced as part of the preparations for the 2019 election and sets out a radical agenda including a reversal of some past deregulatory measures (e.g. PDRs), extension of the planning system to cover ‘major farming and forestry decisions’, ramped-up support for cooperative and community-led schemes e.g. in housing and farming. There is also a strategic land purchase idea included in the proposals. See: <https://landforthemany.uk/summary-of-recommendations/>

*HM Government (various) as in Policy Map (already covered) (centre-right)*

Governmental objectives overall seek to retain aspects of rural development policy post-Brexit but to ensure that good environmental practice is encouraged while ensuring that farming and the wider rural economy is stable. A range of powers to implement new approaches to farm payments and land management are proposed. In England, farmers will be paid to produce ‘public goods’ such as environmental or animal welfare improvements. The key elements are set out in the Agriculture Bill 2019 which will provide the legislative framework for the replacement agricultural support schemes (nb. final stages of the Parliamentary process are now in motion) see: <https://researchbriefings.files.parliament.uk/documents/CBP-8702/CBP-8702.pdf>

Note that a **review of food strategy** (England) was commenced in Summer 2019 under Henry Dimbleby, and prior to the COVID-19 pandemic was due to report in May 2020, see: <https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/developing-a-national-food-strategy-independent-review-2019>

In terms of protected landscapes (NPs and AONBs) the **Glover report** published in 2019 has not had a formal government response but the authors set out 27 proposals, arguing for more funding for such areas to deliver a better integrated service, to ensure the social component of sustainability is given due consideration and strengthen their powers and governance. See: [https://assets.publishing.service.gov.uk/government/uploads/system/uploads/attachment\\_data/file/833726/landscapes-review-final-report.pdf](https://assets.publishing.service.gov.uk/government/uploads/system/uploads/attachment_data/file/833726/landscapes-review-final-report.pdf)

*Cadywould, C. (2018) The Future of Farming: UK Agricultural Policy After Brexit, Policy Network (centre Left).*

This paper focusses on scenarios under different forms of Brexit deal and relations and regulation persisting with other international partners. The report warns of shifts towards lower quality food in a ‘no-deal’ type scenario, or in a protectionist version of Brexit higher costs being passed to consumers. In terms of reform to subsidies two main ideas emerge which feature a ‘supercharging’ of environmental action which would see all subsidies for farmers be linked to incentives for responsible practices such as undertaking environmental measures. The alternative is to link agricultural activity (sales) to subsidies and thus

linking payments to the market finally 'de-coupling' subsidies linked to production. See: [https://policynetwork.org/wp-content/uploads/2018/01/The-Future-of-Farming\\_FINAL.pdf](https://policynetwork.org/wp-content/uploads/2018/01/The-Future-of-Farming_FINAL.pdf)

*Caldecott, B., Hall, S. and Ives, E. (2017) A Greener, More Pleasant Land: A New Market-Based Commissioning Scheme for Rural Payments, Bright Blue (centre Right)*

The main thrust of this report is on a new approach to market-based rural payments. The disparate nature of policy on rural areas and the environment is noted and that Brexit provides an opportunity to consolidate through a new funding approach that also maintains similar levels of spend found under CAP. The main idea is to create a single payments budget and commissioning system for ecosystems services of different types. An additional interesting feature is to provide a channel for private sector to contribute (e.g. to pay into the funding pot for a particular purpose, biodiversity net gain for example). See: <https://brightblue.org.uk/wp-content/uploads/2017/11/Agreenermorepleasantland.pdf> (and particularly pages 59-60).

## **B. Proposals/Studies by Devolved Governments/Government Departments/Agencies**

*Committee on Climate Change (2018) Land use: Reducing Emissions and Preparing for Climate Change*

The report asserts that climate change impacts are already altering the land use, while the services provided by the natural environment are being degraded. They also note the fragmented and incomplete policy environment in the past. The key emphasis here is on promoting alternative land uses through new policy must promote radically different uses of UK land that can be economic for farmers and land managers. The report argues for Governmental support to transition towards such land uses and to reward landowners for public goods that deliver climate mitigation and adaptation objectives. See: <https://www.theccc.org.uk/publication/land-use-reducing-emissions-and-preparing-for-climate-change/>

*Government Office for Science (2010) Land Use Futures: Making the Most of Land in the 21st Century*

This is a detailed and expansive review that take a wide-ranging look at how land is used and the key factors likely to shape its use and pressures for change in the future. This was written well before Brexit was a realistic prospect. The aim was to cast forwards for long-term planning and notably to examine 'What can be done to use and manage land more sustainably and to unlock greater value for people and the economy'. There were six main areas identified as impacting on future land use and driving change: technological change, global economic change, demographic change, public attitudes, climate change and the policy/regulatory environment. The authors call for a new approach to valuing land and associated activity and benefits. Numerous key areas for action feature across the six topic areas (including on: public goods, conservation, water, agriculture, forestry, development, flooding, leisure, energy production and transport), see: [https://assets.publishing.service.gov.uk/government/uploads/system/uploads/attachment\\_data/file/288845/10-634-land-use-futures-summary.pdf](https://assets.publishing.service.gov.uk/government/uploads/system/uploads/attachment_data/file/288845/10-634-land-use-futures-summary.pdf)

*EU (2019) Drivers of Change of Relevance for Europe's Environment and Sustainability (25/19).*

This report the need for a more integrated systems thinking approach to the environment. The key areas highlighted are high level and recognisable cf. the Land Use Futures (2010) work, it spans questions of: growing, urbanising and migrating global population; Climate change and environmental degradation; scarcity and global competition for resources; technological change and convergence; shifts in the global economy and geopolitical landscape; and diversifying values, lifestyles and governance approaches. The overarching argument presented is for the EU (and globally) to develop fundamental transformation of core production and consumption systems, in particular those related to food, energy, and mobility and the built environment. This requires rethinking not just technologies and production processes but also consumption levels and social practices. See:

<https://www.eea.europa.eu/publications/drivers-of-change>

*Moxey, A. and Thomson, S. (2018) Post- Brexit Implications for Agriculture and Associated Land Use in the Highlands and Islands.*

This assessment argues that for more marginal land and fragile economic and environmental contexts. It is argued that post-Brexit agricultural policy should focus greater attention on supporting fragile and land systems. Production oriented support provided through CAP did not effectively reward public goods and there are threats and opportunities that Brexit poses for such areas, notably: longer term concerns over the overall size of the agricultural and rural development budget will not be maintained; the extent of autonomy the Scottish Parliament will have over all aspects regarding future agricultural policy, and the composition of future trade deals and the UK's future relationship with the EU which could pose a threat to agricultural production. In terms of mitigation of Brexit the options appeared to involve: improvement of agricultural productivity - poor land quality, remoteness and infrastructure limit potential gains and a focus on agricultural productivity alone neglects wider ecosystem services linked to management of natural capital; adopt different land uses (e.g. forestry) or diversify business through improved management and innovation - to be supported through targeted information, advice, training and capital investments and a need for continued income support alongside more targeted agri-environment payments. See:

[https://www.sruc.ac.uk/downloads/file/3703/report\\_briefing\\_paper](https://www.sruc.ac.uk/downloads/file/3703/report_briefing_paper)

*House of Commons Parliamentary Office of Science and Technology (POST) (2011) Landscapes of the Future*

This short report oriented specifically towards land use and planning echoes the findings of the Land Use Futures (2010) work published just the year before and recognises that competition for land will be exacerbated by many pressures. Prevailing patterns of land use may not be viable in the long term and may not match the future needs of society. Strategic planning policy should include consideration of green infrastructure, landscape character and provision of multiple ecosystem services as well as more emphasis of forms of multifunctionality. Lastly it argues for greater integration across policy areas. See:

[https://www.parliament.uk/documents/post/postpn\\_380-Landscapes-of-the-Future.pdf](https://www.parliament.uk/documents/post/postpn_380-Landscapes-of-the-Future.pdf)

*National Council of Rural Advisers (2018) A New Blueprint for Scotland's Rural Economy: Recommendations to Scottish Ministers*

This report identified ten elements for action. These cover how the rural economy is monitored (through a National Performance Framework), develop a more are joined-up and integrated approach; to encourage diversity and growth in the rural economy, to shape both targeted support and the development of credible finance models. Also create a supportive enterprise environment for the development and growth of rural businesses a sustainable and profitable

primary production and added value sector, to improve inclusive access to rural housing solutions and a robust infrastructure, with improved and inclusive access to services, mobility and connectivity.

See: <https://www.gov.scot/publications/new-blueprint-scotlands-rural-economy-recommendations-scottish-ministers/>

*Northern Ireland Land Matters Task Force (2015) Towards a Land Strategy for Northern Ireland.*

The report highlights land as a finite resource and that is under pressure from increasing societal demands. It identifies a number of major global issues having a marked impact on how land is used in Northern Ireland. The report recommended an overarching land strategy with an emphasis on 'environmental excellence', on multifunctionality and a strategy active land management to deliver well-being and prosperity. It also stresses community input and roles. See: [https://www.nienvironmentlink.org/cmsfiles/Towards-a-Land-Strategy-for-NI\\_2015-Main-Report.pdf](https://www.nienvironmentlink.org/cmsfiles/Towards-a-Land-Strategy-for-NI_2015-Main-Report.pdf)

*National Assembly for Wales (2017) The Future of Land Management in Wales*

The report is somewhat tilted towards the Welsh position during Brexit negotiations and the question of tariffs that would impact on Welsh farming. As such the emphasis is on iterating the need for careful consideration of the impacts of the exit from the EU. The main other elements are discussed amongst 26 recommendations include: ensuring that future funding arrangements enable climate change measures to be effected and to support farming through a package that delivers sustainable outcomes. See: <https://senedd.wales/laid%20documents/cr-ld10995/cr-ld10995-e.pdf>

### **C. Proposals/Visions by Private Sector Interests**

CONFOR (2017) *A Common Countryside Policy: Securing a prosperous green future after Brexit* (CONFOR Discussion Paper), Edinburgh: CONFOR

Confor is a trade association representing businesses involved in forestry and timber production. This discussion paper argues that the Common Agricultural Policy should be replaced after Brexit by a Common Countryside Policy (CCP) with four key pillars. First, all land uses would be treated equally so long as they contribute to sustainable rural development. Forestry would no longer be, as Confor argues it has been, at a disadvantage compared to farming. Second, the CCP would aim to deliver social and environmental as well as economic benefits. Third, rural funding would be directed towards investment that is profitable and productive but also environmentally and socially beneficial. Fourth, the CCP would promote integrated rural land uses such as payment for ecosystem services as part of the production process. The discussion paper envisages a significant increase in the UK's tree cover as a result of this approach, due to the climate change mitigation, biodiversity and employment creation opportunities it believes forestry offers.

<https://www.confor.org.uk/media/246687/common-countryside-policy.pdf>

CLA (2017) *Redefining Farming: Unlocking Investment / Unlocking Potential* and CLA (2018), *The Land Management Contract: Design and Delivery in England*, London: CLA

The CLA believe that the UK agriculture and rural land sector has the capacity to become self-reliant and profitable across all farm types and sizes. They see IT as crucial in developing a highly productive and innovative farming sector. However, a more efficient and integrated industry will be necessary to this in order to achieve higher market returns to agricultural activity. Support will be necessary to allow agriculture and achieve this transition and farmers/rural land owners will need to be recognised for their contribution to environmental, landscape and social public benefits as well as food production. Skills training, especially in management, finance and business development, is crucial. To encourage investment, government should offer incentives to invest in new technologies, develop a fast-track planning route for small rural businesses and ensure universal rural broadband and mobile coverage. A Land Management Contract for delivery of public benefits payments to farmers should be established. This should consist of four elements: (1) a Universal LMC available to all land managers (2) a Universal Capital LMC for standalone improvements such as woodland creation and pollution-reduction infrastructure (3) an Enhanced LMC for more complex improvements to land management, encouraging collaboration and (4) Landscape Scale Restoration for large scale schemes to address major environmental challenges.

<https://www.cla.org.uk/sites/default/files/CLA%20Redefining%20Farming%20Report%20D8%20V2%2020.11.17%20AW%20LR%20Online.compressed.pdf>

<https://www.cla.org.uk/sites/default/files/CLA-Land-Management-Contract-May-2018.pdf>

National Farmers' Union (NFU) (2019) *The Future of Food 2040*,

This report urges the government to adopt a post-Brexit agricultural policy that addresses the challenges of volatility, productivity and the environment. It will be crucial that there is a sufficiently long transition time away from the CAP. Better market information, potentially including open data sharing, will be needed to enable farmers to negotiate the new, more challenging economic context. Government should target investment to increase productivity and resilience, including supporting research and development. The regulatory regime should be enabling and science and evidence-led, aiming to encourage innovation and competitiveness. Funding for public goods should be accessible to all farm businesses and not unduly bureaucratic. Government should provide the technology infrastructure required to allow rural businesses to thrive and achieve their productivity potential.

<https://www.nfuonline.com/nfu-online/news/the-future-of-food-2040/>

Scottish Land and Estates (2019) *Route 2050: A Direction of Travel for Scottish Land Management to 2050*

Enhancing productivity, business resilience and environmental benefit are the key priorities for Scottish rural policy looking ahead towards 2050 according to this report. Investment in all parts of rural Scotland must encourage the most appropriate land use and best practice to deliver a vibrant rural ecosystem. Low level direct funding, with some regional uplifts, should continue in order to prevent land abandonment but there should be more focused rewards for voluntary measures to improve the environment and investment to improve resource use and productivity. Better data to improve Scottish Government rural policy decision-making is crucial and stakeholders should be involved in the design and development of schemes to draw more effectively on distributed knowledge and achieve greater scheme uptake. Investment in key services, including research and development, and in rural housing is seen as crucial.

[https://www.scottishlandandestates.co.uk/sites/default/files/inline-files/%23Route2050\\_FINAL\\_Sept%202019\\_2.pdf](https://www.scottishlandandestates.co.uk/sites/default/files/inline-files/%23Route2050_FINAL_Sept%202019_2.pdf)

*Tenant Farmers Association (2013) 2020 Vision for Agriculture*

Tenant farming remains a significant element of the UK agricultural sector but, this report argues, policy needs to recognize its special needs. Agri-environment and rural development schemes should be restricted to those who are actively managing the land on a day-to-day basis. County Council smallholdings should be valued as providing an entry point into farming. Food security and income maintenance considerations should not be sidelined by climate change in the development of rural policy. A new framework for ensuring Sustainable development of upland areas, with support focused on re-establishing ruminant livestock production, should be developed. Government should not pass on extra costs of animal health policies to farmers.

<https://www.tfa.org.uk/wp-content/uploads/2013/03/TFA2002VisionforAgricultureV7LoRes.pdf>

**D. Proposals/Visions by NGOs and Other Organisations**

The Food and Land Use Coalition (2019) *Growing Better: Ten Critical Transitions to Transform Food and Land Use*, London: FOLU (Plus FOLU, 2019b, *The United Kingdom: Food and Land Use*)

FOLU take a global approach, arguing that shifts in consumption patterns towards more sustainable dietary preferences is crucial to achieving climate change, biodiversity, poverty reduction and social development goals. This shift, at the apex of ten critical transitions, needs to be fostered by appropriate policy. Other key transitions envisaged are the adoption of nature-based solutions to enable a productive and regenerative agriculture, protect and restore nature and achieve healthy and productive oceans. More diverse sources of protein must be developed, especially plant-based, while food waste must be reduced, with a greater emphasis on local linkages and production. The digital revolution can contribute to these transitions, which will also require (and foster) better rural livelihoods and greater gender equality.

<https://www.foodandlandusecoalition.org/wp-content/uploads/2019/09/FOLU-GrowingBetter-GlobalReport.pdf>

*Royal Society (2019) Future Food: Health and Sustainability*

This conference report emphasised the benefits to shifting to a mostly plant-based diet both with respect to health and climate change. It was noted that agriculture currently contributes 20 to 30% of greenhouse gas emissions. While the vegan, non-meat and alternative protein markets are growing rapidly, consumers need better product labelling of both the environmental and health impacts of food. There is encouraging progress in methods to develop alternative protein sources and SMEs and start-ups are finding success in the alternative food space, but without public trust, good flavour and affordability, there will not be widespread uptake of these new foods.

<https://royalsociety.org/-/media/events/2019/12/tof-future-foods/Future-of-Food-ToF-conference-report.pdf?la=en-GB&hash=23A54C1F233745C70AFA42545A883422>

*Royal Society of the Arts (2019) Our Future in the Land*

To achieve healthy food, this report argues that good food must become good business. Policy should aim to produce the UK supply of fruit, vegetables, nuts and pulses and to use them more in everyday foods. Public procurement could play a major role in fostering healthy food in the UK, working together with

collaborative community food plans to meet the needs of different communities. At the same time, there is a need to connect people and nature to boost health and wellbeing.

A fourth agricultural revolution is envisaged, with a ten-year transition plan to a sustainable, agro-ecological farming post-Brexit. This will require support for innovation and independent advice for farmers, and the encouragement of cooperation through extending producer organisations. A National Agroecology Development Bank should be established to accelerate a fair, sustainable transition.

The countryside must work for all and, to this end, a national land use framework should be adopted. Public investment in skills and infrastructure and sustainable solutions to rural housing needs are essential. A National Nature Service drawing on the energy of young people should be created to kickstart the regenerative economy.

<https://www.thersa.org/discover/publications-and-articles/reports/future-land>

Royal Society for the Protection of Birds (RSPB) (2017) *A Future Sustainable Farming and Land Management Policy for England*;

This report sees Brexit as an opportunity to develop a sustainable farming and land management policy that will secure a range of public and environmental goods. Rural land use policy should focus on restoring natural capital while building resilience. Agricultural production should be supported to become not only productive but also sustainable and humane. The RSPB envisage four key elements to a new rural land policy: payments for comprehensive and for targeted Environmental Land Management contracts, measures to promote sustainable production and a foundation of effective regulation. The Agriculture Bill (now going through Parliament) must set a clear timeframe and direction of travel. A managed transition to a new sustainable rural policy regime is essential.

[https://www2.rspb.org.uk/Images/A%20future%20Sustainable%20Farming%20and%20Land%20Management%20Policy%20for%20England%20report\\_tcm9-446968.pdf](https://www2.rspb.org.uk/Images/A%20future%20Sustainable%20Farming%20and%20Land%20Management%20Policy%20for%20England%20report_tcm9-446968.pdf)

RSPB (2010) *Scotland's Land Use Future: Meeting Scotland's Land Use Needs Sustainably*

This report, although now rather dated in view of Brexit, nevertheless advocates similar policies to the RSPB's 2017 statement. It argues that the Scottish Government should develop a high-level Land Use Strategy to direct policies and funding in line with its objectives, while developing regional land use strategies that recognise the value of ecosystem services and approach conservation at a landscape scale, joining up high quality habitats to foster greater wildlife resilience to climate change. There should be an active habitat restoration programme and High Nature Value farming should be recognised and rewarded. Woodland planting should be located in ways that benefit biodiversity while water management should emphasise ecological status and sustainable flood management. The National Planning Policy Framework must minimise negative impacts of biodiversity while facilitating the landscape-scale approach.

<https://www.rspb.org.uk/globalassets/downloads/documents/positions/agriculture/scotlands-land-use-future.pdf>

Wildlife and Countryside LINK (2017) *A Future Sustainable Farming and Land Management Policy for England*, London: LINK (Plus: Wildlife and Countryside LINK, 2015, *Farming Fit for the Future*)

The central objectives for future agricultural and land use policy should, this report argues, be (1) restoration of natural capital (2) building resilience and managing risk and (3) promoting sustainable, innovative and humane production. Brexit provides a once-in-a-generation opportunity to shift UK rural policy towards these goals, which could allow this generation to be the first (so the report claims) to leave the environment in a better state than it found it. Given the strong policy consensus in favour of this, putting the environment first is also an effective way to secure a long-term funding settlement for the agricultural sector.

Four key elements of a sustainable farming and land management policy are identified: (1) effective regulation (2) universally available Environmental Land Management contracts (3) targeted Environmental Land Management Contracts (4) measures to promote production that is resilient, sustainable, innovative and humane. Meanwhile, direct payments would be phased out.

<https://www.wcl.org.uk/docs/Link%20farming%20and%20land%20use%20policy%20paper%20FINAL%20Sep%202017.pdf>

University of Cambridge Institute for Sustainability Leadership (CISL) (2014) *Natural Capital Leaders Platform - The Best Use of UK Agricultural Land*

According to this report, there is potential additional demand for up to 7 million hectares of land to meet the UK's growing food, space and energy needs while increasing the area needed to protect and enhance the nation's natural capital. This is more than 35% of the UK's existing agricultural land. A maximum of up to 5 million hectares might be released from supply side initiatives including sustainable intensification and reductions in household food waste. This demand-supply gap is concerning but multiple use approaches can reduce it. For example, increased woodland and some bioenergy crops can provide carbon storage, wildlife habitats and flood mitigation.

Key objectives of rural land use policy should be: (1) improved UK food security (2) increased UK energy security (3) better nature protection (4) improved competitiveness and diversity for UK farmers and (5) enhanced recreational space.

Government must take account of landscape, recreational, climate change and future generation impacts in future land use decisions and should work with industry to achieve these goals. An integrated action plan to consolidate existing agricultural land use policies and actions should be developed across all Government departments.

<https://www.cisl.cam.ac.uk/resources/publication-pdfs/natural-capital-leaders-platform-the-best-use-of-u.pdf/view>

## **E. Proposals/Studies by Academics**

*Atterton, J. (2018) The Future of Rural Development Policy in Scotland*

This assessment of the Scottish situation is based on an extensive literature review. She notes that networked approaches have increasingly been used in rural policy and practice. These emphasise the place of local resources and control in rural development but acknowledges the role of external flows of resources to initiate and support local processes. She also points out that resilience and social innovation has been given some prominence recently, with citizen engagement and entrepreneurialism at its core. This aims to address socio-economic fragility and the impacts of austerity and welfare reform but could apply to any 'shock' to the established system.

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Evaluating the current approach to rural policymaking in Scotland, she concludes that it is often a ‘by product’ of other policy themes (e.g. ‘rural transport’ as a by-product of national transport policy) rather than a coherent and integrated approach to rural land and development. She identifies five current policy drivers in Scotland. These are the political priority placed on community empowerment, land reform, a place-based approach to development, inclusive growth, and devolution of decision-making powers from central Government control to individuals and communities.

Having evaluated the current approaches to rural areas of Scotland, she concludes by advocating the following principles for post-Brexit rural policy in Scotland:

- Building a more positive narrative about rural Scotland;
- Taking a networked approach to rural development;
- Ensuring an accurate, up-to-date evidence base exists to inform policy;
- Ensuring an integrated approach to rural policy;
- Rethinking the value of rural proofing;
- Taking a place-based approach to policy;
- Strengthening rural communities;
- Recognising the breadth of economic activities and contributions across Scotland;
- Placing rural areas at the forefront of future opportunities and challenges;
- Acknowledging and strengthening rural-urban linkages.

See: [https://www.sruc.ac.uk/downloads/file/3811/342\\_the\\_future\\_of\\_rural\\_policy\\_in\\_scotland](https://www.sruc.ac.uk/downloads/file/3811/342_the_future_of_rural_policy_in_scotland)

*Bateman, I.J. and Balmford, B. (2018) ‘Public funding for Public Goods: A Post-Brexit Perspective on Principles for Agricultural Policy’*

This article undertakes a critique of CAP, pointing towards the financial and environmental costs of the scheme. It accepts the current policy proposals of the UK Government but explores three questions, outline below. Overall therefore, the article is supporting the current governments proposals for agricultural subsidy and detailing how they could be most efficiently implemented.

- *What are the farm related public goods that public money should support?*

They argue that the focus should be on environmental benefits, but also some components should tackle inequality and social welfare, and possibly animal welfare issues.

- *How should that spending be allocated?*

They criticise the over-bureaucratic nature of CAP and propose a simple ‘per farm income safety net approach’, along with some element of competitive tendering. They argue that advances in monitoring, data availability, modelling and decision support can provide very considerable assistance. The length of such contracts is also important: long enough to deliver the public goods, but not too long that it constrains farmers’ longer term flexibility. They also see an opportunity to include environmental gains as a requirement for any development, especially new housing.

- *How much should be spent?*

They argue that a redesigned system of payments would deliver better value-for-money outcomes than the current one, so the amount of money spent could be better justified.

See: [https://www.exeter.ac.uk/media/universityofexeter/collegeofsocialsciencesandinternationalstudies/leep/documents/WP\\_03-2018\\_LEEP.pdf](https://www.exeter.ac.uk/media/universityofexeter/collegeofsocialsciencesandinternationalstudies/leep/documents/WP_03-2018_LEEP.pdf)

*Helm, D. (2019) Green and Prosperous Land: A Blueprint for Rescuing the British Countryside*

Dieter Helm's involvement in advising the current government makes his recent book an important contribution to the debate about rural futures. As mentioned in Section 4, he is a strong advocate of the use of natural capital as a basis for designing, implementing and evaluating rural (and other) policies. He proposes the use of a new publicly owned and administered Nature Fund that brings together the existing public expenditure from Defra, Natural England, SNH, NRW, and others, along with 'green charges' (e.g. from agriculture), compensation payments (under a polluter pays policy), and 'economic rents for depleting non-renewables natural capital assets' (e.g. from oil, gas and mineral extraction) to create a large enough pot of money to make an impact. The model is loosely based on sovereign wealth funds, such as the one operating in Norway, and Helm suggests the overall pot of money should be £10 million at the very least. His plan envisages five categories into which money from the Fund would be channelled: river catchments, agricultural lands, uplands, marine areas, and urban areas. Money could be passed to partners (such as the RSPB and Wildlife Trusts) in the normal way, but the Fund could also buy and own natural assets, and then have them managed by others. Helm's underlying notion is that public goods should be the responsibility of the public sector and, although his ideas are embedded with a 'marketised' view of public policy, he suggests a bigger role for the State than the current Government is probably prepared to envisage. See: <http://www.dieterhelm.co.uk/natural-capital/environment/introduction-to-green-and-prosperous-land-a-blueprint-to-rescuing-the-british-countryside/>

*Holman, I.P. and Hess, T.M. (2014). Land Use, Climate Change and Water Availability*

This meta-study sought to identify a range of plausible future land use, land management and growing season changes against which to test potential hydrological impacts. It concluded that there is the potential for climate change to lead to many changes in the extent and types of crops and vegetation with the catchments of England and Wales. However, it is also apparent that there is great uncertainty in the direction and magnitude of many of these changes due to the important role of socio-economic change in the agricultural decision-making process. Nevertheless, they argue that it is plausible that future changes will lead to changes in the agricultural and forested areas, increases in the length of the growing season, changes in cropping calendars and changes in crop selection. The implication is that agricultural and land management practices will face challenges in the future as they adjust to these new climate and hydrological conditions. See: [https://dspace.lib.cranfield.ac.uk/bitstream/handle/1826/8533/Landuse\\_climate\\_change\\_and\\_water\\_availability-Task\\_C-preliminary\\_modelling-2014.pdf?sequence=1&isAllowed=y](https://dspace.lib.cranfield.ac.uk/bitstream/handle/1826/8533/Landuse_climate_change_and_water_availability-Task_C-preliminary_modelling-2014.pdf?sequence=1&isAllowed=y)

*Scott, M., Gallent, N. and Gkartzios, M. (Eds.) (2019) The Routledge Companion to Rural Planning, London: Routledge*

This recent review of rural planning covers a range of topic areas and perspectives on rural policy and practice. The final chapter (entitled 'Planning Rural Futures') draws together the evidence and makes a number of points that chime with the analysis provided in this report. They emphasise:

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- The primacy given to agricultural and landed interests which has made the preservation of agricultural land the overarching policy goal, whilst neglecting the wider rural economy and marginalising socially progressive rural planning actions;
- The narrow 'aesthetic' view of landscape protection which has ignored the ecological integrity of rural land and contributed to social exclusion under the 'no development' ethic;
- The contentiousness of land reform proposals, partly caused by the dominance of powerful landed estates, but also the increasing complexity of land-ownership patterns and resultant investment strategies under processes of financialisation and neoliberal state policies;
- The fledgling experimentation with alternative modes of land-ownership, particularly community-based land trusts;
- The increasing influence of urban and global processes on rural areas and the need to anticipate and plan for these.

This kind of analysis lead the authors to suggest a more nuanced package of rural policies to tackle the global challenges facing every nation, including the UK. The ideas promulgated include:

- Greater integration of ecosystem approaches into spatial planning frameworks and other areas of rural policy;
- Movement towards a post-carbon countryside in which a central role is given to low carbon technologies and renewable energies;
- Build a partnership approach embedded within agreed plans and strategies, drawn-up at local and regional (city-region) levels;
- Utilise the potential of new technologies to support 'smart' economic development, land management and citizen engagement;
- Place health and well-being firming on the policy map, focusing on the health benefits of rural landscapes and accessibility to multiple forms of countryside (not just National Parks);
- Positioning planning as an enabler (rather than barrier) of rural economic development, and bridging the gap between environment and economy; and
- Approaching rural and urban areas as an inter-related and single entity, creating policies that manage the mobilities of people and things between these spaces.

See: <https://www.taylorfrancis.com/books/e/9781315102375>

*Shucksmith, M. (2012) Future Directions in Rural Development?, and also Shucksmith, M. (2018) 'Re-imagining the Rural: From Rural Idyll to Good Countryside', Journal of Rural Studies and Shucksmith, M. and Ronningen, K. (2012) 'The Uplands After Neoliberalism? - The Role of the Small Farm in Rural Sustainability', Journal of Rural Studies*

This package of papers from Mark Shucksmith outlines his views on the future of rural areas. He differentiates between two models of development, the current 'top-down' neoliberal regime in which the role of the state is rolled-back, with significant negative implications for the rural economy and society, and his preferred approach, a 'networked' model of rural development which requires government support at all scales. This sees government as facilitator and enabler rather than provider or manager.

This model would build on a new 'vision' for rural areas that emphasises the values and practices of 'repair, relatedness, rights, and re-enchantment'. He details how these values can be achieved through the implementation of an effective 'networking' approach.

With regards to small farm units he highlights the vital role of the state in offering not only financial support but also in regulating land transfers and occupancy. It is argued that the dismantling of such regulatory powers affects the state's ability to manage the tensions between continuity and change which are at the heart of sustainable rural development. The paper concludes that small farms can persist and can contribute to rural sustainability in ways that are often not recognised under neoliberalism.

Although concerned with the wider remit of rural economic and social development, these arguments have implications for landownership, rural activities and land use. The 'networked approach' outlined by Shucksmith would insert state and community interests more centrally into the discussion and decision-making processes by which land is managed, organised and used. See: <https://jcrnetworkservices.com/wp-content/uploads/2013/02/Future-Directions-in-Rural-Development-Full-Report1.pdf>

Strapasson, A., Woods, J. and Mbuk, K. (2016) *Land Use Futures in Europe: How Changes in Diet, Agricultural Practices and Forestlands Could Help Reduce Greenhouse Gas Emissions*

This 2016 paper utilises a land use model for Europe to explore the impact of land use change on greenhouse gas emissions. The model incorporates various 'drivers' of change including: food (and more specifically, meat) consumption patterns; crop yields; livestock yields; international food trade; bioenergy forms and yields; loss of agricultural land to other purposes; land multiuse; land degradation; and levels of waste and food residue.

The report points out that land use change, such as afforestation, reforestation and multiuse of land resources, has the potential to contribute substantially to reducing Europe's greenhouse gas emissions, whilst changes in the types and quantities of food consumed per person and reduced food wastes would also help the EU meet its climate change targets by 2050. The authors note that EU greenhouse gas emissions are highly sensitive to the food trade balance, both within and outside the EU. Choices made about the EU's level of self-sufficiency in food and food security are key determinants of net EU and global greenhouse gas emissions.

They acknowledge the complexity of land use dynamics and call for suitable combinations of empirical data, mapping tools and integrated systems models to aid monitoring and policy intervention. They argue that, to achieve greenhouse gas emissions reduction through land use and dietary change, the right mix of short and long-term policies is needed. In the case of dietary changes and reduced food waste, success may depend on systemic behavioural changes which would require a range of policy levers ranging from market regulations through to education and links with the health agenda. See: <https://www.imperial.ac.uk/media/imperial-college/grantham-institute/public/publications/briefing-papers/Land-use-Futures-in-Europe---web-version-v3.pdf>