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CHANGING LAND USE AND RECREATION

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WELCOME TO THE CONFERENCE

Roger Clarke

CRRAG Chairman, and Assistant Director, Countryside Commission

Good morning ladies and gentlemen. I should start by congratulating you all on getting here on time, at the right place and on the right day, granted all the difficulties there have been with the post.

Welcome to this Conference organised by the Countryside Recreation Research Advisory Group. My name is Roger Clarke and I am the Chairman of CRRAG and so my job is to begin and end the Conference.

The other person whom I should introduce at this stage is Hilary Talbot-Ponsonby. She is the Secretary of CRRAG and is the Conference organiser. If you have any difficulties during the course of the Conference, suggestions about the programme or difficulties with the facilities, please see either Hilary or myself and we will endeavour to help as best we can.

Firstly, a word about CRRAG itself. It is rather a strange acronym and some of you may feel it a rather strange organisation as well. Its job is to bring together primarily the government agencies plus the local authority associations concerned with countryside recreation, or perhaps countryside matters more generally, to help them work together more effectively in the area of research. Therefore, the main jobs that CRRAG has are to identify the need for research in topics to do with the countryside and particularly countryside recreation; to look at areas where there could be improved cooperation between the different agencies concerned with countryside recreation in the research field, and then to disseminate the results of research.

I suppose that this Conference, the annual Countryside Recreation Conference, is primarily concerned with the third of those things, ie, disseminating the results of current research and current policy development within the countryside recreation field from the agencies concerned with countryside recreation at an official level.

This year's Conference, like others, is concerned with engendering thinking about where countryside recreation might be going in the future. This year's subject, 'Changing Land Use and Recreation' is very topical for many of us, whether we be recreationists, conservationists, farmers, land managers, local authority planners or whatever. Clearly, the changing face of the countryside is a very important issue for all of us.

The themes that I see as being important in this Conference concern the nature and pace of the change in the countryside brought about by the changing context of agriculture, and following on from that, what are the implications for countryside recreation from these changes in rural land use? What are the implications and opportunities which might be presented to countryside recreation? Is the new emphasis on countryside recreation primarily going to be of a commercial kind,

will people be earning money from it, or is it going to be primarily of a non-commercial kind, supported in one way or another through public funds and public endeavour?

So, we have a changing agricultural scene. What are the implications and opportunities for changing countryside recreation? These seem to be the main issues which we should be looking at over the next few days.

Just a word about the programme itself. This morning we shall be spending some time on setting the context – what are the changes and opportunities which present themselves? This afternoon we shall be looking more specifically at a number of case studies about particular kinds of opportunity which present themselves.

This evening we would welcome suggestions for 'fringe' events. If you would like to get together with others from different organisations to look at and discuss a particular topic, or if you have some research your organisation has been involved in, we would welcome suggestions for fringe events. The opportunity is here to meet people from a wide variety of backgrounds. If you would like to organise a discussion or presentation about a particular topic which is of interest to you and to others please see either Hilary or myself so that we can allocate rooms and make an announcement after lunch about the arrangements.

Tomorrow morning we shall be looking at managing change. How do local authorities and land managers manage the changes which are taking place? At the end of the morning we shall be looking at where we might be going next.

Tomorrow afternoon we have a new venture which we have described as a 'research market' where a number of the agencies who are major sponsors of research plus a number of organisations who carry out the research, have put up displays about their programmes and activities. Those displays will be in place throughout the Conference but tomorrow afternoon all of the displays will be attended by members of staff from the relevant organisations. So, we invite you to make a tour of the research market and quiz the people who are looking after the displays about the research programmes of their respective agencies.

That, in a nutshell, is the Conference. The responsibility for chairing the different sessions of the Conference is shared out. I am very pleased that this morning the Chair will be taken by George Hill who works for the Ministry of Agriculture. He is Senior Rural Enterprise Adviser within the Farm and Countryside service which, in turn, is part of ADAS. The topics of concern to us are what is happening to rural land, what are farmers doing, and what are the recreational opportunities? These are all a core part of his job and it is a pleasure for me to be able to invite him to take the Chair for this morning's session.

Tomorrow, the Chair will be taken by Duncan Campbell, who has recently become the Director of the Countryside Commission for Scotland.

INTRODUCTION

George Hill

Senior Rural Enterprise Adviser, ADAS

May I reiterate the welcome which Roger Clarke gave you to what I am absolutely certain is going to be an informative and stimulating Conference. Without doubt agriculture, at the present time, is going through a watershed of change, possibly as great as any that has happened over the past 40 or 50 years. Themes such as maximising production are no longer even tenable under most circumstances and this in turn will mean land being taken out of agriculture over the next two decades or so. This will have yet more effect upon agriculture and farming families in rural areas.

At the same time, as a nation, we are demanding more from our countryside, not only in terms of recreation and sporting activities, but also from tourism of all sorts. And we are also demanding that the countryside be conserved. How appropriate, therefore, that the theme for this morning's session is 'Change on the Maps of Europe and Britain'. Within that theme there are going to be three papers given by acknowledged authorities in their own particular spheres.

Firstly, may I introduce Bob Bunce who since qualifying from Bangor University in 1962, followed by a Doctorate in Ecology in 1965, has worked over a very wide range of subjects. Firstly, he worked in the field of forestry classification, followed by studies dealing with the application of the multi-variate methods developed for vegetation analysis taken from maps. Again, this work took him to Drysdale and then to Shetland and Cumbria.

He is now a Principal Scientific Officer at the Institute of Terrestrial Ecology and his experience, both in this country and abroad, is extremely wide, as is the advisory work and activities that he has carried out for a whole range of government agencies. Therefore, he is a man perfectly fitted to get us off to the first class start that we need on the subject, 'Change in Europe - How Much and How Quickly?'.

After the European scene has been set for us by Bob Bunce we will narrow the field down to look at the UK. Who better to do that for us than Colin Spedding. It really is very difficult to pick out things to say about a man who seems to have packed so much into a working life which is still ongoing. I expect he would look back on his 26 years at the Grasslands Research Institute, and latterly as a Deputy Director and Head of the Ecology Division, with a considerable amount of nostalgia.

He and his work are remembered by countless farmers, researchers and advisers. I count myself as one of those. However, for the past 13 years he has been at Reading University and is now Professor of Agricultural Systems and Director of the Centre for Agriculture Strategy and Vice Chancellor. Those 13 years have been extremely satisfying and rewarding. It has also allowed the acquisition of knowledge over a tremendously wide range of agricultural and the wider land use matters.

It is with pleasure that I ask him to address us on 'Land Use Change in Britain'.

We are going to narrow the field down still further and look at the opportunities for recreation. I think it is opportune to take this particular session this morning and concentrate our attention in this particular way, before we move on to the Workshop Session this afternoon.

Adrian Phillips is again the ideal person to carry us through this change of emphasis. Not only has he got a wide experience abroad, for example as Head of Programme Coordination Unit under the United Nations Environmental Programme in Nairobi and again working in Switzerland for several years on the Union for Conservation of Nature and Natural Resources, but he has been the Director of the Countryside Commission since 1981. As such, of course, for the past seven or eight years he has spearheaded the thinking and the development of that organisation into looking at the wider aspects of uses of the countryside.

It is also well known that the integration of the work of organisations such as the Countryside Commission, along with conservation bodies and with the government agencies, such as the Ministry of Agriculture, means that they have got to work together very much more closely in the future in order to achieve the concerted and coordinated approach which is so necessary.

I think that the subject 'Opportunities for Recreation' is an extremely important one and I look forward to hearing Adrian Phillips address us on that particular subject.

CHANGE IN EUROPE – HOW MUCH AND HOW QUICKLY?

Bob Bunce

Land Use Group, ITE Merlewood

INTRODUCTION

This introduction will provide a brief framework to change before proceeding to contrast various countries and identify the different types and rates of change. The concluding comments concern future important stages of work.

Change is related to the basic ecologic characteristics of the area concerned. This, in turn, links to the actual potential for recreation. Europe can be divided into four major environmental zones. The first zone is the boreal zone, ie, northern Norway and Sweden, with mountainous regions and cold, short growing seasons. Secondly, there is the western, Atlantic region with its high rainfall and problems such as leaching of soil nutrients.

Thirdly, there is a gradation into the Continental zone which occupies the major plains of central Europe, with a high potential for agricultural production, and for forest production. Finally, there is the contrasting hot, dry Mediterranean region with different types of ecological problems. Instead of too much water, there is too little, and a long history of over exploitation, soil degradation and erosion.

None of these major zones stop abruptly; they merge gradually into each other. However, when considering the recreational potential the environment actually determines:

(a) what the production is going to be;
(b) what the recreational potential is going to be in due course.

On top of the major geographical zones there are superimposed factors, such as altitude. For example, a mountain chain emerging from a Continental plain modifies the local conditions and turns it into a much harsher environment than would have been expected from its overall position. So, local changes, in terms of altitude, modify the initial major climatic zone.

Within the various countries the potential is modified by the actual policies and restraints determined by the political process. Whilst Mrs Thatcher recently made her plea against a united Europe, on the other hand, the pressures of the Common Agricultural Policy are towards a united Europe. However, what is not yet understood is the influence of the individual national policies in altering the basic environmental patterns in the rural scene.

For example, in central France the rivers are havens for wildlife and the recreation potential is high. Compare this *with many British* river systems which have been largely canalised and modified. We do not understand the actual way in which many of the political processes of the individual countries have modified this basic ecological pattern.

NATIONAL COMPARISONS

Land use change in Norway and Sweden primarily relates to the modification of the traditional farming system of transhumance with small fields. It is a diverse pattern of high Alpine pastures and their relationship with the traditional agricultural system of intense management practice by small farmers. This is one of the constant themes which occur throughout the mountainous areas in Europe.

However, there are marked changes in the mountainous areas relating to the fact that people are finding it much more easy to use the land for recreational purposes, be it skiing, climbing or hotels, than maintaining traditional agricultural patterns. People visit Alpine areas to experience these traditional patterns and the background scenery. The trend away from upland agricultural production as one of the principal changes is taking place throughout Europe, whether it be in Norway, Germany, southern France or Spain. The traditional patterns of agriculture, with small fields and the intense hard work which is required to maintain these traditional patterns, is under threat. Throughout Europe such changes take place wherever environmental conditions are difficult through climate or terrain.

In northern Norway the changes take place more slowly, but further south in general, the faster changes will take place. If an area is left in northern Norway without traditional agricultural practice, the change will be slow. This is also the case in much of western Britain and Ireland in the uplands. If an area in Langdale is left without agricultural practice, particularly if dominated by bracken, there will not be marked changes for many years. The trial plots of RE Hughes in Cwm Idwal in Snowdonia in north Wales have shown this to be the case.

On the other hand, in the Pyrenees one or two years is enough to convert a traditionally managed, herb rich meadow into a scrub area which will eventually go over to forest. The interaction between the patterns of change and acid rain is controversial but important to emphasise. In the Norwegian case decline in agriculture means lower inputs into the fields and hence lower calcium levels with greater susceptibility to acid rain. Many such factors are interrelated but are often seen in isolation. Acid rain is regarded as one problem, recreation as another, the Common Agricultural Policy as another, but in fact they are all interrelated. The changes in the British uplands due to afforestation and the influence of sitka spruce on the acidification of rainfall in turn affects the soil, and this affects the recreation potential downstream because of its effect on fish. So, often the information received is isolated and is not integrated into an overall picture of the potential impact of change.

So, the traditional patterns in Norway are changing, with the changes in catchments compounding the effects of acid rain. There is a contrast with southern Sweden where there is intense agriculture on the fertile plains with the now familiar features of intensive agriculture. There are very few habitat features left behind and the potential for recreation is limited. Throughout Europe the fertile agricultural plains are likely to continue to remain in intensive agriculture. Indeed, the pressures on agriculture, as the work with the Department of Environment at Reading University (Harvey et al, 1986) has shown, are likely to increase rather than decline.

On the other hand, in southern Sweden, there are limited areas in the marginal land which are now going back to forest. The shallow soils are no longer sufficiently productive to maintain agriculture and are going back to forest, in an old field succession which has also been well documented in the United States.

A basic principle is therefore that polarisation is very pronounced. Areas which are under intensive agriculture are likely to become more intensive and areas which are poor for agriculture will tend to go the other way. So, the principle here is of directional polarisation, which is indeed ensconced in the European Communities approach, because the idea is that areas which are most suited to individual crops will become progressively dominated by those crops. Areas which are marginal, such as the Lanarkshire glasshouse industry, will progressively disappear. By contrast, areas in southern Spain with low heating costs can produce tomatoes and spring fruit for the markets in Britain.

Denmark is one of the few countries to follow Britain's example and monitor the changes which are taking place. Work by Peder Agger and Jasper Brandt (1984) has shown very similar trends in land use change in Denmark to those that have taken place in southern Britain. Such trends have been followed by the Hunting Survey's Study in 'Monitoring Landscape Change' (1986) and through our own work between 1978 and 1984 (Barr et al, 1986).

Denmark is an intensively managed agricultural country but with the potential in areas of poor sandy soils for actually setting land aside. The land which is going to be set aside in Denmark will be identified as the poorer land, while the land which is more fertile will be maintained in intensive agriculture. For an individual farmer, with land set aside, he is likely to need to intensify the rest of his holding in compensation. This important principle has been shown to take place in the USA and could eliminate any environmental benefits from set aside.

Turning now to the plains of Germany the farms which are likely to be stable are in intensive arable land. In Germany the farms are smaller in contrast to Britain and the fragmented, part time farming, with the non-dependence of farmers for their complete income from the industry, could mean that the pattern will remain more stable. This is the basis of encouraging farmers to diversify.

There are similar patterns in Holland, with intensive farming leading to problems of ammonia through intensive use of cattle in sheds which, in turn, modify the poorer heathland by increasing nutrient levels. However, there is potential for recreation through the use of linear features such as the dykes, ditches and the smaller areas which are left even in the intensively farmed landscape.

The central heathlands of Holland, Belgium, Denmark, Germany and France suffer the same problems as seen in the lowland heaths of Britain: ie, progressive modification; and are much favoured for recreation, both for amenity and for nature conservation. Such losses of heathlands are a major land use change in the lowlands - being associated with agricultural improvements of heathlands, and the modification by colonisation of trees. Many other changes in agricultural

systems are qualitative, ie, species rich to species poor lands, rather than outright losses.

The problems of the Alpine region will be generally familiar. The pressures, in contrast to the lowlands, are of a recreational nature. The modification of the traditional farming systems is comparable to Norway, and is happening throughout central Europe. In Switzerland 25% of the whole population are engaged in building hotels. This is at variance with the requirement for the maintenance of the traditional farming pattern. The major use by skiing causes major problems, comparable to those of the Cairngorms (Watson, 1981). The upland environments, because of their high altitude, are very sensitive and the work of Watson (1981) in the Cairngorms and Brugger et al (1984) in Switzerland, shows that modifications of these sensitive environments can lead to catastrophic results through knock on effects. Such impacts were highlighted last year with the major floods in the Italian valleys.

Intrusions by only a small number of people into high Alpine environments can also disturb the patterns which have been built up over many centuries. Skiing in this sort of environment can have a major impact downslope and can transfer the impact of recreational use.

A traditional Alpine meadow is the feature that many people associate with recreation in the Alps. The meadows are maintained by intensive hard work. Fertiliser is not used but hard human labour is required. The results of neglect are a genuine land use change rather than a quality change in that forest replaces grasslands. People visit the Alpine area to see the beauty of the meadows which are maintained by a small proportion of people.

In Italy the recreational pressures have meant that the limited valley bottom land is being used for building hotels and expanding the recreation industry. The whole system is therefore in danger of becoming unstable, again as highlighted last year with the catastrophe in the Italian valleys.

Large areas of land have been cleared in the Dolomite forests for ski runs. Whilst this will not have an effect during the summer, under particular conditions in the winter, of hard snow followed by heavy rain, the small rivers in the valleys could well be made unstable through this indirect effect of the increase in recreation. It is important to note that in terms of area, a small change in an Italian valley has much more influence than a much larger change in the large plains in central Europe.

An example of the decline in the Dolomites is emphasised by traditional chalets being left unoccupied during the summer. Fifty years ago these would have been used by a family during the summer months when the cattle were brought to the high pastures. Rye grass has been planted in some areas to cover the bare soil which has been caused by recreation. Whilst at the moment there are not major problems of erosion, the potential is there.

In contrast the plains of northern France have land use patterns that are very stable. There is rich agricultural land, with a high production of wheat and barley and therefore the principal changes are in the composition of the vegetation rather than the land use.

In contrast, in Brittany the granite and associated soils result in small fields. In this region there is a direct link between recreational pressure and change in land use in that the expansion of the tourist industry has led to the decline of agriculture on the poorest land. The poor land in the west of France is an area of change with decline in traditional activities, such as turpentine extraction from trees. Modern methods are expanding and farmers cannot be blamed for this because it is inevitable if they are to optimise their profits and survive in the modern farming environment.

In France hunting is a very popular sport and even small birds are shot. However, there is a trend now for an increase in concern for wildlife conservation. The pressure for shooting is beginning to decline a little. However, there is a major debate at the moment between the conservation of people as opposed to the conservation of wildlife. The wish to maintain people in the countryside, in villages etc, is often at variance with the requirements of recreation and the requirements of wildlife conservation. Such contrasts are expressed in the recent document (1988) published by the Society for the Protection of Nature in France.

There are many examples of superb meadows in southern France which show that traditional patterns of keeping people in the countryside can be linked to the maintenance of recreational features. On the other hand, in some areas, the maintenance of people in the countryside means modern techniques reduce wildlife and therefore there is a conflict between maintenance of people and traditional patterns.

There is also conflict between modern building developments associated with recreation, eg, hotels and skiing facilities. A solar furnace has been erected at a ski development and further up the hillside new ski developments are taking place. In France, the developers and the pressures from the urban environment are under less control than in Britain. Such controls vary widely in Europe and their indirect influence on the countryside needs further work.

From experiences in France, it appears that the shift towards recreation in upland areas causes a decline in agriculture. In a short space of time traditional meadows can be changed into a derelict landscape. It may be good for the goldfinches who feed on the seeds of the thistles, but a declining landscape is not generally considered attractive.

There is a lot of new building going on in the French Pyrenees. New ski resorts are being built with tracks going up the hillside. The high rainfall in the Pyrenees means there is a greater potential for erosion than in the Alps. Agriculture declines, but there is also the introduction of diesel cars. This introduces the problem of acid rain and the interaction with ozone production and other pollutants in mountain areas, which may be the underlying cause of trees dying in the Pyrenees. The synergistic effect of various forms of pollutants could well have an influence on land use patterns in poor mountain areas.

The influence of tourism on much of France has been minimised by the traditional French restriction of camp sites and, in general, although there is a great emphasis in the popular press on the influence of tourism the actual influence in many respects has been over

emphasised. The actual 'take' of land is small although locally the visual appearance may be significant.

Spain is a country of rapid change. The traditional landscape patterns are being modified by modern farming practice and recreational developments such as ski tows. Spain is comparable in some ways to Switzerland in the last century with rapid expansion of tourist facilities. The expansion of industry in the north and the agricultural industry in the south threatens traditional patterns.

Major engineering works, eg, hydroelectric developments, have flooded many valleys. Such changes will not only affect the recreational potential but will affect the wildlife and overall changes in land use. The traditional land use in the central plains of Spain where trees and cattle coexisted is changing; the Dehesa system is under threat because of EEC subsidies and conversion to more productive agriculture.

In north west Spain the old villages are changing rapidly. Television aerials are appearing on roof tops; and the traditional red coloured roofs are changing to asbestos. International telephones are being introduced and the first hotels are appearing.

There are still areas where the traditional patterns are maintained. For example, in Majorca the olive groves are still well managed although there are high recreational pressures. However, in some areas of Spain the olive groves are in decline and are being overtaken by the native vegetation. In contrast, old olive groves have been ploughed up and even turned into rye grass leys on mountain hillsides in Majorca. It shows that the tentacles of the Common Agricultural Policy reach out into formerly traditionally managed land.

LAND USE CHANGE IN BRITAIN

In Britain there is a different picture. Although land use change has been trumpeted very much in Britain, in general the changes have been in major modifications of patterns of management rather than the actual land uses. The major land use areas have not changed greatly as shown by Ministry of Agriculture statistics. The increased use of nitrogen and herbicides has altered the arable and grassland flora completely. Figures on change are available for England and Wales from Huntings (1986) and for Britain from Barr et al (1986).

The biggest change in land use terms is afforestation in the uplands. The direct loss of habitats and the indirect changes which have taken place have been through drainage, with a profound effect over the past 40 years.

In the lowlands there is no doubt that the lowland heaths have declined markedly. The work done at Furzebrook (Webb, 1986) on the heaths of Dorset have shown spectacular losses in the heathland, not only from improvement for agriculture, but also from the spread of scrub.

The influence of modern agricultural practice affects many countryside factors in addition to direct changes in land use. For example, fifty years ago much of the straw would have been used. Now

straw burning is an integral feature of farming practice and its influence is very widespread both in pollution and wildlife terms.

In the uplands and particularly in the north west part of Scotland the trend, as elsewhere in Europe, is for people to move from harsh environments to milder climates. The emphasis in Britain for growth is in the south east because of jobs, a better climate and better agriculture. The depopulation of the western highlands of Scotland inevitably affects the land use patterns present, with recreation having a relatively small influence by comparison.

The influence of changes in agricultural practice on the marginal uplands (Sinclair, 1983), ie, the increase in value of grouse moors and the problems of grouse, are also having an indirect effect upon change. The pressure of forestry is influencing many upland landscapes, in addition to the agricultural improvement. This could be slowing down at the moment but still over the past 40 years it has represented a major land use change from heather moorland into agriculturally productive grasslands.

This is an historical change and the following paper places such figures into context. Recreational pressures in the uplands, eg, at Stickle Tarn in the Lake District, has an environmental impact by causing local erosion but the land use has remained as before. The impact of such path erosion is described by Bayfield (1985). Much of the change which is taking place in Britain is primarily concerned with the quality of land parcels rather than an actual change in land use. This is not to say that the recreational pressure is not linked ultimately to land use change. It will be, but in the short term such changes are relatively small.

Currently in Britain there are also major changes in the structure of farming which have an indirect effect on land use. For example, increased numbers of horses could well be a major influence in grassland composition over the next few years. The expansion in Britain of this recreational activity could well be significant in contrast with elsewhere on the Continent. Britain is mainly an urban society in contrast to the Continent, particularly France and Spain, where connections with the countryside are still strong.

Changes and the links to ownership patterns are poorly understood and require further study. Furthermore, although urban expansion is significant locally, it uses relatively little land, but its influence on the surrounding land use needs further study. Afforestation also has a major impact on vegetation resources (Bunce, 1988).

CONCLUSION

The changes in agriculture and forestry are thus shifting away from the traditional patterns throughout Europe with many direct and indirect effects. However, they are all determined by the environment of the area concerned and modified by social and political constraints. A major research initiative is required to define, much more closely, the environment and then to look within uniform environments for the potential for recreational use and how it interacts with the land use change in a formal and structured way. The actual influences of the socio-political scene need to be examined in different countries and

related to the Common Agricultural Policy and the set aside policies. Different scenarios need to be considered in a formal and structured analysis, which needs a major research initiative. The framework would cross international boundaries and require much coordinated work. Europe will become more open in 1992 and there is therefore a major opportunity to take an initiative to examine influences and to examine the effect of different scenarios on land use change and its link to recreational potential.

This will not be done by a series of individual, isolated case studies because of the interactions between many disciplines, as shown by Bunce et al (1981) and Bunce and Heal (1984). The interrelationship and synergism between use of diesel fuel, increase in recreation in the uplands, the decline of agricultural practice and the increase in urbanisation, is an example of the need for multidisciplinary research. Trees die in some areas; grouse may decline in others and scrub may development elsewhere from apparently unconnected causes. Unless there is a structured plan, such interactions cannot be considered. Modelling procedures can provide such a basis as shown by Harvey et al (1986) and Bunce et al (1984).

In conclusion the majority of recreations do not use land or at most, a limited area. The countryside can be enjoyed in many ways without having a major influence on the balance of land use, although this may differ from region to region as shown in the discussions above.

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DISCUSSION

G Hill (ADAS)

That has got us off to an exceptionally good start and I now open the floor for discussion.

RO Smith (Isle of Wight County Council)

Is reafforestation necessarily a bad thing, bearing in mind that this country has one of the lowest acreages covered in forest?

B Bunce

At the Institute of Terrestrial Ecology we take a balanced view of this and I am sure you are absolutely right. In some fields you read that all afforestation is a bad thing. However, there are pluses and minuses and what we need to do is to evaluate these in different situations. If you take a very large area in the uplands and completely blanket it with conifers I would see that as a negative influence. On the other hand, in a lowland situation we have a low area of woodland. In that case the benefits are positive, bringing increased variability and extra wildlife. It is therefore necessary to consider the basic environment and then to evaluate the pluses and minuses. I think what is needed is a proper way of assessing the impacts of a given development and producing a balanced view. We need a proper impact assessment procedure so that any particular development would go through a series of routines and produce a balanced view of the situation.

Having said that, in terms of land use change such as that happening in north west Spain, over 60% of the land is covered by forest. The particular variability of that landscape in visual terms is due to the balance between the small fields and the forests. So, in visual terms, in that situation, if you were to let those small fields go into forest, you would lose variability and many different species from the meadows.

JA Mitchell (Waveney District Council)

I noticed that you made no reference in your presentation to climatic change in the environment. To what degree has this occurred and to what degree do you anticipate this to be a more rapid change, or at least as rapid, as the Common Agricultural Policy with the set aside?

B Bunce

As far as the ecology goes, there is no formal study as yet on the influence that climatic change will have on landscape change. In fact I have a PhD student just starting at Birmingham University to set up models to look at what influence increased temperatures and carbon dioxide will have. Evidence from my colleagues indicates that it is not whether it will happen but how soon it is going to happen. If it does happen then it will have a major influence and there will be major shifts. A large number of crops will move further north and the

temperature increase will have a major influence on crops, eg, vines, in southern England.

Apart from that, what is most likely to happen is that production of these crops is going to increase, rather than changing the balance. However, we need to look at this and it needs a proper study, as I was indicating at the end of my paper. We need to find a structured framework so we can assess the true proportions of land which might be affected.

J Fladmark (Countryside Commission for Scotland)

I was very interested in what you were saying about the small units where farmers combine farming activities with other activities to generate income. The implication of what you are saying is that this is quite a robust and stable system. I know the same has been said about the crofting system in Scotland where they undertake other activities.

Could you elaborate on that and say how robust you think the system is? Do you think special attention has to be given to make sure that the system is supported in the debate between conservation and people as you referred to in France? I would also like to know whether anybody is actually studying this to try to predict what will happen.

B Bunce

I think that the last point is the valid one and we do not know the answer. The French system of support differs from our own and is designed to support the small farmer and therefore has a cut off point for grant support. In Britain, however, there is not a cut off point. On the other hand, you would expect the actual problems in France to be less than they are in Britain, if that is so, yet the problems appear just as great. What we therefore need to do is to assess such differences in quantitative terms. What influence does it really have? Is it peripheral to the main determinant which is the overall Common Agricultural Policy policy?

At the moment one would say that the evidence shows that the local environmental conditions dominate the situation, in conjunction with the main thrust of the Common Agricultural Policy. The minor differences we are talking about may stabilise local situations, but currently we only have the idea that because people in Germany are less dependent on farming then change is likely to be slowed down. We have to draw out the factors which are the principal driving forces. Only then can we influence, through policy, what the end product is going to be.

JD Watts (North York Moors National Park)

In Britain, as I think most people would agree, there is a growing concern about the need to cope with the changes in agriculture. A growing body of opinion favours the idea of supporting farmers carrying out a wider range of countryside management roles. Is there any evidence of any kind of consensus view emerging within Europe or are we in a situation, such as you showed us in Spain, where national policies are diverging rather than converging?

B Bunce

I think the picture is very fragmented. I do not think there is a consensus at all. I really think that this is one of the things that people need to get together about. As a general comment, the rate of change in Britain has probably been over emphasised. David Harvey points out that land has a very high value in the lowlands at the moment and there are a number of alternative uses to which it can be put, eg, in some areas you can get £17 a week just for grazing a horse, which can add significantly to farm income.

There are many other activities which can use up land. However, I think that the likely rate of change has been over emphasised and the figures assume that man is a rational and economic being. As we all know, that is not always the case. Some generalisations can be made and one of the principal conclusions is that mountain areas are moving towards a loss of traditional farmers and an increase in recreational use and employment.

JA Busby (Department of Environment (NI))

I would like to add a further point into the equation. In the southern and western areas of Ireland since 1850 there has been a population decrease. However, the most recent studies are showing an increase on the basis that if you are going to be poor it is better to be poor in a rural area than in a built up urban area! It is a very serious social point and has great implications for the rate of change of land use. Sometimes the changes run counter to the major thrusts of your argument.

B Bunce

You have raised a very important point and one which I forgot to mention – the movement of urban man from the town to country with modern increases in communication. I think that increases in population in rural areas are probably of people who are not actually working in the countryside. In Cumbria at the moment people are now setting up computer firms because they can do it as well in Cumbria as they can in Manchester, for example, but can still live in a very pleasant environment. There was an article in the Guardian showing how people are buying up farmhouses in the Yorkshire Dales. I think this is an important point but it means that people's judgement of what a fully populated countryside should be is different.

JA Busby

More people are working on the land and this is arising from the EC Initiative on the Anti-Poverty Programme. We have the Anti-Poverty Programme in the south, in Eire, and we also have it as a Rural Action Project in Northern Ireland. Here, several selected very rural areas have had work carried out on them for the past four years by researchers working on aspects of social and agricultural change. This is coming out of this study of the Anti-Poverty Programme.

G Hill

I think I will draw the discussion to a close with just one comment. It is good news for a lot of farmers that people are irrational when it comes to horses! If economics really played a part in it then perhaps there would not be quite as much money in it. Thank you very much indeed, Bob, for covering such a tremendously wide area so explicitly and forthrightly. I am sure we have all learned a tremendous amount from you.

LAND USE CHANGE IN BRITAIN

Colin Spedding

Centre for Agricultural Strategy, University of Reading

THE CURRENT PATTERN OF LAND USE

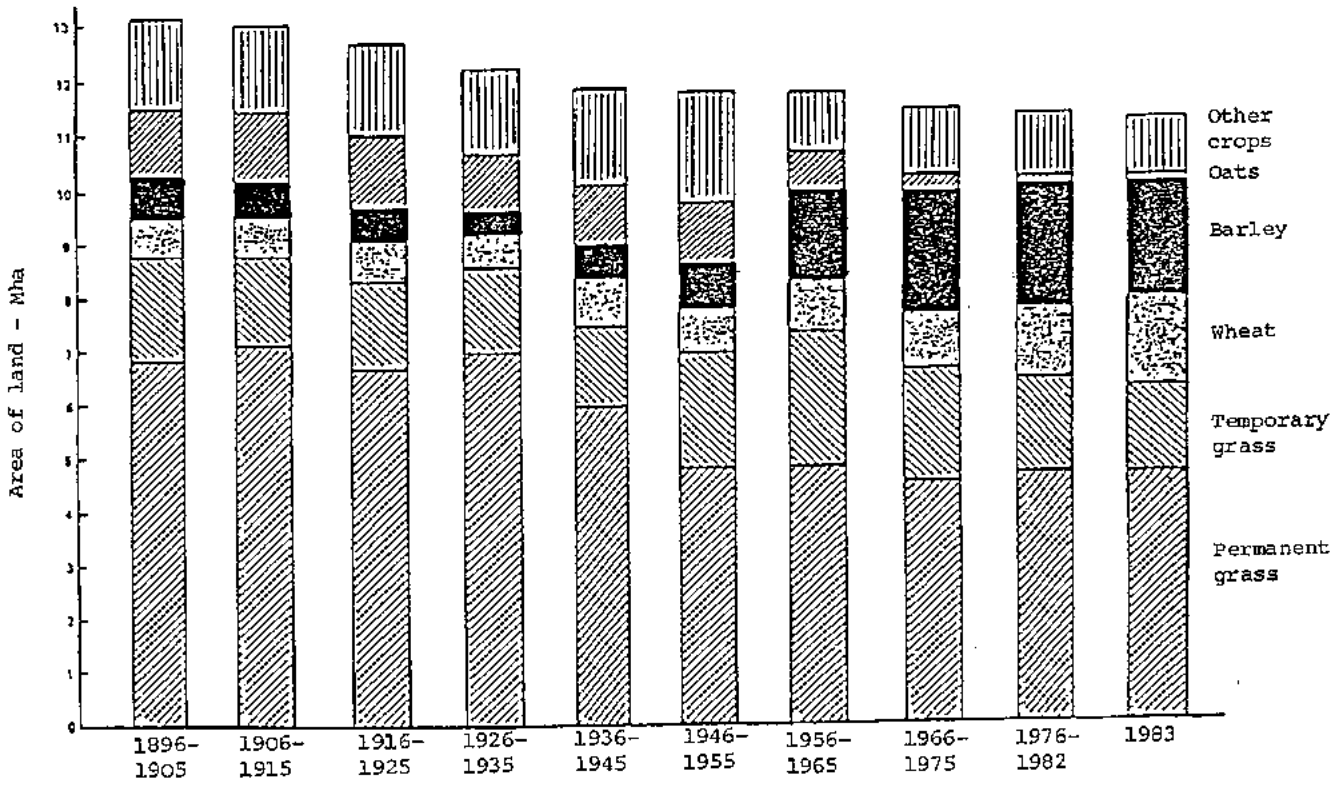
The total area of land in the UK is approximately 24 million hectares, about 90% of it being owned by private individuals, companies and trusts, about 8.5% by public and semi-public bodies and traditional institutions, and about 1.2% by financial institutions.

Farming is by far the biggest user of land in all parts of the country except the great conurbations. The main uses of farmland and the changes in these between 1900 and 1983 are shown in Table 1 overleaf.

The changes in the pattern of cultivated land use ie, ignoring rough grazings are illustrated in Figure 1.

FIGURE 1

THE CHANGING PATTERN OF CULTIVATED LAND USE - GREAT BRITAIN



Source: Craig et al (1986)

TABLE 1

LAND USE IN ENGLAND, WALES, SCOTLAND AND NORTHERN IRELAND 1900 and 1983 (k ha)

	England[1]		Wales[1]	
	1900	1983	1900	1983
Wheat	703.2	1,637.4	23.7	5.8
Barley	663.7	1,596.7	44.5	50.7
Oats	749.3	80.9	91.2	6.5
Other crops inc fallow	1,166.3	1,008.8	84.4	25.6
Total tillage	3,282.5	4,323.8	243.8	91.7
Temporary grass[2]	1,325.5	956.4	166.3	167.2
Permanent grass[2]	5,340.0	3,151.0	860.2	861.6
Total grass	6,665.5	4,107.4	1,026.5	1,028.8
Rough grazings[3]	919.2	1,192.8	520.1	525.3
Total tillage grass and rough grazings	10,867.2	9,624.0	1,790.4	1,645.8
Total land area	12,967.9		2,063.8	

	Scotland		N Ireland[4]	
	1900	1983	1900	1983
Wheat	19.8	47.4	4.5	1.5
Barley	97.2	450.2	1.3	45.4
Oats	384.1	25.1	152.4	3.4
Other crops inc fallow	266.5	112.0	126.7	23.8
Total tillage	767.6	634.7	284.9	74.1
Temporary grass[2]	654.2	481.5	na	241.0
Permanent grass[2]	569.8	570.1	na	524.8
Total grass	1,215.0	1,051.6	797.9	765.8
Rough grazings[3]	3,793.7	4,214.7	179.6	205.4
Total tillage grass and rough grazings	5,776.3	5,901.0	1,262.4	1,045.3
Total land area	7,708.0		1,348.3	

Notes:

1. In 1900, Monmouth was part of England. In 1983, as Gwent it was part of Wales. In this table it is classified with Wales in both years.
2. Definitions of temporary and permanent grass are variable though in 1983 the division was between under and over 5 years of age.
3. In 1900, rough grazings in Great Britain were designated 'Mountain and Heath'. Those in N Ireland were divided into turfbog, marsh and barren mountain.
4. These data are not all for 1900 but from the years 1899, 1900 and 1901.

Source: Craig, Jollans and Korbey (1986)

The proportion of owner occupiers of farmland in Great Britain has risen from 13% in 1914 to 69% in 1983 but the number of holdings has fallen steadily (243,500 in 1980) and the average size has increased (to 16 hectares in 1980 but the variation is substantial). Thus some 78% of UK land is farmed in one way or another and this has not changed greatly in recent times (Table 2).

TABLE 2

UK TOTAL AREA OF AGRICULTURAL LAND

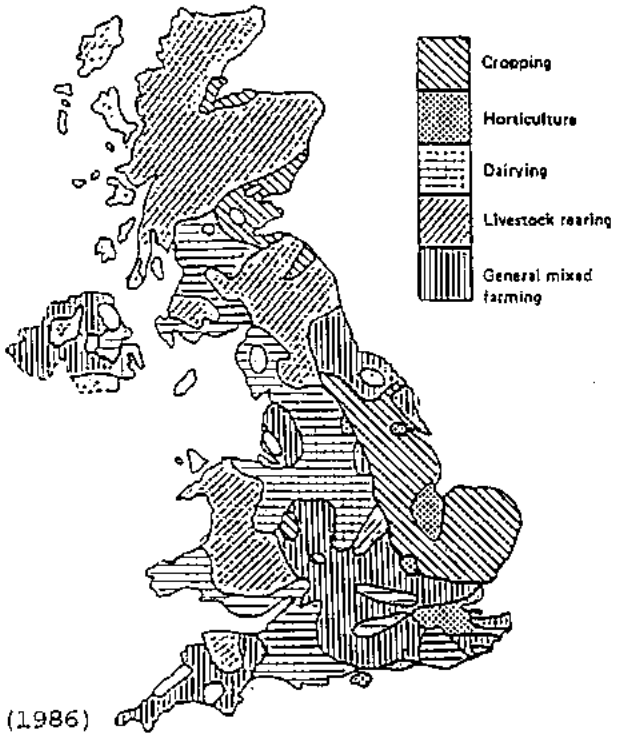
		% of total
1977	18,947,633	78.7
1978	18,952,612	78.7
1979	18,936,446	78.6
1980	18,953,490	78.7
1981	18,807,693	78.1
1982	18,783,188	78.0
1983	18,734,973	77.8
1984	18,719,682	77.7
1985	18,702,828	77.6

Source: MAFF, DAFS, DANI, Welsh Office (1982, 1986)

A broad impression of the present distribution of the main farming systems is given in Figure 2. There has been a marked change in this distribution over time, including a concentration of cereal production in the eastern counties. Figure 3 illustrates these changes in the distribution of tilled land between 1900 and 1983.

FIGURE 2

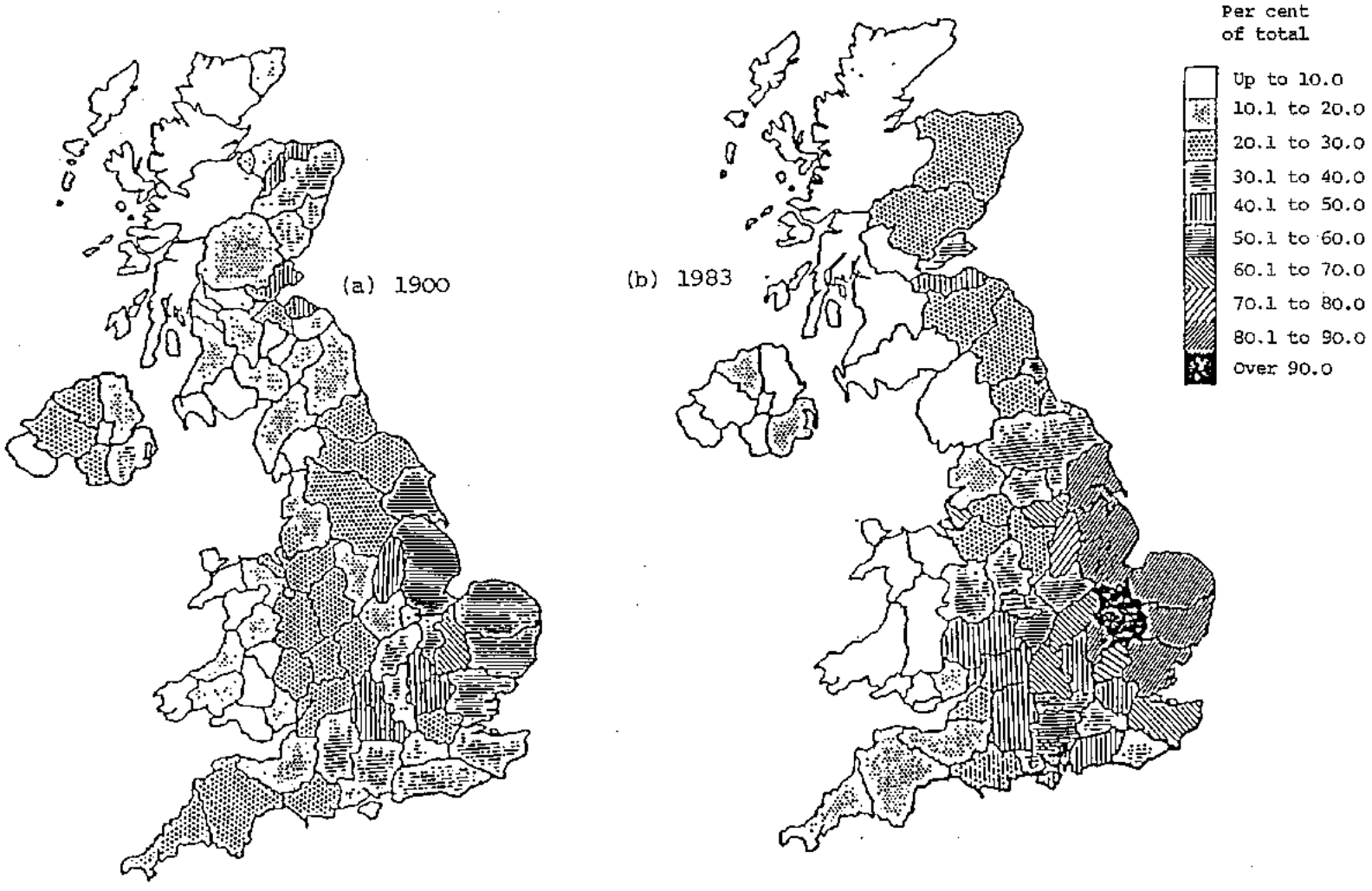
A BROAD IMPRESSION OF THE PRESENT DISTRIBUTION OF THE MAIN FARMING SYSTEMS



Source: Craig et al (1986)

FIGURE 3

THE DISTRIBUTION OF TILLED LAND (PERCENTAGE OF TOTAL TILLAGE, GRASSLAND AND ROUGH GRAZINGS)



Within the areas farmed there have also been important changes in intensity. Yields have risen sharply (see Figure 4 for milk and wheat) partly due to a vast increase in the use of nitrogenous fertiliser (Figure 5).

FIGURE 4

YIELD TRENDS IN UK

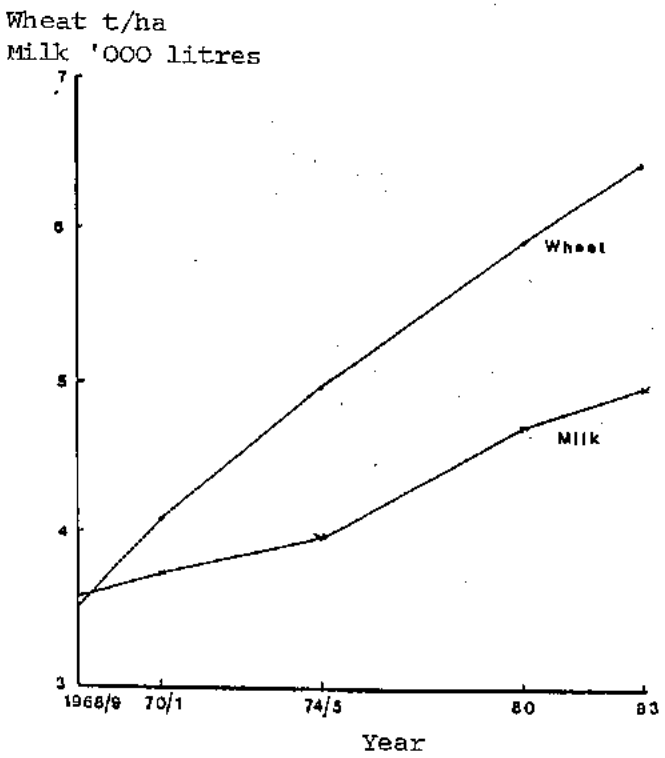
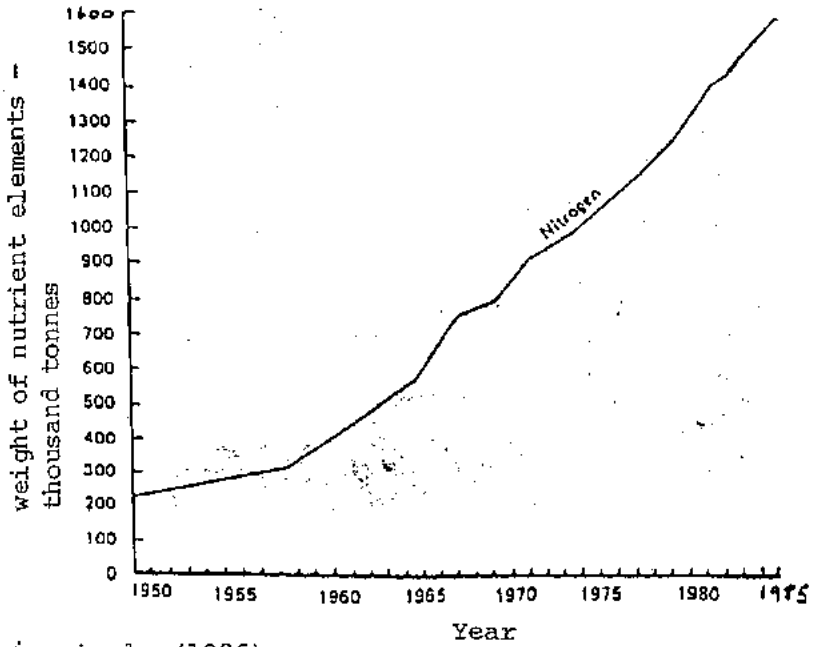


FIGURE 5

ANNUAL USE OF NITROGEN FERTILIZER IN THE UK



Source: Craig et al (1986)

Employment in agriculture has declined to very low levels (Table 3) with 32% of farmers now classified as part-time. The decline in regular, full time employed workers has been most marked.

TABLE 3

SUMMARY OF EMPLOYEES IN EMPLOYMENT RELATED TO UK AGRICULTURE, 1981

	Agric related employees in employment*	% of UK employees in employment
Agriculture and horticulture	709,875	3.03
Input industries	205,293	0.88
Public sector etc	40,000	0.17
Output industries	252,026	1.07
Total	1,207,194	5.15
UK total in all employment	23,440,484	100.00

* Note that the part time and casual employees included here may also be included in the employment statistics of other industries.

Source: Craig et al (1986)

Over a period from 1910, the number of horses used in agriculture has declined, slowly at first with still half a million farm horses in 1946, and then more rapidly to negligible numbers, and the number of tractors has steadily increased.

Forestry also occupies a significant area but it is only about 10% of the total UK land area.

There are, in fact, about 2 million hectare of forests, just over 70% in conifers and about 30% in broadleaved trees (mainly in the lowlands). Forestry is concentrated primarily in the north (especially Scotland) and in Wales. The balance of species reflects the needs of industry, which has an 80% requirement for softwoods.

The proportion of the total afforested area that is privately owned is about 50%.

Country sports and recreation involve many people but relatively little land is devoted solely to these purposes. However, a total of about 5.5 million hectare is occupied by the following:

National Parks
Environmentally Sensitive Areas
Sites of Special Scientific Interest
National Nature Reserves
Royal Society for the Protection of Birds Reserves
Areas of Outstanding Natural Beauty
Nature Conservation Trust Reserves
Royal Society for Nature Conservation Reserves
Wildfowl Refuges
National Trust properties

A major purpose of these quite large areas is the conservation of particular areas, habitats and wildlife species: and these areas have been added to steadily over the past 30 to 40 years (although Environmentally Sensitive Areas, for example, are relatively recent).

DETERMINANTS OF CHANGE

Changes in land use have always occurred, and not always very gradually, but there are at least three major factors operating at the present time that are relatively new.

The first is the significant increase in public concern about the way land is used, who owns it, what it is used for and what it looks like. This is closely related to the second factor, which is the greater awareness of the public, partly due to greater mobility (the number of cars is now well over 16 million and the number of bicycles is about 15 million) and partly due to more rapid and widespread communications (especially television). The third important factor is current overproduction of major food commodities.

OVERPRODUCTION

It is as well to recognise that the problem is an EEC one, with costs of production support, storage and disposal now putting an intolerable strain on the Common Agricultural Policy, but that, in the UK, it is confined to food products.

Agriculture, of course, is also concerned with the production of non-food products and an important influence on the future pattern of land use will be the extent to which agriculture is able to shift its emphasis away from food and towards non-food production. This, as with so much of land use change, will depend largely upon economic considerations.

In the longer term it is by no means certain that overproduction will continue but, in the short term, action has to be taken. This has already happened with the imposition of milk quotas and various controls are now being introduced for other commodities, especially cereals.

The fact is that we do not require as much land as is currently farmed in order to produce the amount of food that we can sell. That is, assuming that we continue to operate at current intensities of production. There are, of course, two other possibilities. First, that technology in the pipeline would actually result in increased intensity: this would further concentrate production on the better land and lead to even more land being released from food production. The other possibility is for extensification, decreasing the intensity of production and continuing to use a similar area to that currently cultivated. There are pressures in this direction, favouring various degrees of lower input system or organic farming (virtually without external inputs).

If we continue to farm intensively, the amount of land no longer required for food production will be considerable. Using a range of possible scenarios, John North (1988) has calculated that the area required in the year 2015 could be about 30% less than that actually used in 1985 (Table 4).

TABLE 4

LAND FOR FOOD PRODUCTION (m ha)

	Used in 1985	Needed in 2015
Cereals	4.00	1.3-1.9
Grassland	12.63	7.5-9.3
Other crops	0.68	0.6
Horticulture	0.21	0.2
Total	17.52	9.6-12.0

Source: North (1988)

If so much land came out of agricultural use entirely - that is, was not moved into non-food production, it would seem likely to lower land prices, at least in regions where prices reflect demand for farming. This could, in turn, encourage lower cost farming systems and offer opportunities to younger farmers, without debts, to enter agriculture and operate systems that might not be economic in the present cost structure of farming.

However, assuming that controls are imposed on the production of cereals and maybe also on some forms of meat production, it is clear that the form that these controls take will have a considerable impact on land use patterns.

CONTROLS ON PRODUCTION

Controls may be direct (eg, quotas on the amount of a commodity that may be produced or on the area of land on which it may be grown) or indirect (eg, price reductions, taxation on inputs or legislative restriction on input use, incentives to set aside productive land).

Clearly any control mechanism that effectively reduces output will have some influence on the pattern of land use, but the effects may be complex. For example, if less milk or beef is to be produced, it may either come from fewer cattle (thus using fewer hectares) or from less productive cattle kept on the same or even more hectares.

Which of these alternatives is adopted will be affected by whether there are restrictions on the use of fertilisers (especially nitrogen) - leading to extensification - or decreases in prices, leading to cost cutting - which might involve further intensification.

Government policy in these matters is likely to be increasingly influenced by the nature and extent of public concerns (Table 5).

TABLE 5

CURRENT CONCERNS

about	(a) What is produced
	(b) Costs and subsidies
	(c) The way it is produced
	(d) Effects on the environment
	(e) Over production
	(f) Privilege

The public, as represented by the many, very vocal interest groups that claim to speak for them, are increasingly concerned, not only with the kind of food produced by agriculture, but also with the ways in which it is produced. Farmers are increasingly sensitive to these concerns and have absorbed many of them into their own attitudes to both crop and animal production.

All this will govern, in part, the choice of alternative enterprises that will be needed by farmers, in order to sustain their incomes whilst demand for major commodities decreases, and by the nation, if it wishes to manage the countryside in a productive manner. (If it does not, the cost of such management will have to come from other sources.) The possible alternative enterprises are most conveniently considered under four headings: alternative crops, alternative animals, forestry and non-farming enterprises.

ALTERNATIVE CROPS

The main alternative crops, as identified by the Centre for Agricultural Strategy study (Carruthers, 1986b), are shown in Table 6. The only ones likely to occupy large areas of land are trees and crops (including existing ones, such as cereals) grown to produce raw materials for industry. Many other crops may be important to the farmers who grow them – especially those with a high unit value – and it should be noted that the effect on the environment may be substantial even where the area is small. The visual impact of rape in flower can be seen for considerable distances, even where small areas are involved.

ALTERNATIVE ANIMALS

Some 'new' animal enterprises will be small scale (eg, snails) and have no impact on land use. Others may be large scale but housed, and thus not be so visible, and only affect land use insofar as they require land to be devoted to growing their feed.

TABLE 6

ALTERNATIVE CROPS

Time Scale		Market[1]	Constraints
Short term (0-5 years)	**New or nearly new crops**		
	Flax	a	Scutching facilities, seed supply
	'Medicinals' such as Borage, Meadowfoam, Fenugreek, Liquorice	a,b,c,	Economic measurements, marketing arrangements
	Essential oil crops such as Peppermint, Jasmine	a	Economic measurements, marketing arrangements
	Novel salad crops	b	Market reserved, seed supply
	Rose stocks	a	Marketing arrangements
	Cranberry, Blueberry, Cloudberry	a,b	Market development
	Expansion of existing crop areas		
	'Medicinals' such as Caraway, Coriander, Lucerne (alfalfa tablets)	a,b,c	Marketing arrangements
	Herbs such as Parsley, Thyme, Fennel	a	Market arrangements
	Durum Wheat	a,c	Market demand, marketing
	Linseed	a	
	Winter brassicas	c	Market development
	Pot plants and ornamentals	a,c	Marketing, market development
	Field cropping with plastic film		
Medium term (5-10 years)	**New or nearly new crops**		
	Chickpeas	a,b	Evaluation of cultivars, seed supply
	Lentils	a,b	Evaluation of cultivars, seed supply
	Flower seed production	a	Techniques development
	Flax	b	Process and market development
	Pearl Lupin	a	Variety development, marketing arrangements
	Novel bush fruits for juice production	b	Market development, variety assessment
	Expansion of existing crop areas		
	Peas (high yielding types)	a	Variety development
Long term (over 10 years)	**New or nearly new crops**		
	Navy Bean	a	Cold tolerance
	Sunflower	a	Cold tolerance
	High lysine cereals	a	Genetic manipulation
	Protein (or other) Beet	a,b	Genetic manipulation
	Oil pea	a	Genetic manipulation

1 a Import replacement
b Meet an expanding home demand
c Newly developed export market

Source: Carruthers (1986b)

Land use is most likely to be influenced by 'new' species (eg, llamas) or by changed methods of keeping animals (eg, free range hens, outdoor pigs). The main possibilities are illustrated in Table 7.

TABLE 7

ALTERNATIVE ANIMAL ENTERPRISES FOR UK FARMS

Time scale	New or expanded animal enterprise	Market[1]	Constraints
Short term (0-5 years)	Goats' milk	b	Lack of health regulations, organised market and nutritional knowledge
	Free range eggs	b	No evident technical constraints
	Turkeys	b	No evident technical constraints
	Rabbit	a	No evident technical constraints
	Outdoor pigs	a	No constraints on free draining land
	Finer wool (from British breeds)	a,c	No technical constraints
Medium term (5-10 years)	Fine wool from sheep	a	Lack of foundation stock and technical expertise in production methods
Long term (over 10 years)	Goat fibre	a	Lack of foundation stock and technical expertise in production methods
	Alpaca fibre	a	
	Angora rabbit fibre	a	

1 a Import replacement
b Meet an expanding home demand
c Newly developed export market

Source: Carruthers (1986b)

FORESTRY

Trees have already been mentioned under 'alternative crops' because there are possibilities of agroforestry and trees in parkland used extensively. There are also possibilities for fuel crops, including coppiced trees.

But, in addition, since the UK is currently only some 90% self sufficient in wood, it may be expected that the area devoted to forestry will increase. Indeed, it is planned to do so.

However, this need not imply either monoculture, coniferous plantations or rectangular patterns of planting. The productivity of trees in the future ought to be much higher because modern genetic techniques are only just being applied, because inputs might be used to a greater extent and because trees may be grown on more fertile land and in better climates.

NON-FARMING ENTERPRISES

These will vary with the farmer, his resources and his location. The main categories are listed in Table 8. They do not have major implications for land use except in the sense that they may make good use of land kept in a non-agricultural state. Thus, pony trekking may use quite extensive areas, but it does not create or control the vegetation and its appearance.

TABLE 8

A CLASSIFICATION OF POSSIBLE FARM BASED RECREATION AND TOURIST ENTERPRISES

Tourist accommodation	Resource based activity
In farmhouse	Horse and pony based
Self catering	Water based
Second homes	Shooting
Camping sites	
Caravan sites	
Specialised holidays	
Day visitor enterprises	
Informal recreation	Catering
Access to areas of natural interest	Farm produce sales
Dog based	Public events
Sporting	Educational activities

Source: Carruthers (1986a)

However, the state of the vegetation is an important aspect of the countryside from the point of view of those who wish to use and enjoy it, for recreation and amenity.

RECREATION AND THE COUNTRYSIDE

All kinds of countryside have a recreational value but not on the same scale. Thus, for example, waterfalls can only be a small part of the countryside and it might be oppressive if it were otherwise.

The vegetation that is consistent with large scale use of land for recreation by large numbers of people is mainly that of grassland. Heather moors are the major exception and some forest areas are in the same category, but, for the most part, recreational use of woodland favours scattered trees interspersed with grassland.

Grassland is preferred for most purposes and many of these require short grass. In any event, since grass is not the natural vegetation of most of the UK, grass that is not defoliated proceeds to scrub and eventually forest.

For most recreational purposes, therefore, grassland has either to be cut or grazed and, on a large scale and many types of land, grazing is the only practical and economic method of control.

This raises questions of cost (who is going to pay?) and management (who is going to manage both sward and animals?). Neither are negligible. Costs could only be minimised if the animals served some productive purposes and, if they are going to be there, why should they not do so?

Management faces a number of major difficulties. It is hardly consistent with amenity to have dead animals lying about, especially the large grazers that would be required. But, since animals have a limited lifespan, death has to occur, either naturally - perhaps following painful and unsightly disease - or in a controlled fashion. This fact makes it even more sensible that the animals used should serve a productive purpose. If they do, however, this exacerbates another major problem, that of feeding them in winter.

Natural vegetation exhibits enormous peaks and troughs in productivity, providing insufficient food in winter for the number of animals needed to keep grass short in the spring and summer. Either additional food has to be provided (at substantial extra cost) or animal numbers have to be adjusted. The latter is most easily achieved if the animals are being farmed.

There is thus much to be said for farmers and farming, however extensive, undertaking the task of managing the countryside for recreation and amenity. This may also influence the maintenance of rural population.

RURAL EMPLOYMENT

There is considerable pressure to develop rural industries, usually small and often in buildings no longer needed for agriculture. Such a development could help to rejuvenate villages and increase rural populations.

One major possibility is the further extension of part time farming. A high proportion (32%) of farmers in England and Wales now have other sources of income and part time employment is increasing (Gasson, 1988).

One important feature of part time employment in farming is that it can serve as a base on which to develop a non-agricultural rural enterprise, initially involving only part time activity. Of course, rural population need not be linked to rural (or any) employment.

URBAN SPREAD

It is quite possible that more people will wish to live in the country, whether they work there or not. If agricultural land is not required for farming, especially in the south east of England, it may well result in an increase in the number of large houses with several surrounding hectares of land being bought by non-farmers. Whether the land will then be farmed on contract, or perhaps as a point of entry for young farmers, is hard to predict. What is certain is that this land, too, will have to be managed.

LAND USE CHANGE

Not all change can be managed although it may be advantageous where this is possible, and change is bound to occur, in response to changing needs and desires of those who own the land or use it. But most land does actually require management, especially if it is to be used by people. This implies policies, managers and money.

It is right that a broad debate should be encouraged on what sort of a countryside we want to have, recognising that we shall not all agree and that it is hard for most people to be well informed about the subject. But it should always be remembered that there are costs and alternative demands on the resources that would be used to meet them.

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OPPORTUNITIES FOR RECREATION

Adrian Phillips

Director, Countryside Commission

INTRODUCTION

Last night, when I was looking at the notes for this presentation, I came across the most awesome little paragraph, which I think I had better read to you.

> "A speech is a solemn responsibility. A man who makes a bad speech of 30 minutes to 200 people wastes half an hour of his time, but 100 hours, that is more than four days, of the audience's time, which should be a hanging offence."

Then, looking at all these people who know a great deal about the practical level of countryside recreation I am reminded about the Chinese proverb which says, "Better to be thought a fool and keep your mouth shut, than open your mouth and prove it beyond any doubt"; which is not a very kind way of introducing a paper and thanking Paul Johnson for contributing to it, but Paul will know that such strengths as the paper has got are his and the other problems are just those of the man who is here to talk to you.

About three quarters of England and Wales is farmland, and it is still famed throughout the world for its green and pleasant qualities. In many parts, as you know, it shows the strains of 40 years of intensive farming. It is land uniquely covered with legal rights of way for the public's use - yet often, in practice, a very private world.

This paper is about the Countryside Commission for England and Wales' strategy for caring for that countryside and for making it more accessible. It is in four parts and first of all deals with the level of public interest in the countryside and its enjoyment. Secondly, I will consider how, as a society, we can best ensure that as much land as possible is sensitively managed to the benefit of our landscape, wildlife, historic assets, and so on. Thirdly, I want to consider how accessible the countryside is at present and what the scope is for improving opportunities to enjoy it first hand. Finally I want to touch on how some of the ideas I am raising can best be put into practice.

LEVEL OF PUBLIC INTEREST IN THE COUNTRYSIDE

England and Wales is, of course, one of the most urbanised countries in the world and yet the people of these countries have a peculiarly close relationship with their countryside. A quarter of them visit it in a typical week, another half less often. On a summer Sunday afternoon - and they do, I understand, occasionally occur - as many as 18 million people, about 40% of the whole population, venture out into the countryside for some sort of recreation or another.

Whether they visit it regularly or not, the countryside matters to the great majority of people. The fact that they do not own it does not stop them from feeling intensely protective towards it and deeply alarmed about threats to it. In a sense our landscape has always belonged to all of us, free to all "with an eye to perceive and a heart to enjoy", a source of relaxation and rejuvenation in a stressful society. Is that a rather romantic notion? Well perhaps so, but a 1983 opinion poll found that an attractive countryside came second only to safe streets in people's judgement about the quality of life.

The public interest is rising all the time. We see all around us today a growing consciousness of the importance of healthy lifestyles, coupled with increasing awareness of the natural environment and the need for its protection. Jonathan Porritt's latest book calls this trend "the Coming of the Greens". All the signs are that mobility, personal affluence, leisure time and so on, will continue to rise amongst sectors of the population, sustaining the growth in both active and outdoor recreation. Demographic shifts favour informal family based pursuits in that the number of people in the age group 30 to 44, the group who visit the countryside most regularly, is likely to rise by 15% by the end of the century, whilst the more sporty 16 to 29 group declines by 20% – an interesting thought as we watch the Olympic Games.

So it seems commonsense to me on these grounds alone to improve the opportunities for countryside recreation by caring better for land and making it more accessible; however, there is also a cast iron economic case for doing so.

Visiting the countryside, as many of you know, is big business. Spending by all visitors in the countryside, England and Wales, in 1986 was estimated at £3,270 million, well over £3 billion. British people out on day trips spent nearly two thirds of this. All this tourist spending gives a vital boost to rural economies, it helps to keep vulnerable local services like shops and buses viable and often supports more full time jobs than agriculture. Sustaining and enhancing these economic benefits requires that we have a fine countryside that is well cared for and readily accessible.

That is a point that I think we need to stress with representatives of the tourist industry. The countryside is, in fact, a prime tourist resource and like all resources it must not only be accessible, it must also be properly looked after if it is to produce sustainable benefits for tourism.

I believe the tourist industry must play its part in ensuring that rural areas remain worth visiting and that means more than avoiding the worst excesses of tourist development. It means, also, that the tourist industry must become the ally of conservation, pressing for the resources and the policy support which conservation requires.

There are some early signs that the more farsighted leaders of the industry are becoming receptive to this argument. Perhaps one is being optimistic in reading the signs but I think they exist, for example, in the English Tourist Board's recently published 'Rural Tourism Strategy'.

CARING FOR THE LAND – MECHANICS

A prime difficulty remains. The quality of the countryside may be a very important economic resource, but how do we actually get it into the hands of those who care for and manage the countryside, those to whom the care of our landscape and wildlife is largely entrusted? Knowing that your sensitive management of the land is making an invaluable contribution to the tourist economy may be good for self esteem, but it is not much consolation if your farm enterprise can no longer balance its books.

For the reasons I have outlined, we believe the appearance, wildlife, and historical qualities of farmland, are often as valuable as any crop or livestock on the farm. This has, I suppose, been recognised for the first time in agricultural legislation, in the 1986 Agriculture Act. But what is still missing is the means of harvesting these resources to produce replacement income for the farmers and landowners.

The time is surely right for the mechanisms of agricultural support to give more financial backing to management practices that foster an attractive and an accessible countryside and landscape and promote the wildlife interest of the country.

The Government's most recent step in this direction, the set aside scheme, has, frankly, been rather disappointing. We had hoped for a system which was more explicitly designed to bring environmental and recreational benefits. But there are still possibilities in relation to set aside which I will come back to later.

More significantly next year's agriculture scheme, extensification, could, with imagination, offer the prospect we have long advocated, that of applying to the countryside at large the principles already in place in Environmentally Sensitive Areas.

It is early days, but Environmentally Sensitive Areas look very promising. Acting on the Countryside Commission's and the Nature Conservancy Council's advice, the Government has designated 12 areas in England and Wales where farmers receive payment for following or readopting traditional farming methods which maintain and enhance the natural beauty of the countryside. It is, however, entirely a conservation arrangement. There are no access arrangements specifically built into Environmentally Sensitive Areas.

Within the first 15 months, something like 85% of the eligible land in England was the subject of Environmentally Sensitive Area applications and agreements. That is a very encouraging response, although one might say in parenthesis that until we actually see what it means in terms of the management of land, we should suspend judgement. The extension of the Environmentally Sensitive Area concept over wider areas must, we believe, be the way forward.

In the meantime, the Countryside Commission continues to put its own much more modest funds where the needs are greatest. Since 1982 something like 200 management agreements have been made, mainly in National Parks, for the positive management of open moorland and other important National Park landscapes. There are now farm conservation advisers for virtually the whole of England and Wales. We contributed

to the planting of more than 2 million trees last year and on top of that established a special planting programme in the areas affected by last October's storm, and so on.

These are the sort of practical measures we are able to take as a small organisation to help maintain the landscape. But funds on a different scale, from the budget that currently sustains agricultural surpluses, are likely to be the only viable mechanism for restoring more of the traditional balance to most of our farmland.

There is, of course, another vital element in caring for the landscape, and that is a strong planning system. Despite all the difficulties which you read about, on the whole planning has served the countryside well. Many visitors to these shores find themselves surprised, even amazed, at the proximity of real country to towns, and forward looking planning policies have a key role to play if the changes that take place in the countryside are to happen in an orderly and sensitive way. I believe that this is a theme that the Conference will be looking at tomorrow. Incidentally, the Countryside Commission has recently published for comment, a discussion paper 'Planning for Change', and we would appreciate your comments.

ACCESSIBILITY – IMPROVING THE OPPORTUNITIES

I do this against the background of a Conference title which implies that there may be greatly enhanced opportunities in the light of the changed outlook for agriculture. In a sense, this covers some of the ground about which Colin Spedding has just been speaking. Four million hectares, some say, are likely to come out of farm use by the end of the century, maybe 6 million hectares, as you saw, by the year 2015.

I wrote this paper before hearing Colin speaking, but, personally, I question these figures. Four million hectares is four times the size of our largest county, Devon, and there are only 12 years to go to the year 2000. I suspect that extensification of agriculture, planned or otherwise, and a whole lot of other factors will account for some of the so called oversupply of agricultural land. The farmers may sustain a squeeze on profit margins as prices fall but stay in business nonetheless. So I do not think we are going to see 4 million hectares falling out of agricultural use by the end of the century.

But even so, the dramatically changed outlook for farming must have implications for recreation and access. On the whole these should, in very general terms, be beneficial. As a general statement one could say that if farmland needs to be farmed less intensively then there should be more room for conservation and access. But the extent to which this potential is realised will depend, of course, upon there being policies in place which encourage recreation and access, the existence of a sustained public demand and the presence of landowners and entrepreneurs ready to exploit the opportunities.

Commercial entrepreneurs there certainly are. Ideas which have materialised in recent years, from theme parks to war games, have shown the potential for creating a market from scratch for a special kind of recreational experience in the countryside. I believe Clive Gordon will be covering some of this ground in the Workshop sessions this afternoon.

All I want to point out now is that such provision, though very popular especially for a well run place like Center Parcs, cannot directly satisfy the public wanting a quiet countryside experience. Moreover, it can create serious planning problems in sensitive environments. Its development and management calls for considerable expertise which means that farmers and landowners at large will not benefit.

What then is the scope for farm diversification? In our view it is unlikely to produce very much direct benefit for informal recreation. Ministry of Agriculture grants are now available for farmers who want to take up the option, but a recent survey suggests a pretty cautious response. Two farmers in five currently undertake activities other than producing crops and livestock. The enterprises which generally make an important or useful contribution to farm income are the following:

agricultural contracting and haulage - 20% of farmers;
selling or processing farm produce - 10%;
farm accommodation - 9%;
camping and caravanning - 5%.

Other activities, like providing for fishing, riding, shooting or other sports, attract far less interest among farmers and generally bring less useful income to those involved, although set aside might be expected to raise the level of interest somewhat.

In general, non-farming ventures tend to be short lived and 78% of farmers said they had no plans to apply for a diversification grant, which, when you recall that 40% of farmers already engage in non-farming ventures, clearly indicates that there is no huge new market to be tapped in this field, at least as expressed by farmers at present through that survey.

We concluded that to expect great recreational benefit to come out of direct commercial provision by farmers would be unrealistic. However, there are bound to be some incidental benefits in terms of new picnic sites set up to attract customers for the farm shop and so on, and the establishment of 'store tents' or camping barns.

What about land that will be acquired by bodies like the National Trust for conservation and access? In a changed outlook in agricultural terms there must be increased opportunities for that. But again, we do not see large areas of new land being thrown open for exclusive recreation or conservation use.

Indeed, we already have quite an impressive network of more than 450 country parks and picnic sites around the country - sites specifically designated over the past 20 years for recreational use by the public. They have an important job to do, particularly in providing for people whose age or family or physical circumstances restrict how well they can get around. They can be an ideal place for sports and other active uses of both land and water and for special events on a rural theme. They usually offer convenient parking, or access to public transport and other convenient facilities not found elsewhere in the countryside. So they encourage people from towns to come and have a

look and perhaps explore the area further if they like what they see. Country parks can act as a kind of gateway, both psychologically and physically, to experiencing the wider countryside.

There is a clear role for existing recreation sites, and there are certainly some parts of the country where more areas need to be established, but even so, we are not looking to see hundreds more country parks set up. For one thing that would be a very expensive strategy and, for another, our own survey figures reveal that most people actually prefer visiting the wider, living countryside.

So if site provision is playing a rather smaller part in our plans for the future, we would hope on the other hand to see much more rural land in multiple use, including for recreation and access.

Let me look at some of the possibilities for multiple use. Set aside land might provide one model where uncropped strips through farmland could open up new access routes to attractive spots like clifftops, viewpoints, watersides, with new roadside stopping spaces where people could join the footpath network, and so on.

Although the present scheme would not reward this kind of provision by farmers, in our survey 40% of farmers in the south east, 28% nationally, expressed some interest in receiving extra payments for allowing access onto set aside land. We are currently discussing with DOE whether there is any prospect of developing that concept. But there are difficulties - there would probably only be temporary benefits as the scheme itself is only temporary, with the attendant difficulties as to whether concessionary rights can readily be withdrawn at the end of the agreement.

A more permanent way of opening up attractive areas of land to public access is, of course, through the existing structure of commons, perhaps even by the creation of new commons. Commons are, after all, the best model for the truly multiple use of countryside, at least when they are well run.

This is not the place to rehearse the many compelling reasons why commons desperately need a new law to help achieve that balancing act. Our newspaper, Countryside Commission News, recently ran a feature on this. Suffice it to say that we regard the case for legislation on commons as overwhelming. We have just called upon Ministers to publish a White Paper by the end of this year and to reserve a firm place for the Bill in the 1989-90 Parliamentary session. To do so would protect commons from encroachment, ensure their proper management and give a right of public access on foot to well over one million acres of countryside in England and Wales.

There are other exciting opportunities for the multiple use of the countryside. The Countryside Commission's Forestry Policy, published last year, called for the adoption of a new policy which would not only aim to produce timber, sustain jobs and provide a productive alternative use for farmland, but would also enhance the landscape, enrich wildlife and increase opportunities for recreation and access. We argued for forestry strategies, tax incentives, advice grants and planning controls to encourage this concept and multiple use forestry. Some of our ideas at least have already found a favourable response in Government.

To demonstrate our own commitment to this concept we will be promoting the planting of forests on the edges of cities and major towns to provide much needed recreational opportunities for people living in large conurbations, though I have to say that the extent and speed that we do it at is going to depend very much upon the resources that we can attract from Government. We have also just appointed consultants to look into the prospects of creating a major new forest, roughly the size of the existing New Forest, covering some 150 square miles to be located somewhere in the English Midlands.

Another opportunity for extending access through multiple use lies in providing far greater public use of nature reserves. I acknowledge very quickly that the protection of the wildlife resource must take precedence, but we now have a lot of experience in projects developed with the County Naturalist Trusts up and down England and Wales to show how greater public access can be provided, without damage to wildlife, and thus widen public interest in nature conservation.

There are also opportunities as well as dangers, which I think many of you are aware of, in the Government's proposals to privatise Water Authorities by the end of next year. Between them the Authorities own something like 450,000 acres of land, much of it of high landscape and access value in our National Parks; I think 15% of the Peak District is owned by the Water Authorities, and 8% of the Lake District.

After privatisation most of the land will pass with statutory responsibilities for conservation and recreation to the new PLCs. But, clearly, the danger is that pressure for financial returns will overshadow the benefits to the public. So the Countryside Commission will be aiming not only to have the existing Section 48 requirements in the 1981 Act applied to the new PLCs but to have those duties and responsibilities towards conservation and recreation strengthened.

So we see scope for extending public access to the countryside through multiple use on agricultural land, on commons, in forests, in nature reserves and on Water Authority land. But what of the largest example of multiple use countryside and potentially the element that links and unifies all the others - the rights of way system?

Right at the start of this talk I referred to our countryside being in a sense rather secret and inaccessible, which may seem odd when there are 135,000 miles of rights of way. I should say here that one of the Countryside Commission's greatest achievements in the past year was to discover another 15,000 miles of rights of way that we did not know existed. So the figure we now have to quote is 135,000 miles which, I believe, is the equivalent of five times round the globe. Yet, in fact, large parts of that 135,000 miles are, in practical terms, secret and inaccessible with paths that used to be used by families to get around the local countryside, often now fit only for those with a good eye for a map, a pioneering spirit and a machete.

Our national rights of way sample survey will reveal the detailed picture soon, but I would not be surprised if it told a sorry tale of locked gates, missing stiles and bridges, paths full of corn or oilseed rape, jungle stretches requiring the full machete treatment and routes

that suddenly disappear across front lawns guarded by very fierce Yorkshire terriers – not exactly calculated to make the average family feel at home walking their local paths.

In our own household surveys we have found that more than half of those who expressed a view on the matter thought that most rights of way were too difficult to use, although only 1% thought there were more paths than were needed. In effect, few people will cross a gate or a fence unless there is a positive invitation to do so. We are not by nature a race of trespassers. Only one in eight people had ever actually attempted to walk a route which was not clearly waymarked.

It was against that type of background that the Countryside Commission set its ambitious targets in the 'Enjoying the Countryside' documents which were published just over a year ago. We said, you will recall, that the entire rights of way network should be legally defined, properly maintained and well publicised by the year 2000. I referred to that as a Countryside Commission target but we suggest it should really be a target for the community at large. Every local authority and every other organisation concerned should see that as a target for the nation.

We made two other points about rights of way. We said that it should be easier to make minor and non-contentious changes to the system where they benefit both the farmer and the user. We have expanded upon this in our recent discussion paper on changing the rights of way network which is out for comment until the end of this month. I have no doubt we shall receive a lot of strong views about that.

Secondly, we identified the need for local networks – well waymarked and maintained routes throughout the countryside giving ready access from towns and linking points of interest, coordinated with accommodation, car parks, publicity, local guides and so on and quite possibly extending outwards from established recreation sites such as country parks or picnic sites – country parks again as gateways to the countryside.

Implementing our ideas for rights of way could offer some limited financial benefits to farmers. As I said earlier many are increasingly involved in agricultural contracting; this accounts for half of their current diversified activities. Obviously farmers will not and should not be paid to meet their legal obligations to leave rights of way unobstructed. But, there is no good reason why farmers who wish should not undertake contract path maintenance for highway authorities. I believe this is not dissimilar from what is done with snow ploughing in certain areas where farmers are contracted by the local authority to keep the roads free of snow. We shall be setting up some experiments to test this idea.

Our recent survey of highway authorities shows how little they spend now on keeping the rights of way system usable. Most spend less than £50,000 a year on capital projects and maintenance. That is often heavily dependent on the use of the Community Programme. The recent termination of the Community Programme has, I believe, struck a grievous blow at the manpower resources available to highway authorities to help maintain and restore rights of way. That is bound to be a major preoccupation of the Countryside Commission in the months

ahead. We plan to gather experience of the impact of the new Employment Training, assess it and make our views known to Ministers. However, please be in no doubt, local authority listeners in particular, that the Countryside Commission believes, Community Programme or not, that you should in any case spend more on your rights of way and give them much more attention.

Rights of way are not just a local resource of course. The 13 long distance routes so far designated by the Countryside Commission, and many other unofficial long distance routes, show how existing public highways can be linked together and promoted so as to provide a regional or national resource. Long distance routes are potentially a considerable tourist asset, but to date the name has tended to conjure up an image of use only by dedicated hikers, so we would prefer a name that conveys the national importance of the routes and their potential attraction to the public as a whole, not just to those walking the whole length but to those using sections of the route. So we have suggested 'national trails', which has been canvassed with some success, but we are still open to alternative suggestions if somebody can think of something better.

Whatever we call them, our proposals for paths, routes and trails include outlines for major new routes, including the Thames Path, Hadrian's Wall Path and a 250 mile bridleway to parallel the Pennine Way. We go on to outline ten possibles from which a further selection will be made. The speed at which the work can be done will depend on resources, primarily the resources in this case which are made available by the Government to the Countryside Commission. The Countryside Commission will take the lead in developing the routes as we have in the past, meeting 75% of the maintenance cost of the trails designated. We have previously met 100% but we think that 75% support for maintenance is not unreasonable. We are also looking at the possibilities for commercial sponsorship of development costs and we are preparing a new series of guide books on existing routes.

PUTTING IDEAS INTO PRACTICE

Implementing the ideas in this paper calls for a planned and coordinated approach to the development of opportunities for recreation and the local countryside. Our 'Enjoying the Countryside' policy document says that local authorities and other public bodies should take stock of current and potential recreation opportunities and prepare a suitable strategy which sets long term objectives and short term priorities as a basis for detailed programmes of work. We are calling for a systematic and planned approach to the provision for recreation.

In fact the ideal countryside strategy might go considerably wider than this and embrace social and economic development, landscape, nature conservation, informal recreation and so on. The main point is that the Countryside Commission's grant aid to local authorities, in particular, is increasingly being geared to programmes of work within such a strategic framework, rather than to piecemeal projects considered ad hoc. I know from talking to our own regional officers that many of the local authorities – not only counties but also some of the districts – have responded with enthusiasm to that approach.

The more popular an area, the more potential there is for conflict between different recreational activities, and between recreation and other interests in the land, including its landscape and wildlife importance. To help resolve these conflicts the Countryside Commission has advocated the extension of countryside management programmes to all the key countryside recreational areas, heritage coasts, major urban fringes, green belts, and the heavily used Areas of Outstanding Natural Beauty.

In all this we see the work of countryside management staff, rights of way staff and rangers becoming more closely integrated. After all, in a sense, they are all trying to achieve much the same thing. Particularly we are keen to see ranger services becoming more involved with the management of the wider countryside, especially the areas around recreation sites. This will take time and training but we think it is an inevitable development.

CONCLUSION

Well that is a very rapid review of a very big field to which the Countryside Commission is already devoting more attention and plans to commit more resources, particularly if we are able to persuade our paymasters in the Department of Environment to allow our funds to grow in real terms.

Indeed, the success of our efforts and the realisation of the targets we have set will depend as much upon others in central and local government and among private landowners too. The key must be to raise the level of political awareness, at all levels, of the importance of access to the countryside. It has a complementary relationship to conservation. It has direct relevance to the rural economy. It is significant in terms of rural land management. And it has important implications for those who farm the countryside. So building the political constituency for countryside access, making those links and connections, rather than fine tuning the policies or refining the management techniques, seems to us to be the biggest challenge before those who seek to realise the opportunities.

DISCUSSION

G Hill (ADAS)

The floor is now open for questions to both speakers. Colin Spedding concentrated on the wider aspects of land use change in Britain and looked at land set aside and what that could mean in terms of land prices; at the effect on the agricultural industry in terms of output and employment; the wider issues. Adrian Phillips looked mainly at recreational uses; certainly the multiplicity of land uses which the Countryside Commission sees as going hand in hand with change.

J Evans (Farmer)

My question is to Adrian Phillips. With regard to recreation, we have heard a tremendous amount about what the Countryside Commission is going to do, but what does recreation mean to people? Also, what are people's specific recreational needs when they come to the countryside? We have heard a lot about access and the variety of interests in the countryside, but can you be more specific about the balance between farmers' interests and those of the public, and what recreation really means, not merely in a semantic way, to the 18.5 million people who come to the countryside on a Sunday afternoon?

A Phillips

Many of those 18 million people will be going to a site set aside for organised recreation in the countryside, many will be going to the coast and so on. However, some of them – 3.5 million I think it is from our own figures – want to use the rights of way network. So a proportion of the total of 18 million have a very explicit desire to explore the countryside, in the sense that they want to use a map, get out in the countryside, commune more with nature. They want to be closer to what the countryside has to offer.

It is that sensitivity to what the countryside has, the desire to explore it and discover it, which we think, from various researches we have done, is probably the sector which is growing most rapidly. A large part of our strategy is orientated towards catering for that demand.

RO Smith (Isle of Wight County Council)

Colin Spedding, in the set aside programme the Minister left out the grazing option. Is there any possibility he could be forced, requested or pressured to change his opinion?

CRW Spedding

I have no idea about that, but I can tell you what I think about the set aside option. I think it has presented a remarkable opportunity for the nation to explore all the alternatives in which it is interested. I think it would have been a splendid opportunity for agriculturalists and those interested in different aspects of the countryside to get together and say, "This is how we would like to see the countryside used, let us try it out in these set aside areas".

Farmers could have tried out some of the new enterprises, for example. They have a problem at the moment in that you cannot say to a farmer in economic difficulty, "Try out this new enterprise and see if it works or not". You really have to take that enterprise quite a long way and demonstrate on a reasonable scale that it works, that it is profitable, productive and so on and then he may copy it. As a means of exploring the alternative land uses of interest to agriculture, set aside could have been a wonderful opportunity.

In some of those cases other organisations like the Royal Society for the Protection of Birds would have said that they were interested in that kind of use from a bird point of view and would have wanted to study the effects of that. Other people, at another extreme, could say, "Let us put it aside and leave it alone, that is what we want, some real wild country". We could have done that and seen what were the results.

Part of the difficulty with the debate at the moment is that a lot of people are asking for new uses of the countryside from their own points of view without much idea of what effect it would have in total. I think across the whole range we could have had a national debate about different ways of using the countryside. We could have used the set aside areas all over the country as examples where people could have seen what they wanted to see developing and how it worked out - and some of those would have been extensive grazing.

AM Houghton (CEAS Consultants (Wye) Ltd)

I would like to take up some of those points and make a point about strategy and tactics. Both papers addressed issues of strategy, and Colin Spedding spoke about considering more tactics.

I would agree with the general consensus that agricultural land is in surplus production and we will see it come out of production. But, the big question is where, when and how? I think there is a lot of misconception about those issues. With regard to the 'where' we talk about marginal land; I always talk about marginal farmers which are not necessarily the same thing. We need to understand our UK tactics as well as the European tactics because suddenly, within the past eight months, we have seen an EEC debate and political expediency in the setting up of the regulations for set aside.

Earlier today people have mentioned 1992 and the Single European Act as if it is all going to be very harmonised. In fact, what will happen in 1992 is that there will be greater flexibility and deregulation by each country and it will be less harmonised. We are moving towards a less harmonised agricultural and rural policy rather than a more harmonised policy.

So the question is where that land will come out of production because the Common Agricultural Policy will still dictate prices for land and land products across Europe, but the actual regulations for taking land out will be different in each country.

My point is that we need to understand, in much greater detail, the instruments that we are using and proposing to use. And it is in the detail that we see in the UK set aside with a 20% minimum arable

land, but no maximum. You can take all the land out and that is where it is going to be economically interesting for some farmers. In France you have 20% minimum but a 30% maximum, so the economics are completely different and the options are different.

My challenge to the Conference today is very much to take on board, looking at the details of the tactics and understanding the very details of these instruments, because they will be translated into policy by individual farm businesses who are the principal landowners, as the last speaker suggested, according to their own individual circumstances. We have to understand not only the economics but the motivation in response to those tactics.

CRW Spedding

Could I just make one quick comment about tactics. I entirely agree with that and what I was trying to say was that we need theoretical studies, of course, but we need more than that. We actually need to try out some things because we do not know what the consequences will be. Some of the people advocating particular solutions do not know whether they would like the consequences.

What I wanted to add was that I think it is a great mistake ever to think that there will be any major panacea, any one solution, to any of these problems, or that we would be able to work out what it is and what effects it would have. I am not advocating an exploration of a lot of different things in order to focus on one. I really do believe that we would be better off with a package of measures. With practically every one proposed, the Environmentally Sensitive Areas for example, people argue about the take up and whether it will be a sufficiently big solution to the size of the problem. I think in our current ignorance about any one of these solutions, it will be better to go for a package which can be more readily adjusted.

H Oliver-Bellasis (Hampshire Farmer)

My question is with regard to access. Adrian Phillips quite rightly said that the public are very concerned about the countryside and he made a plea for those footpaths which are currently blocked and are impassable. I feel his comments were somewhat dismissive of the fact that to maintain footpaths is very expensive.

I actually speak with some experience because I look after 26 miles of them. I have to replace the stiles and, more importantly, I have actually to replace those things that are taken or broken because 35,000 people travel through those 26 miles of footpaths every year. The fact is that the people who use those footpaths are remarkably shy about offering assistance in any form at all in helping me to look after those footpaths in the way that I feel that Adrian Phillips is suggesting.

Also there is some evidence, certainly from the work that has been done lately, that access to the countryside through the footpath network is not necessarily complementary to conservation. He said that access was complementary. There are species within the countryside that are quite definitely harmed by too many people.

There is also a further problem in that footpaths were actually designed not to cater for the public to go into the countryside – and I accept that necessity as a farmer because that is the age we live in – but more particularly to allow the business of the farm, at whatever scale, to operate. Another point I would like to make is that under the 1981 Wildlife and Countryside Act there is a burden of responsibility on county councils to reclassify Roads used as a Public Path to Byeways open to all Traffic. Now politically I do not know why that was done. All I can tell you is that in my area that will stop those paths which are currently bridlepaths being used by the people who wish to use them for horses and for communicating between where they keep their horse and and where they need to go to have a sensible ride. They will be used by cross country motorbikes and by the four wheel drive clubs and so on. They will be cut up and I will then have to put them back which is a further cost, so that my farm machinery does not lose the wheels off its trailers.

The point I want to put to Adrian Phillips is this: we need to consider, with the people who manage the countryside, ie, the farmers, whether in fact it is even sustainable to make the sort of comments that he has made about access. Personally, I am not anti-access but I do have a major problem in what that access means to me as the person who actually carries the can.

A Phillips

You have referred a number of times to these problems and I am very aware that you farm in an area near Basingstoke which is under considerable pressure. The conflicts you have talked about, conflicts between your interests and the users' interests, conflicts between access and conservation, are all real. In a sense what we all have to do is to work together to find some solutions. I know that sounds like a general panacea, so to be more precise we certainly think that local authorities are going to have to spend more money on rights of way. In fact if there is one thing that comes out already from the responses to the consultation and discussion documents that we put out on modifying rights of way, it is the widely held view that solutions to many of the conflicts lie in local authorities, as highway authorities, giving more attention to access matters. As I have said, that has been made much more difficult because of the demise of the Community Programme.

Secondly, I did acknowledge, and I think we want to work on this, that there may be ways in which, through developing a contract role for farmers in maintaining rights of way on behalf of the local authorities, they can receive some recompense which can, to some extent, compensate for the inconvenience and irritation that greater access to the land involves.

With regard to conservation of wildlife and access, of course they can be in conflict, but they are not inevitably in conflict. I believe, for example, that in the recent work we have been trying to do in a very difficult area, access to grouse moor commons, we have come up with a solution which should protect the variety of interests. Everyone's interests are not fulfilled entirely, but it is a reasonable compromise and certainly will be beneficial to conservation.

I think the long and the short of it all is that the problems are there and unless we, as a community, collectively, spend more on trying to resolve them, give access problems greater attention, they will grow and become of greater difficulty to people in your position. So my message is a plea for the whole issue to be given greater prominence and greater resources.

P Trevelyan (ABT Consultancy)

Following that last question I have to declare an interest, which is that I am the Technical Director of the survey that the Countryside Commission has initiated into public rights of way.

There is a general question I want to put to our two speakers. I feel that there is an understanding among academic circles that fiscal policy is now a very important determinant of the type of countryside we have and the change that is taking place. From their dealings with politicians and in the corridors of power, is it recognised in those circles that fiscal policy does have such an effect? Once we have that established, you will then have the lever to get the resources to effect the type of changes you want.

CRW Spedding

I do not know whether there is sufficient awareness of that point. I think the awareness has been growing, but the trouble with the political arena and decision making is that whatever sensible thinking you may develop, the results may be overridden by political considerations. So, even if you get sensible thinking going on, it does not necessarily affect the decisions that are taken.

I do believe that there is far too little thinking about the future in government departments. Politicians have a rather short timespan and are not really very interested in the long term. Civil servants tend to be under great pressure to deal with the problems of today and hardly have the time for looking ahead. I really believe that what is required is that much more thinking should be done about the use of policy instruments to produce the effects that we want, but in addition, to examine the likely implications of the policy instruments that are being put into place, because that is an equal problem.

If you try to press the first issue amongst civil servants you tend to get the response, "Oh, we cannot predict the future, it is a waste of time" or "You are trying to impose very firm planning where we believe planning is inappropriate, we want a more free market situation" or "You do not understand how a sudden development elsewhere in the world can override all our considerations and blow us off course. We are not in the luxurious position of being able to say that is the way we want to go, a lot of the financial considerations are born in Brussels and not determined in this country".

However, I do not see how they can really wriggle off the second question, which is that you ought to examine all the implications for the countryside and the environment of the instruments you are just about to put in place for other reasons.

A Phillips

There is no doubt at all that the effect of fiscal policy has impacts on all the sorts of things you have been talking about. It affects individuals and how they spend their money, what their investment strategies are, and so on. A couple of years ago we were in discussion with the Treasury and others about the possibility of using the fiscal instrument much more widely to secure our objectives. But the door was very firmly shut on this. The Treasury do not, on the whole, and I will come back to what is meant by on the whole, see fiscal policy as an instrument for pursuing other social objectives - basically it is about raising money for revenue to be spent.

The exception is the inheritance tax legislation which was put in place in 1976. This is used very widely, as many of you are aware, to secure conservation objectives and, to a limited extent, to secure access objectives too. But that is a very specific example and I think at present the Treasury would resist strongly the idea of using fiscal mechanisms in general to secure conservation objectives in the countryside. That may be regrettable but that appears to be the situation.

R Bull (Countryside Commission)

I am very interested in the relationship between the costs and the use of nitrogen and the amount of land that might become available in the future. I hesitate to ask Colin Spedding to speculate or perhaps to forecast the use of nitrogen, but he mentioned that subject so I wonder if he could take it a little bit further.

CRW Spedding

It is a very big subject. The fact is that nitrogen is used in vast quantities because it is a very cheap and a very certain way of increasing production. It overrides all kinds of other things. As compared, for example in grassland, with getting your nitrogen through clover, it is much more certain.

It is not surprising that since it was available cheaply and had such a certain effect, it was used in a very widespread fashion. Because it is so cheap you would have to put an enormous tax on it or raise the price substantially to have any very large effect on usage. It would be more sensible if, for example, you were concerned with nitrate pollution in groundwater, to determine the areas in which agricultural use of nitrogen was actually the culprit and that it was current usage that would make any difference as distinct from what was put in 30 years ago and is still working through. Taking all that into account, you could say that in that region we want to limit the amount of nitrogenous fertiliser usage to a defined figure, and actually impose that restriction in that area rather than come at it by a method which would be blunt, unreliable and apply too widely, and probably distort the agricultural scene unnecessarily. I stress that I believe that the action then proposed would be quite specific to particular areas.

G Hill

It falls to me now to wind up this whole morning session. I think that you would agree with me that it has been extremely stimulating and thought provoking. All the three papers have fitted extremely well together in drawing attention to the very, very big problems that we have to overcome in the countryside and the various ways in which we could tackle it. I certainly like the idea that Colin Spedding put forward very near the end that these things ought to be looked upon as a package of measures which farmers could pick up and mix, if you like, in order to meet their circumstances and, equally, other sections of the community could pick up and mix to meet theirs.

Somewhere along the line we have got to come together more and more. I feel that this Conference could very well be pointing the direction that we are going to go. Thank you very much indeed and I hope you will join with me in thanking our three speakers very much for their contributions this morning.

INTRODUCTION

At this stage of the Conference delegates were able to choose to attend two of the eight different Workshop sessions. Roger Clarke, the CRRAG Chairman, made a brief introduction, explaining that the purpose of the Workshops was to look in detail at particular recreational activities from two points of view: what were the opportunities or consequences for the farmers who might embark on some of these activities; and secondly, what were the opportunities or problems from the recreationists' point of view.

This section of the Conference Proceedings gives a summary paper for each of the Workshop sessions. The Workshops encouraged participation, and the main points of the discussions were noted, but have not been included in the publication. Copies of discussion notes are available on request from the CRRAG Secretary, School for Advanced Urban Studies, Rodney Lodge, Grange Road, Bristol, BS8 4EA.

During the evening, a number of impromptu 'fringe events' were put on. The aim was that delegates who had some information to disseminate, or who wished to discuss a certain topic should volunteer to lead an event. This was a new venture for the Countryside Recreation Conference, and was thought to be successful both in terms of the number of delegates who volunteered to lead events, and the number who attended. As these were informal groups, there are no reports in this publication, but the following events took place:

Wildlife as a Recreational Resource - led by Bridget Smith, Nature Conservancy Council

County Hall or High Street - How are Countryside Management Services Going to be Organised in the Future? - led by Richard Graves, Hereford and Worcester County Council

Boating and Ecology - led by Alan Inder, Hampshire County Council

Pedestrian Counters - led by Glen Millar, British Waterways Board

The Ethics or Ideologies of Rights of Way - led by Jim Saunders, Project Officer for Offa's Dyke National Trail

How Local Authorities might Respond to Agricultural Change - led by Ken Taylor, Laurence Gould Associates

FIELDSPORTS

Hugh Oliver-Bellasis

Hampshire Farmer

BACKGROUND

Fieldsports can be defined as fishing (game and coarse), shooting (small game, pigeons, rabbits), hunting (fox, deer), coursing (hares), falconry (small game) and stalking (deer).

Fieldsports have been a traditional land use for many centuries. Years ago these sports were restricted to monarchs and the nobility, today they are enjoyed by a large cross section of the population. Fieldsports rely on the ability of the owner of the land to provide a quarry and subsequently allow someone to hunt it. Hunt here is used in the European sense. In some cases the quarry (fox, rabbit, pigeon, deer), needs to be controlled since the damage it would do would inhibit forestry and agricultural crops. The quarry in other cases can be harvested to provide an economic return. The species, therefore, if properly managed, will provide revenue and enjoyment to participants. With pressure from the EEC to reduce production, do fieldsports produce a realistic alternative income?

ISSUES

The following are the main issues that need to be addressed by those investigating fieldsports as a recreational land use.

(a) Management

The management of the countryside is a costly business, which in most cases costs farmers money which produces no immediate financial return (eg, hedge cutting, grass verge cutting, management of uncropped areas). Fieldsports produce a quantifiable motivation for farmers to manage to benefit quarry species. Research shows quite clearly that management of both cropped and uncropped areas for quarry species benefits both landscape and flora and fauna, which otherwise produce a negative return (eg, grouse moors, deer forests, cereal crops, conservation headlands and field margins).

(b) Access

Access produces a dilemma. The current footpath/bridlepath structure benefits neither the farmer nor the public, who wish to enjoy the countryside. On the one hand the footpath system is outdated and in need or reorganisation to enable circular routes to be walked, and farmers to manage those paths. However, some user organisations fail to recognise the realities of the current footpath system, and oppose alterations because they perceive this as opposition to access. This in turn antagonises landowners. There

is also the necessity to restrict certain access at key times of the year, for either reasons of disturbance of nesting birds or safety (eg, deer cull).

(c) Ownership

Surely the landowner should be entitled to the freedom of choice, whether encouraging fieldsports or not, especially since management of the land holding for fieldsports enhances the variety of wildlife.

(d) Economy

The Standing Conference Cobham Report highlights the economic advantages of fieldsports. Much of the benefit is indirect (eg, farriers, saddlers, horse breeding, show jumping, three day eventing). All of these are significantly assisted by hunting. The same is true of all the other sports. Grouse moor management guarantees the survival of heather moorland, (see Porter, Royal Society for the Protection of Birds). Farmers are looking for alternative income sources and fieldsports produce income and enhance the countryside and people's enjoyment of it.

(e) Morality

There is much hypocrisy surrounding the moral argument about fieldsports. The moral issue of fieldsports should not be judged until the person has weighed up the management benefits arising from those sports. The cruelty of fieldsports is often cited against them – are they more cruel than a pride of lions killing a gnu to survive? There are those who argue that control of predators of quarry species is immoral, because it is manipulating nature. Is the control of predators any different to controlling disease in livestock, or insect pests of cereals or trees? This is especially important since these predators are not selective and kill other species, which are non-quarry (eg, squirrels and trees). Finally, man is manipulating nature in many different ways, why should predator control be any less acceptable?

Fieldsports are a traditional practice in the countryside, enjoyed by a wide cross section of the population. They provide motivation to manage and some direct income to landowners/farmers. They provide enjoyment for a significant number of people (eg, 4 million fishermen). They provide the guaranteed survival of species, which might otherwise either disappear, or reach pest proportions.

Chaired by Jeremy Worth, Countryside Commission

Report back by Bridget Smith, Nature Conservancy Council

MAJOR TOURISM ATTRACTIONS

Clive Gordon

Director of Development, Center Parcs (UK) Ltd

This workshop session was about Center Parcs (UK) Ltd's approach to the provision of large scale tourist facilities, with particular reference to the Sherwood Forest Holiday Village.

Setting the scene for his talk, the speaker reminded delegates that tourism was now the fastest growing sector of the economy, and was on course to be the leading industry of the 1990s. He highlighted the more frequent merging of leisure and retail activities as part of that trend, and referred to increased demand for high quality provision. Growth in the short break holiday market was also noted as a significant feature of the industry at the moment.

With 20 years experience behind it, the Dutch based Center Parcs company now had a British based subsidiary, Center Parcs (UK) Ltd. There were currently eight holiday villages run by Center Parcs in Holland, two in Belgium, one in France, one in Germany and one in Britain - the Sherwood Forest Holiday Village - with another in construction at Elvedon and five more proposed for development by the UK company during the next five years.

The Sherwood Forest Holiday Village occupies a 400 acre site on land acquired from the Forestry Commission, just off the A614, north of Nottingham. In a coniferous woodland setting, the Center Parcs developers have created a £45 million holiday village complex with many facilities. The speaker showed slides to illustrate some of the facilities provided within the 'secure environment' of Sherwood Forest: villa accommodation for 3,500 people in 700 units of various sizes; access roads and other essential utility services; three miles of landscaped water features and a 15 acre lake, complete with beach; the central car park where cars remain except for loading and unloading on arrival and departure (2,000 cycles are available for hire); a sports facilities complex, linked to shops and administrative buildings; the 'sub-tropical swimming paradise' under its geodetic dome; a nature trail and facilities for angling, cycling, boating and pony trekking; and the continental cafe style village square.

In all aspects of design and development, Center Parcs' aim has been to provide a high quality, peaceful environment, in which people can feel 'close to nature'. This special relationship between people and their environment was presented as a fundamental feature of the developers' approach, from conceptual planning stages, right through to marketing and management. The Center Parcs approach appears to have been successful, not least in commercial terms, with almost 100% occupancy all the year round, rewarded with a British Tourist Authority 'Come to Britain' Trophy in 1987.

Tourism is clearly big business in the Sherwood Forest area now - not just at the Holiday Village, but at neighbouring stately homes, country parks, and leisure provisions of various kinds, most attracting

substantial visitor numbers. The speaker saw scope to extend considerably the area's leisure market potential. Indeed, with growing pressures to deintensify agriculture, and continuing decline in the area's mining activity, a successful tourist industry was now seen as crucial to the social and economic future of the area. With thoughtful planning and management, it was suggested that investment in tourism could be undertaken with environmental gains rather than losses.

Chaired by Alan Inder, Hampshire County Council

Report back by Richard Ferguson, Countryside Commission for Scotland

PICK YOUR OWN AND FARM SHOPS

Peter Clarke

Oxford Pick Your Own Farm

Pick your owns and farm shops provide a valuable leisure activity in the countryside and are certainly more than the 'lunatic fringe of greengrocery' as they were once described by an MP. The opportunity which they provide to visit a farm, have free access to the fields, and take home fresh, local produce, fits in well with many people's lifestyles. This form of farm retailing was an early type of agricultural diversification, long before it became fashionable, and has helped many farm businesses to survive and maintain employment in rural areas.

The speaker felt that in many areas the market for pick your own crops was fully supplied and in certain regions production was in excess of demand. Farm shops, however, seemed to provide an area for expansion as, to a greater extent, they met the current consumer demand for convenience.

To develop a profitable pick your own or farm shop venture several basic requirements have to be met. These include:

(a) location near a large centre of population;
(b) good access to a public road;
(c) land of suitable agricultural quality for the product to be produced;
(d) management and staff willing and able to deal with the general public on the farm;
(e) access to considerable capital for investment especially in the case of pick your own which has a negative cash flow in the early years;
(f) freedom from excessive local competition.

As a pick your own unit only sells produce grown on the farm it does not require planning permission. Most units, however, need roadside signs and obtaining permission for these can be difficult. In order to maintain continuity of supply, and provide the sort of product range that will attract enough customers to make the enterprise viable, most farm shops have to buy in some goods for resale. This activity required planning permission and a long and expensive campaign has often been needed in the past to obtain consent. However, now that central government has given strong support to this, and other forms of agricultural diversification, we hope that local government will also see the benefits involved.

Although most farmers who start in pick your own and farm shops are seeking an improved form of food marketing, this often leads to further diversification into other rural leisure activities such as fishing, picnic areas, catering, farm zoos, farm trails, craft centres, etc. These activities can attract extra custom for the farm retail business and in some cases generate income themselves.

The most common way in which farm shops and pick your owns advertise is through advertisements in local newspapers, leaflet drops and local radio. In many areas growers have joined together for joint promotional efforts such as public relations activity, generic advertising of soft fruits and publicity stunts such as trying to beat the record for the world's largest bowl of strawberries and cream!

The speaker said that his own pick your own business began in 1980 when he went into partnership with a large arable farmer near Oxford. This unit has now expanded to cover over 75 acres (30 hectares) and produces over 60 crops during an 18 week marketing season. In 1984 he obtained the tenancy of a small, run down farm just to the west of London which has now been developed into a viable pick your own business. He also acts as managing agent for a pick your own unit near Birmingham on a large estate with a number of tourist attractions such as a craft centre, adventure playground and farm trail.

Chaired by Jan Fladmark, Countryside Commission for Scotland

Report back by Richard Broadhurst, Forestry Commission

WHAT IS RURAL TOURISM?

Bernard Lane

Director, The University of Bristol Rural Tourism Development Project

The nineteenth century origins of the modern tourism industry were essentially urban in character. Spas and seaside resorts became railway destinations for the burgeoning industrial population. In the twentieth century, air and car based tourism has continued this urban trend. Large sun belt settlements service visitors to the Mediterranean. Alpine ski resorts are clearly urban despite the rural pretentions of their pastiche vernacular architecture. Winter city breaks are becoming ever more popular - even Bradford is now a place to visit.

In Britain, as elsewhere, rural tourism has made some progress, helped by rising levels of car ownership. But much rural tourism is curiously urban in character. The country parks of the 1968 Countryside Act, and their modern free market equivalents, the theme or leisure parks, are transplantations of an urban victorian park concept. They are rural in location partly because of high city land prices and partly because many families enjoy a rural car journey to their leisure destination. But, rural communities still do not relate easily to visitors, fearing loss of control over their lifestyles and their environments. Modern tourism is often large scale and does not integrate into rural economies and society. Visitors are transitory, taking much but putting back little in financial or other terms. Control of the tourist trade is usually remote and urban be it by National Park Authority, Tourist Board or distant developer or hotel chain.

Nevertheless, it has become common throughout Britain, Europe and beyond to see tourism as a vital tool for the preservation and enhancement of the rural world. In Britain this view was given official recognition in the English Tourist Board's 1988 document 'Visitors in the Countryside'. This work combined the thinking of many government departments and quangos to create an outline strategy for rural tourism in the future. What it did not do was to define rural tourism.

Does rural tourism have special intrinsic qualities? Or, is it simply tourism in a rural location? Of the four main contributors to 'Visitors in the Countryside', none have tackled this issue. The Rural Development Commission has seen tourism largely as a way of transferring jobs and income to the countryside. The Countryside Commission has been interested mainly in conserving fine landscapes for the visitor to admire. The English Tourist Board has been involved chiefly in large scale projects - inevitably, given its national remit and limited funding. Its overriding aim is to increase the numbers of tourists; large projects help to ensure that this goal is achieved. The Ministry of Agriculture, a new actor on the rural tourism stage, wants visitors to help diversify and improve farm incomes.

What are the features which rural tourism must possess to be truly rural? Smallness of scale is an obvious parameter. Closeness to nature, absence of crowds, quietness and a non-mechanised environment are clear necessities. Personal contact - the antithesis of urban anonymity -

must be important. A sense of continuity and stability, of long and living history, is another contender for inclusion. The possibility of getting to know an area and its people well is a special quality of the rural environment. And for any rural community, retention of individual identity is important, as also is local control - by manor house, farm, business or council.

Can these inherent countryside qualities be part of rural tourism? It is clear from Countryside Commission surveys that they are the qualities which many visitors seek, but very often they are sought unsuccessfully. So far, much so called 'green tourism' is green only in its location. It is not green in an ecological sense. Discussion of the ideas of green tourism has not been widespread in Britain. In Europe, however, the position is different. Tourists have made a considerable impact on some continental rural regions - notably the Alps. As a result, the 1980s have seen far reaching discussions of alternative tourism referred to by German writers as 'sanfter tourismus' and by the French as 'tourisme doux' - both terms generally being translated as 'soft tourism' (as against 'hard tourism').

Soft tourism is generally seen as being holistic in its approach, value rather than price conscious, socially and environmentally considerate and cautious, relying on small and slow developments by local interests. Farm economies are strengthened and retained rather than replaced. Existing buildings are re-used rather than being replaced by new buildings. 'Low tech', low rise, car free concepts are favoured. New kinds of tourists are sought - these visitors spend time on repeat visits to an area, looking for experiences rather than sights, seeking memories, recreation and new insights rather than postcards, souvenirs, and excitement. Sunshine is not important - but heritage, in all its forms, is important. The heritage may be cultural, culinary, historical or artistic. Slow, traditional forms of transport - and above all, walking - are encouraged.

The leading writer on soft tourism in Europe is Jost Krippendorf of the University of Berne in Switzerland. Other key figures in the discussion have been Robert Jungk in Germany, Pierre Laine and Suzanne Thibal in France and Peter Hasslacher in Austria. A number of communities have already taken up the philosophies of the soft tourism movement. These include Waltensburg, Erschmatt and Gomstal in Switzerland, Bonneville and Les Karellis in France and Virgental in Austria.

Hard tourism is in some ways a mirror image of soft tourism. Hard tourism relies on mass rapid transport and develops large scale tourism complexes, funded and managed by non-local, indeed often international, companies. Projects are completed rapidly with little regard for long term environmental or social consequences. Many jobs may be created, but, the speed of their creation, their type and their seasonal nature often do little to help the local labour market. Typically, workers and managers are imported from distant towns or even from other countries: permanent or long term residency by the imported staff is rare.

Will soft tourism ever be able to compete against the hard sold world of the glossy multinational tourism giants? Krippendorf suggests that tourists are maturing in their holiday requirements and are beginning to find that mass tourism does not satisfy their recreational

needs. Soft tourism's appeal to health conscious, educated, environmentally aware individuals is increasing. In England, Countryside Commission surveys show considerable latent demand for soft tourism concepts in rural areas.

Can a truly rural tourism be developed in Britain, taking the best features from Europe's discussions? This is the task of the Bristol University Rural Tourism Development Project. First envisaged in 1980, the Project, based in the Department of Extra Mural Studies, learned much from a series of pioneering general rural community development courses launched in west country villages from 1984 onwards. These village based courses demonstrated that adult educators could have a role as animateurs in rural development, that communities could act as their own development agencies if well briefed, and that there was interest in, and a need for, an alternative form of tourism development.

Funded by the Rural Development Commission, the Countryside Commission, Barclays Bank and the Calouste Gulbenkian Foundation, the Tourism Project began work in January 1988. It has four main aims:

1. to gather together practical ideas from successful rural tourism experiments and enterprises, and publish these in a handbook;

2. to set up local community Rural Tourism Development Forums, bringing together a wide cross section of the community to discuss soft tourism strategies, development and market potential, local initiatives, etc;

3. to explore the role of animateurs in the Forums and to publish a 'Tutors' Guide' for future animateurs; and

4. to publish a newsletter, 'Green Tourism'.

Three Forums are already in being, at Blakeney in the Forest of Dean, in the Brit Valley in Dorset and at Dulverton in Somerset. New Forums are planned in Cumbria, Durham, Shropshire, Wiltshire and elsewhere. The Forums are working on a variety of initiatives including local and national marketing, brochure production, speciality weekend breaks, translation of materials, links to the European market, circular walks, links with local schools and churches, heritage interpretation, etc. Many important lessons for the future conduct of Forums have been learned: numerous ideas for successful soft tourism are still being tested.

Parallel with the work of village based Forums, a large number of case studies of rural tourism enterprises have been and are being assembled from world wide sources. In Britain, a postal questionnaire survey of attitudes to and methodology in rural tourism has been completed across the Rural Development Areas, Rural Community Councils, District and County Councils. Analysis of all this information will be undertaken over the winter of 1988/89.

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Chaired by Peter Ashcroft, Countryside Commission

Report back by Jack Wilkinson, Sports Council

SPORT AND ACTIVE RECREATION

Ken Taylor

Laurence Gould Consultants Limited

Laurence Gould Consultants Limited are specialist consultants in agriculture and land use and regularly undertake studies on behalf of private and public sector clients. In 1988, Laurence Gould Consultants Limited completed two projects which investigated the opportunities for sport and leisure activities presented by the current over production of agricultural products and the Government's policy of farm diversification.

One, sponsored by the Sports Council and the Ministry of Agriculture, investigated in detail 15 case studies where farmers had introduced a variety of sports enterprises onto their farms. The emphasis was to discover the difficulties encountered and benefits accrued both financially and otherwise.

The other project was undertaken solely for the Sports Council and has resulted in the production of a series of Guidance Notes on sports which could be suitable for a farm location. These are aimed at advisers rather than farmers, and it is hoped they will be of value to the Sports Council and National Farmers Union regional staff.

On the basis of the research and investigations completed in the course of these projects, it is possible to reach some tentative conclusions. Tentative because the amount of information upon which these conclusions can be drawn is limited, whilst, in contrast, the variety of farms and farmers is enormous. This variety is a great strength when seeking to attract the public, but it also makes it very difficult for advisers to lay down precise rules and guidelines.

While commenting on which sports provide opportunities for profit making by farmers, or clubs as tenants, it is worth bearing in mind that, despite the popular media image and the difficult financial circumstances they currently face, many farmers do not put maximisation of profit at the top of their priority list. The motivation for such diversifications from agriculture are seldom purely for profit. Some have a personal interest in their sport, or feel that it enhances the value of their holding or even provides employment opportunities for their family which farming can no longer supply.

A further consideration when assessing profitability is the return this provides on investment made, especially if opportunity costs are considered. The type of management system chosen or imposed is extremely important. If done in house the investment, of both time and money, can be significant; profits might be slow to build up; therefore returns to someone with cash flow problems could be regarded as poor. Alternatively, if the sport is normally operated through a club network, for example motorsports and football, the time and money commitment will probably be very small; returns in rent or share of income will not be great but could constitute an attractive rate of return on investment.

The more profitable enterprises in the study were found to include:

in house: clay pigeon shooting, sailing, golf ('primitive'), put 'n' take fishing

club: motocross, grass track, microlites.

Within the sample were several farmers who had linked their sports to other developments. These included racquet sports and swimming linked to accommodation; badminton and indoor games linked to accommodation and conference facilities; squash, tennis and water skiing linked to catering. The first two activities have shown profits. Although these are not yet substantial, prospects look good and farm values may have been enhanced.

A number of other sports apparently met a latent demand but still failed to show a net increase in farm profits. These included fitness training, self defence and airsports. If the demand for these sports is to be met by farmers or others, some type of financial support might be necessary to maintain an acceptable level of profitability.

Chaired by Howard Pearce, Sports Council

Report back by Paul Johnson, Countryside Commission

THE HISTORIC LANDSCAPE: A NEW APPROACH?

Dai Morgan Evans

English Heritage

The British countryside is a man made artefact thousands of years old. With the exception of a few areas there is nowhere on these islands where man's influence has not caused major physical changes in creating the landscape we live in today. The realisation of this special nature of the British countryside as a man made artefact is achieving wider recognition, but the implications for conservation and for recreation have still to be properly worked out. What does need to be explicitly acknowledged is that in our dealings with the countryside there is this historic dimension which is identifiable in its own right, although closely linked with nature and landscape conservation.

The physical elements which go to make up the concept of historic landscape include not only the more obvious historical features such as earthworks, ruins and below ground remains. The historic landscape also includes those natural features such as hedgerows, coppiced woodland, water meadows and so on. These are just as much the creation of man as the more generally accepted archaeological sites. From this basis it can be argued that the British countryside is one large artefact, and we can look at its value for recreation, although being clear that it is seen as an aspect of the wider countryside.

The resource of the historic landscape has several attributes which need to be considered when we consider its potential for recreation. First, as an aspect of the wider countryside it is extensive, that is, while it contains sites which may act as focal points, it needs to be approached in a non-site specific way. Second, the physical elements that form it generally have an extended season in terms of interest, compared for example with nature conservation. Third, the countryside defined as historic landscape is 'real'. Given the current backlash against the heritage nostalgia industry, it is worth quoting Professor Hoskins words in his introduction to the 'Making of the English Landscape' county series. He refers approvingly to books about the geology of the English landscape "for they deal with facts which are not given to the sentimental and formless slush which affects so many books concerned only with superficial appearances". He also says that "the English landscape itself, to those who know how to read it right, is the richest historical record we possess". In terms of recreation potential this approach is very important.

How do we attempt to define the potential market for this historic landscape resource? As an implicit aspect of the wider countryside this is difficult but an obvious start is the Countryside Commission's National Countryside Recreation Survey, 1984. The summary of people's motivations and interests contains a suitable warning and encouragement. "Most trips to the countryside are made because of the attraction of intrinsically countryside features... countryside visitors are very much creatures of habit and little influenced by marketing or publicity techniques... people's expression of wanting to go to the countryside more shows that there is much latent demand for countryside

recreation." If we examine the details of the report it is possible to argue that part of this demand can be tied in with historical elements in the countryside. It is clear that the unmanaged countryside attracts more visitors than the stately historic homes or other intensively managed types of site. What can be called the historic dimension does figure as one of the aspects of the countryside, and is one which is identified as having a potential for growth. It is interesting to compare the results of this survey with those from two field monuments, Maiden Castle near Dorchester and St Catherine's Hill near Winchester. In both places the main reason for visiting the site was for the general countryside experience, with the archaeology playing a minor role. The relative percentages of reasons for visiting the sites are roughly comparable in all cases. This raises a problem of what people understand by a countryside experience, and the 'sense of place' given by prehistoric earthworks must form a large part of the experience. It is also interesting to see that at Maiden Castle nearly three times the national percentage of socio-economic group AB people were visiting the site, and that the age group tended to exclude those aged 55 and over. This may be due to the greater physical exertion needed on this site. As a final warning one survey indicated that 51% of the visitors did not want improvements made to the presentation of the site. While the survey results are far from clear, the Countryside Commission survey does indicate the potential for more low key recreation in the countryside. While the historic element is more implicit than explicit it can be argued that it has, with other factors, a role to play, and that English Heritage should be looking at what it can do to enable this to happen.

The policy of English Heritage towards the wider countryside was announced in a speech by Lord Montagu in November 1987. The main objectives at the moment are to help land managers know what they have to deal with by advice on how to identify and manage the historic elements in the countryside, and also how to increase the public's understanding and enjoyment. In carrying out these objectives English Heritage has published 'Ancient Monuments in the Countryside', an archaeological management review, and 'Visitors Welcome' – a manual for the presentation and interpretation of archaeological excavations (this has wider applications). We have also launched a scheme of historic landscape survey grants for farmers wanting to diversify into farm tourism. A booklet for farmers on the historic landscape jointly produced with ADAS is in production. We are also committed to working on joint pilot schemes with the Countryside Commission and local authorities to see how recreation potential of the historic landscape might be realised in the context of the wider countryside.

Chaired by Alan Barber, Bristol City Council

Report back by Ian Rickson, British Tourist Authority/English Tourist Board

THE PUBLIC ON YOUR LAND – THE ESTATE PERSPECTIVE

Kenneth Royston

The Boughton Estates Ltd

The Boughton Estate, owned by the Duke of Buccleuch, is between Corby and Kettering in Northamptonshire. The Estate includes three large areas of woodlands, together with agricultural land and five villages. Approximately 0.75 million people live within 30 miles of the Estate and 1.5 million within 45 miles (ie, one hours drive).

Considerable access to the public already exists on the Estate, with activities including fieldsports (shooting and fox hunting), sponsored walks, orienteering, army exercises, police training, photography (permits issued), camping (youth organisations) and nature study. In addition, some of the woodland areas are open to the public, either with general access or by means of permits. There are 27.5 miles of public footpaths and 4.5 miles of bridleways, although it is estimated that only 24% of footpaths are used regularly at present. No charge is made for these informal uses of the Estate by the public, although costs are incurred through the need for the maintenance of rights of way etc.

New leisure markets have been identified, including:

(a) commercial caravanning and camping. This is encouraged by the local authority, but it requires considerable capital expenditure and may interfere with shooting;

(b) initiative and endurance camps. Interest in establishing these mainly as weekend camps for business executives has been shown locally; and

(c) educational activities, where, with the new curriculum and GCSE syllabus, there are likely to be more requirements for rural studies.

With an increasing local population, and improved accessibility, there is likely to be a rising demand for use of the Estate's woods in the future, given the lack of locally available woodland for public recreation and access. Possible future development for recreation and access could encompass all the five options or levels of involvement set out by Anton Irving in his book, 'The Public in your Woods', ranging from minimal involvement to very high involvement. In this, a balance has to be struck between all the enterprises carried out, including not only commercial woodland management, but also in the matter of compatibility with existing and ongoing objectives. Here the effects of this year's Finance Bill, which takes forestry out of the taxation system in April 1993, could have important repercussions. Initial calculations indicate that, unless any relief or grants are given for maintenance, the lowland broadleaved woodland owner will be adversely affected by this measure and, in order to minimise his loss, he will be obliged to look to other ways of obtaining a financial return from his woodland.

With regard to future development, the 'very high involvement' option of a Center Parcs type development has been discounted, at least for the present. Other areas of 'high' involvement under consideration include sophisticated chalet or caravan camp sites, and a village centre concept, incorporating a local craft theme. These options would involve high capital investment, and could be high risk in nature. Also such developments would mean that the commercial management of the woods might have to become a secondary consideration.

'Medium' involvement activities for which needs have been identified, such as car rallying, motocross, four wheel drive activities, war and adventure games, and equestrian pursuits, are not sufficiently financially lucrative, and would require the creation of more open spaces within the woods. However, there is considerably more scope for 'low' and 'minimal' involvement activities, such as the provision of basic toilets, water and catering, guided tours, educational facilities, fitness trails, archery, clay pigeon shooting, barbecue sites, and equestrian trails. The effects of such activities upon the present balance of shooting lets, commercial woodland management, vermin control, conservation and heritage must be considered in any developments.

Promotion of Boughton is essentially low key, limited in advertising terms to two roadside notices at wood entrances. The Living Landscape Trust, founded in 1985, is based at the Estate, with the purpose of providing a centre where all those with an interest in and concern for the countryside can foregather to see, hear, and discuss problems related to the present and future management of the countryside. The Trust issues promotional material and publishes booklets, leaflets and plans for educational purposes, and this is seen to be a growth area, particularly insofar as the younger generation is concerned.

In the future it seems likely that woodland owners who are prepared to promote access will have to make a conscious decision as to when they start advertising the facilities they can offer, and how much to charge. This has consequences for management. For example, at Boughton, the Estate's gamekeepers are increasingly assuming a public relations role, and greater formal instruction in public relations techniques and interpretation skills will be required in the future. However, such a policy can lead to abuse through increased damage, litter, car dumping and vandalism. To help control this, Boughton Estates, in conjunction with neighbouring landowners and the local police, have established a Poacher Watch scheme, similar to the town or village Neighbourhood Watch Schemes.

At the same time as public access is promoted, it is necessary to ensure that the Estate remains a viable commercial enterprise. This means that it will become necessary to start charging for entry in the near future, in the same way as charges are made to go to a football match. If the public wish to see a continuance of woodlands and the countryside as they exist now, they must realise that it costs money to maintain and sustain them.

At Boughton good relations have been developed with the local authorities and the various countryside agencies and pressure groups. At the same time however, the ever increasing plethora of countryside agencies and organisations available for advice, financial aid (and criticism) is bewildering and often frustrating to landowners.

In recent years there has already been a change in attitude by landowners and farmers in their approach to the public in terms of access and recreation. This is partly attributable to a self conscious attempt to demonstrate that media criticism is unfounded, but perhaps more to the fact that, as forestry and farming incomes decline, the provision of public access, recreation and tourism facilities is likely to become an increasing source of income to redress the adverse financial balance.

Chaired by Anton Irving, Nature Conservancy Council

Report back by Glen Millar, British Waterways Board

THE PUBLIC ON YOUR LAND – IN YOUR WOODS

Anton Irving

Nature Conservancy Council

This paper considers the recreation opportunities in small woodlands, which are taken to be under 50 hectares (125 acres). It is important to recognise that the recreational potential of woodland lies principally in its open areas as most activities do not use the stands of trees, except as a scenic backcloth. A large number of pursuits are possible in woodland but only a few actually require a wooded setting. The sports not feasible in woodland of under 50 hectares are orienteering and its non-competitive variant, wayfaring, as these need at least 300 hectares (700 acres). The range of activities possible in the smaller woodland are listed below and in addition to these landowners also may wish to consider the educational use of their woodland.

Informal activities:	children playing, cycling, dog walking, horse riding, jogging, picnicking and barcecueing, trail bike riding, walking, wildlife observation;
Fieldsports:	archery, clay pigeon shooting, pheasant shooting, deer stalking, rough shooting, hunting;
Competitive sports:	field archery, cyclocross, war games;
Overnight stays:	camping, caravanning.

The location of woodland in relation to centres of population affects its potential, as woods within 2 km walking distance of a town edge or large village will tend to be used as public open space by the dog walkers, joggers, horse riders, picknickers and walkers. At this proximity to the population, frequent short trips are feasible, whereas more isolated woodlands involve a pre-planned half day visit as a minimum and need to have a more specialist appeal.

It is worth considering assembling a range of related facilities to fill a particular niche in the market. For example, woodland on the edge of a town could concentrate on children's play by providing a toddlers' playground, adventure play apparatus for older children, a BMX bike circuit, pony riding and woodcraft training. The latter can be particularly helpful in countering the junior lumberjack problem frequently encountered in the urban fringe, by allowing the youngsters to learn and understand something of woodlands and their management. Further away from town, say 5 to 10 km, a woodland could tap the current keep fit enthusiasm by providing a range of facilities on the fitness theme. The Dutch have developed a Trim Trail which is a series of points with exercise equipment on a circuit. This could be supplemented with a jogging trail and a health food snack bar. In the countryside away from large centres of population there are opportunities for camping and caravan sites in a tourism area or on a main tourist route. Of particular interest to the small woodland owner

are the 'certificated locations' for five touring caravans which require the minimum of facilities, a fresh water tap and a disposal point for chemical toilets.

To assess the demand for a particular mix of activities it is important to examine the counter attractions in a series of three concentric zones centred on the site; a local zone up to 5 km, a district zone 5 to 30 km, a regional zone of 30 to 50 km. Activities with small catchment areas are obviously more important near the site in the local and district zones and less so in the regional zone. For example

In the regional, district and local zones:	camping and caravan sites, chalet park, theme park, country park, national park, woodland parks, field archery courses;
In the district zone and local zones:	barbecue sites, picnic sites, Forestry Commission woodlands, BMX circuits, off road cycling trails, trail bike circuits, clay pigeon shoots, pheasant shoots, equestrian centres, trim trails, nature trails, visitor centres;
In the local zone:	Adventure playgrounds, riding stables, rough shoots, public open spaces, parks.

Landowners need not be frightened of trying a little market research for themselves, such as interviewing any current visitors to the wood, or a sample of households in the district. Tourist Boards and local planning authorities may be useful sources of statistics to help gain an idea of the existing market to help identify a niche. Many of the governing bodies of sports, federations of site operators and the national agencies like the Tourist Boards, the Sports Council and the Countryside Commission are very pleased to provide advice and literature.

In addition to identifying market opportunities, the site limitations need to be recognised; these include hazards such as limb shedding by ancient pollards, availability of mains services, the nature conservation value of the wood and heavy clay soils. The following activities are not recommended on heavy soils: horse riding, adventure play apparatus, cycling, trim trail, jogging trail, camping and caravan sites, hunting. Hazards such as derelict buildings, are usually obvious, but owners need to make them safe by taking reasonable precautions, or where possible turn them into an attractive feature. For example buildings might have potential for renovation and be used as a visitor shelter or kiosk.

Obviously not all activities are compatible with each other, and some require designated areas with or without total exclusion of other pursuits. It is important to recognise that the degree of compatibility can vary with the intensity of use. Secondly, subtle interactions between activities are revealed by considering the effects of one activity being introduced into an area where another is taking place. For example, introducing playing into a campsite for campers is acceptable but it is not sensible to introduce camping into a play area.

Activities compatible with each other: walking, dog walking, informal jogging, children playing, off road cycling (at low levels), wildlife observation (at a casual level);

Activities requiring designated but not exclusive areas or routes: jogging (at over 100 people/day), picknicking and barbecueing, horse riding, wildlife observation (at a serious/educational level), off road cycling (at over 100 people/day), trim trail, educational visits;

Activities requiring exclusive use of areas or routes: adventure play, BMX cycling, trail bike riding, camping, caravanning, field archery, clay pigeon shooting, pheasant shooting, rough shooting, deer stalking, war games.

Activities requiring an exclusive zone like fire arm sports, may be intermittant and so during the quiet times other activities can be allowed to use the area. Secondly, there are possibilities for some of the exclusive zones to be used for additional activities by the same group of participants. Finally, it is worth mentioning that the conflict most commonly reported by woodland managers involves horse riders, where poaching of paths is the problem. There are three tactics to adopt, segregate horse riding where possible, encourage a riders' code of behaviour and liaise with the local riding community.

The various activities and their combinations mentioned in this paper can range from those with no major capital or labour input for informal activities at low use levels to schemes involving considerable capital and daily management by highly trained staff such as a camp site with full facilities. A landowner not wishing to be involved in recreation management can consider permit access systems or leasing the woodland to a club, or entrepreneur and the following activities are suitable for this approach: permit access – wildlife observation, rough shooting, educational visits; leased use – field archery, youth or touring campsites, touring caravan site, horse riding, trail bike course, pheasant shooting, deer stalking, war games.

For those wishing to become more involved in the recreation management of their woodland the possibilities are many and varied. The Woodland Park near Westbury run by Tony Phillips and his family is an excellent example of the integration of woodland management and recreation. The principal enterprise is timber, and produce is in the form of roundwood, rustic furniture, name plates, bird boxes, fencing and firewood, for sale. The recreation and educational enterprise is multi-use, and the only entry route, past the woodland office, facilitates charging the general public for access. Tony Phillips is particularly keen to promote understanding about forestry, nature conservation and woodland crafts and has developed a museum and the interpretive services.

The informal activities at the Woodland Park include: walking – marked trails, leaflet; picknicking – woodland glades provided with tables and benches; barbecueing – lakeside barbecue grills; camping – Camping Club site with water, bathroom and toilets; caravanning – 'Certificated Location', water, bathroom and toilets; tea room – lunches, teas, suppers; shop – environmental and tourist publications, charts, sweets, etc.

There are also specialist activities: fishing – 2 hectare lake, carp, day permits; scout campsite – near pylon line wayleave, leased to local group; field archery – course leased to local club; assault course – course used by local groups; holiday cottage – overlooking the lake; bed and breakfast – in the Phillips' home.

For interpretation, the Woodland Park offers: countryside museum – displays, reference books, collections; guided walks – Tony Phillips conducts walks for societies, schools; supper evenings – groups taken on evening walks and given supper; dawn chorus visits – conducted by a local ornithologist; lectures – for teachers, societies and the public; labelled trails – informal nature trails, extensively labelled with features of interest; tool exhibition – in the woodyard.

It is clear that the Phillips have a great commitment to this integrated approach, which provides income from the various recreation and forestry enterprises. The demonstration of fully integrated forestry at Brokerswood is a model for others to emulate in a modified way according to their own interests and woodland attractions.

Chaired by Kenneth Royston, Boughton Estates

Report back by Glen Millar, British Waterways Board

INTRODUCTION

Duncan Campbell

Director, Countryside Commission for Scotland

Good morning ladies and gentlemen. I am Duncan Campbell, Director of the Countryside Commission for Scotland. Yesterday we heard interesting talks about the forces and mechanisms of land use change and discussed a very lively menu of recreation opportunities for the countryside.

This morning we are going to hear and discuss how such changes and opportunities can be integrated beneficially and managed. So our key theme this morning is management. To do this harmoniously we need to have some idea of the aspirations of the recreationists as well as those of the land resource providers.

Our team of speakers have all had considerable practical experience in dealing with these sorts of issues and our first pair, John Collins and David Bown, will deal with the recreation and land use aspects from a planning perspective. They will be followed by Philip Merricks and Brian McLaughlin who will provide a land owning and farming perspective and their views will be discussed before the final session by Roger Clarke.

John Collins is going to open the session. He has just retired as County Planner for Cheshire County Council after over 21 years of service with that Council - a laudable record. His early work involved the creation of country parks in Cheshire and other recreation facilities, with a particular focus on interpretation facilities in the countryside. Latterly his efforts have concentrated on tourism issues and in steering the third review of the county structure plan which deals, in large part, with alternative land use issues.

He started a new job today - he is in private practice as a Planning and Research Consultant. John's talk is on 'Managing Change in Areas of Mainly Domestic Recreation' and he is going to illustrate this with slides.

David Bown has, for eight years, been County Planning Officer for Dyfed, which covers a fairly large area of Wales, some 2,200 square miles. He has been in the planning profession for 25 years in rural areas. He is also Planning Adviser to the Welsh Counties Committee, a member of the Association of County Councils Working Party, Campaign for the Countryside, he is a former Chairman of the County Planning Officer Society for Wales and a member of the Welsh Countryside Commission's Access Working Party - so he has a very good pedigree from which to address us. David is going to speak on 'Managing Change In Areas of Mainly Tourist Recreation'.

Brian McLaughlin is currently Head of Land Use at the National Farmers Union headquarters in London. Prior to that he was Reader in Rural Planning and Head of the Planning Research Centre at the Sussex Institute of Higher Education. In that capacity he was Director of the

Government sponsored study on 'Deprivation in Rural Areas' which was submitted to the Department of Environment in June 1985. So Brian is in particular going to give us a farmer's view of managing change.

Philip Merricks is a very busy man. He owns and manages something like 4,000 acres of prime land in Kent, of which half is intensive arable. He also manages a National Nature Reserve and runs a craft centre. He is a Member of the Country Landowners Association Council, Vice Chairman of the Kent Country Landowners Association and a member of the Agricultural and Land Sub-Committee as well as being Chairman of the Kent Farming and Wildlife Advisory Group. Philip is going to speak about managing change from a landowner's point of view.

The final session 'The New Countryside of Britain', is by Roger Clarke. In his position as Head of Countryside Commission for England and Wales' policy branch Roger has been at the centre in developing policy initiatives for this whole question of new countryside aspects. He is most admirably placed to give what I think he is going to describe as his personal reflections of the issues of the Conference.

In listening to his presentation I would ask you to remember the aspirations of ethnic natives north of the border. Whilst there is a great deal of commonality in the problems and opportunities that we have listened to over the past two days, there is a Scottish dimension on many issues.

MANAGING THE CHANGE IN AREAS OF MAINLY DOMESTIC RECREATION

John Collins

County Planner, Cheshire

Yesterday you heard all about the scale and pace of change dictated to us all by the Common Agricultural Policy in the European Community. It is not just that we have the European Community chasing us, ironically it is the UK farmers themselves who, because of their increased efficiency, are now producing a much higher percentage of our food in this country than ever before.

TABLE 1

UK AGRICULTURAL PRODUCTION AS A PERCENTAGE OF TOTAL SUPPLIES

Food Products	1973-75 (average)	1985
Meat	80	90
Eggs	97	97
Milk (liquid)	100	100
Cheese	62	67
Butter	14	64
Sugar (refined)	29	55
Wheat	61	103
Potatoes	94	89

Source: Social Trends (1987) HMSO

On top of these changes, most of us have accelerating aspirations for a bigger slice of the action in our countryside. Again, yesterday you heard of the effects of this upon the changing use of land in the United Kingdom, and of the opportunities that this creates for, amongst other uses, greater recreational use, my topic for today.

In the Workshop Sessions you have been looking in greater detail at the specific recreational opportunities, activities and initiatives, and how these affect landowners, tenant farmers and users. This morning, I want to draw you back from the detail and the specifics of the workshops, to a broader canvas and consider how all the actors in the countryside interact with each other.

If planners are to seek to manage change in some way and have some influence on change, their responsibility is first to try to understand fully all the many users, with their many diverse and often conflicting interests; all the people who are involved in the countryside scene. Having done that, they must try to establish a strategy which,

with sympathy and understanding all round, will accommodate most, if not all, of the interests alongside each other, bridging the gaps between them using the new opportunities provided to us all by change.

My topic area, opportunities for increased recreational use, is only one aspect, or one element, of this change. It certainly must not be taken in isolation. I believe that the isolationist approach is the curse of our countryside planning. That is why we need to draw back to this wider canvas to see what each other's needs are. We have each to learn forbearance and tolerance, and develop this to a high degree.

It is a very major task ahead for the planners to draw all the individual self interests away from being introspective and make them realise and be aware that they are one only amongst a host of other interests in the countryside.

Those of you who have worked in an open plan office or been educated in an open plan school, or even lived in an open plan house, have learnt that an open plan does have some advantages; it also has a great number of disadvantages. Certainly if you have had that experience you know that you have had to learn tolerance. The countryside is open plan. It is a combined work space, play space and living space. We all have to learn first to understand and then to tolerate each other.

Many of the people who live in the cities, want to get out into the countryside. Sometimes they want to continue to be together in the countryside, at other times they want to be well away from each other. While many farmers want and need to operate an intensive farming system, prairie farming, the visitor wants to see the traditional landscape retained with protection of the flora and fauna. Some other people want either to build or buy their dream cottage in the countryside. If that is the case then the house builders want to come in and make sure that they are meeting this housing demand.

New jobs are needed for the young people in the countryside to replace those lost from agriculture. Developers come in with proposals for commerce and industry in parkland settings.

Many people want better access to the countryside for walking, horse riding and cycling, but this brings fears of trespass for the farming community. Some want peaceful settings for informal recreation, picnics and walking the dog, whilst others go for 'noisy sports' like clay pigeon shooting.

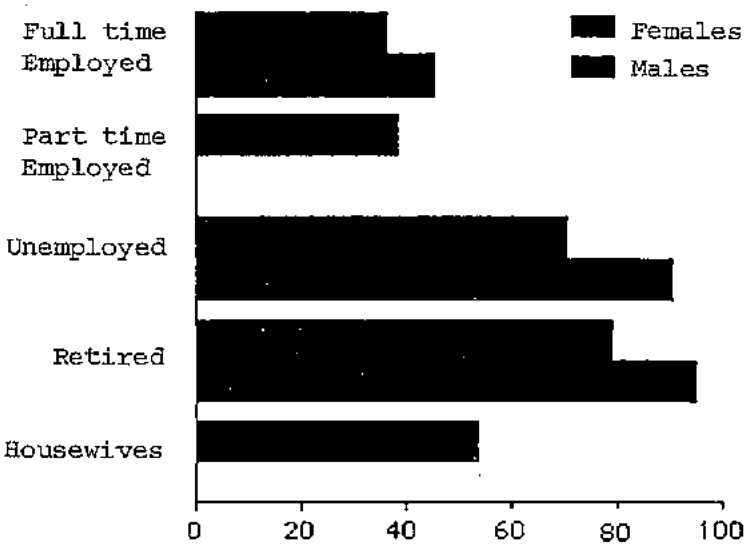
The countryside has to absorb a whole range of uses and not all recreational - many activities and many sounds. The closer that you get to the edge of the cities then the more intense the pressure becomes.

People have more spare time now (Figure 1) and more spare money to spend on leisure time activities (Figure 2). We are all joining many new countryside related organisations (Table 2).

So, our countryside recreational needs grow. Some of these involve managed countryside, organised sports, watching sports, country parks, historic buildings, and pick your owns. The unmanaged countryside caters for leisure drives, outings, picnics and long walks (Figure 3).

FIGURE 1

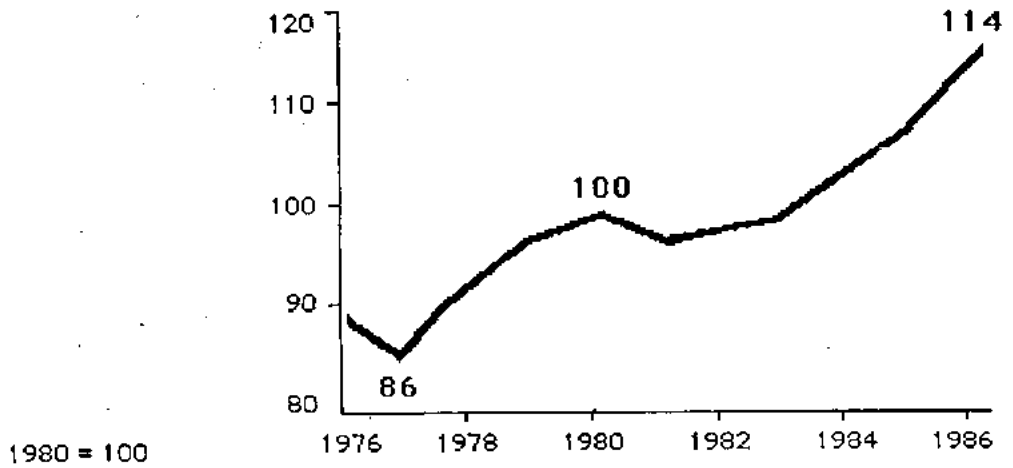
AVAILABLE LEISURE TIME - HOURS OF LEISURE, TIME AVAILABLE IN A TYPICAL WEEK. 1986



Source: Social Trends (1988) HMSO

FIGURE 2

HOUSEHOLD DISPOSABLE INCOME - REAL DISPOSABLE INCOME PER HEAD



Source: Social Trends (1988) HMSO

TABLE 2

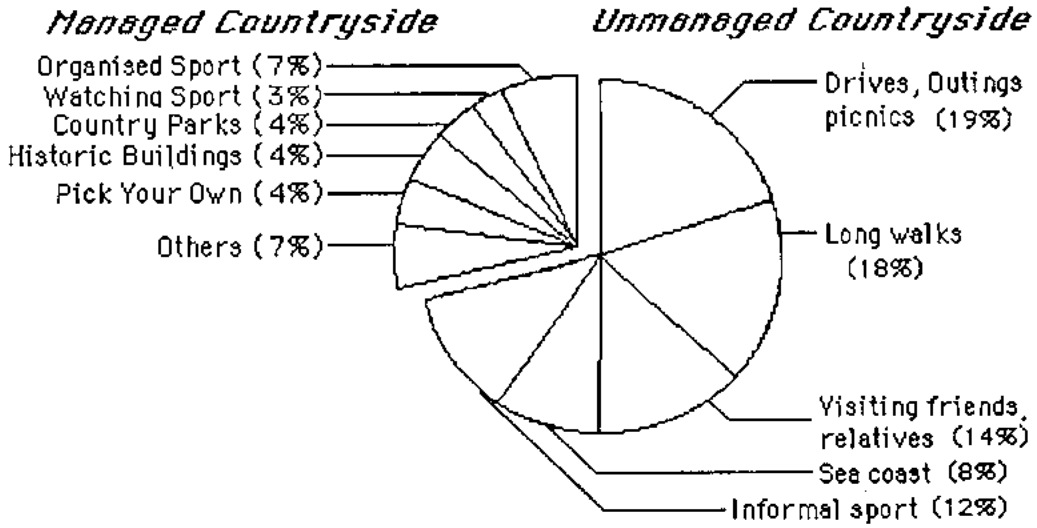
MEMBERSHIP OF VOLUNTARY ORGANISATIONS

	UK Membership (000's)		
	1971	1981	1986
National Trust	278	1,406	1,417
National Trust (Scotland)	37	110	145
Ramblers Association	22	37	53
Royal Society for Nature Conservation	64	143	179
Royal Society for the Protection of Birds	98	441	506

Source: Social Trends (1988) HMSO

FIGURE 3

COUNTRYSIDE RECREATION ACTIVITIES



Source: National Survey of Countryside Recreation (1984) Countryside Commission

I want to make clear that today I am not dealing with the 'wild countryside' – David Bown is going to do that. In my job I have to deal with the urban fringe countryside. Close to our cities, river valleys are convenient leisure resources to be developed. They provide extremely useful lungs penetrating into the cities which we can operate and use for informal recreation. But when you start talking about water, you are immediately confronted by the conflicts between different sports. In Chester on the River Dee there is competition between dinghy

sailors, power boats and the windsurfers, and the canoeists who have to weave in between. They in turn have to try and avoid the leisure cruisers!

Again, there are fairly quiet water sports as well as very noisy ones and all these infuriate the fishermen. So the need is to create a whole range of water facilities for each competing user; worked out sand and gravel pits come in very handy for creating these areas.

The development and improvement of our inland waterways, our old canals, creates an ever growing opportunity for increased water usage. We are fortunate to have 200 miles of canal in Cheshire and that helps us to take pressures off other areas of countryside and off the roads. It also gives us opportunities for more gregarious recreational needs such as boat rallies. At Ellesmere Port we have a boat museum housed in heritage buildings. They add to the stock of usable heritage buildings for leisure.

Many people watch sport rather than taking an active part in it. In my area, Chester Races is a case in point. This brings with it the problems of crowd management and traffic management, particularly off course. Other mass spectator sports in the countryside such as motor racing at Oulton Park give us the same type of traffic management problems with local disturbance and noise - not just on the race days but on practice days as well.

Noise disturbance is very much a growing problem. It is an issue which, when I go to public meetings, people want to talk about more than any other topic. Clay pigeon shooting causes much concern to the locals. It is possible to alleviate the disturbance with a prepared site, in a desired location, with permission granted and conditions, noise levels, and so on, agreed. However, some farmers who need to supplement falling incomes are now letting out fields at weekends for the less frequent and the less controllable Sunday shoots. I heard the other day that over 200,000 people clay pigeon shoot every Sunday. 'Treat your guests to a Clayday' (as opposed to an Awayday) is now the latest advertising phrase used.

Motorbike scrambling in the countryside and on waste ground has been a problem with us for a long time. Local people can suffer very great hardship and a shattering of their countryside peace at the weekends. You have to find an appropriate location for all these activities because 'noisy sports' are here to stay. Motorcycle racing and scrambling need to be located with sensitivity - again where planning control can minimise the nuisance value to the locals.

So my message again is that all these clashing interest groups need to communicate with each other and express their viewpoints, especially when farmers are looking to recreation as one of their key opportunities for diversification. Until recently we had tried to guide policies for land use change, particularly for recreation, through the structure plan and the local plans and policies. These policies have been supplemented by guiding people to selected honeypots and then providing interpretive literature and well developed visitor facilities.

In the changed situation today, this is no longer an approach which will hold back the flood tide, either for people looking for recreational facilities and opportunities, or for the people who are now anxious to provide them.

New golf courses are the 'flavour of the year', as many of you know. At any one time we appear to have around six applications for golf courses coming to the County Council for consultations from the District Councils. Some of these are genuine attempts to manage landscape which is not going to be farmed any more in a profitable way. However, a number of them are merely smokescreens for people who really want to surround the golf courses with very expensive housing close to the urban fringe, either just inside or just outside the green belt.

Our first answer to dealing with change has been to prepare a draft 'Rural Strategy for Cheshire'. We are in no way unique in this, a number of counties have been following this line, encouraged by the Countryside Commission. Some, I know, are represented here today and can probably tell you more about rural strategy than I can. However, how we got down to preparing that strategy may be of interest.

First, I set up a Rural Advisory Group to help us to prepare the bones and inject new ideas. The members are people from outside the County Council. Within the County Council I also had a parallel group of officers from relevant departments who were going to be involved in countryside policy and strategy implementation in some form. So, included were officers from education, countryside, highways, and estates departments.

To set up the Rural Advisory Group I first persuaded a prominent and very well loved and respected member of the Cheshire farming community to chair the team. That is the key thing, getting the chairman right. He knows the right people to involve with him. Working with us, he selected his advisory group; it was made up of people who could well present the many faceted views of the people who live and work in the rural areas. They were not there as individual representatives, often one man or woman was involved in several of the organisations, which ensured that the interests of the National Farmers Union, Country Landowners Association, Council for the Protection of Rural England, Ministry of Agriculture, the Cheshire Community Council, the Rural Development Commission,and the Sports Council were all covered. A District Planning Officer was also on the team.

Within this forum I was anxious for them to discuss; to get together and begin to listen to each other, exchange views and understand each other's viewpoints and how they could be integrated. It is from this that the draft strategy has emerged. My published summary sheet included the key expression, 'Your response will help to get the strategy right'.

So, our draft has emerged and hopefully now public discussion will begin. I will read a short excerpt from the draft in relation to recreation.

"The challenge ahead:

To promote the wider development of tourism in selected rural areas as a way of bringing further jobs and investment.

Ensure visitor enjoyment of rural Cheshire whilst minimising visitor impact, especially reducing conflicts with farming and other activities.

Take advantage of the opportunities for the rural community, in particular farmers and local services, to get involved and generate income from recreation and tourism.

Promote the use of land no longer needed for farming for low level recreation."

Some of the suggested actions that follow are:

"The County Council in conjunction with the District Councils and other agents to marry together land no longer needed for agriculture with the temporary or permanent use for recreation and community facilities like pocket parks and local sport pitches.

Working with the Ministry of Agriculture, Sports Council, Countryside Commission, etc, to encourage the farmers to develop income generating facilities for activities like fishing, shooting, riding and other sports compatible with the conservation of the countryside and agricultural viability, and where they do not prejudice the use of the rights of way networks.

Use the County Ranger Service to liaise initially with farmers and landowners to highlight the opportunities for recreation and investigation of grant aid and other resources to implement them.

The County Council to use its own opportunities on its own smallholdings to demonstrate the successful use and management of the footpath network, the development of small scale recreation facilities, and interpretive facilities, possibly linked to the local schools.

Prepare an explicit countryside recreation strategy, (because this is a general rural strategy, the detail on countryside has still to be developed). Developing the recreation sites as gateways to the wider countryside.

Guide and advise privately owned recreation operators on how they can do this. Identify the recreation and facilities that are required in Cheshire. Guide and develop ongoing area management strategies to help all those involved in the rural areas to understand and appreciate local recreation assets and opportunities.

To coordinate the Countryside Commission's 'Enjoying the Countryside' policies and the Sports Council's own regional recreation strategy and elicit further grant aid in Cheshire.

Promote the greater use of woods and forests for recreation.

Further develop the rights of way network.

Investigate the potential for new commercial countryside interpretation, rural life and farm museum facility, as part of the new Cheshire Show Ground.

Ensure that recreation and tourism is given full consideration in plans for the restoration of mineral waste disposal and other operations in preference to agricultural after use.

Develop local information points based on helping to support the rural shops, pubs and other enterprises. Encourage the cooperative marketing of rural tourism enterprises."

That is just Cheshire's line. Another excellent example is the Cambridgeshire rural strategy. There is obviously not time to compare the two approaches in detail. In the main, it is just a difference in balance. Looking at the two documents, Cambridge is emphasising farming and countryside policies while Cheshire have included rural communities and employment and housing needs in their strategy. Cambridge appear not to be speculating too far on the future of agricultural change.

They are a county which has 45,000 acres of county farm estate as against our 13,000 acres in Cheshire, so they are very much concentrating on integrating farming and countryside policies with an emphasis on recreation. While Cambridge have gone into detail on their lower level strategies, many of ours in Cheshire have still to be developed, particularly on recreation.

Our specialist advisers and farmers stressed to us the great importance of maintaining a strong dairy farming industry in the county for social and economic reasons, as well as being the best way of maintaining and managing an attractive countryside. After all, there is no use in providing so called countryside recreation if we have lost our attractive countryside.

MANAGING THE CHANGE IN AREAS OF MAINLY TOURIST RECREATION

David Bown

County Planning Officer, Dyfed

It is clear from what we have already heard in the Conference that we are currently witnessing fundamental changes in our countryside. I would like initially to look again at some of the pressures impacting on the remote countryside and how some of those pressures are manifesting themselves before going on to consider the ways in which we are trying to manage the situation.

It seems to me that until about five years ago rural areas enjoyed a political importance which bore little relation to either their economic strength or population levels. This importance had been built up since the beginning of the century on the notion of urban areas being reliant upon the countryside for their daily bread. In fact, of course, agricultural production had so improved in the previous 25 years and population growth so declined that the country was more than able to feed itself, even before we joined the EEC and enjoyed all of the additional produce which Europe can provide.

This political strength was reflected in an agricultural lobby which was able to bring great pressure to bear upon governments and influence legislation to a very large extent. Although there was a continuous growth of a number of pressure groups advocating such things as nature conservation, landscape conservation, the prevention of factory farming and the abolition of country sports, during this period, they were never able to overcome the strength of the agricultural lobby. Not, that is, until five years or so ago.

As previous speakers have mentioned it was the over production of food on a European scale which finally caused this historic change. The political centre of gravity within Europe has moved to the Mediterranean with the accession of Greece and the Iberian peninsula, and this has led to a reduction in the support finance available from the EEC.

At the same time as these major changes have been going on in Europe, there have been a series of other factors which have had a major influence on our rural areas, and the more remote areas have been affected just as much as the other rural areas. People in the United Kingdom have acquired a brand new set of interests and priorities in the past ten years which have dramatically changed attitudes and lifestyles.

A new awareness of personal health and fitness has led to a demand for more facilities for recreation and major changes in British eating habits. Almost all of the red meat and dairy products which have formed the hardcore of farming production in the more remote areas have come under attack as being health hazards.

A growing awareness of environmental matters fuelled by a plethora of television programmes, has led to demands for changes in farming practices and the protection of habitats. A craving for times

past and an interest in all things nostalgic has led to demands for the retention of buildings and of agricultural practices and landscapes which are no longer seen as economic or efficient by the farming community.

In addition, improved accessibility with the building of motorways, faster trains and advances in telecommunications have freed people from the need to live close to centres of employment and increased the demand for homes in the countryside for commuters.

As John Collins has shown, despite high unemployment those in work are more prosperous than ever and more leisure time is now available to the average person than was ever the case previously. Accompanying these new interests have been a series of social trends which have similarly impacted on the remote rural areas. The national trend towards smaller family units has led to the demand for extra housing in the countryside in the same way as it has in urban areas. At the same time changes in the age structure of the population have brought about an increase in the number of retired people, many of whom are looking to spend their retirement living in the countryside and others of whom look to the rural areas for their recreation, leisure and tourist visits.

Law and order has become a major political issue and the countryside is still seen by most people, despite recent reports, as being a safer place to live than the cities and this has been an added incentive for movement into the remote rural areas.

Profound differences in the regional costs of living within England and Wales, particularly in respect of house prices, are encouraging the movement of people into rural areas for permanent residence as well as fuelling the demand for weekend homes. It might interest you to hear that Wallace Arnold runs a weekly bus from London to west Wales, simply full of people looking for houses to buy.

All of these social and economic changes have brought about major problems for remote rural communities but they have also brought new opportunities. The new interest in healthy living has manifested itself in new demands for health foods and in a tremendous increase in interest in sports and other recreational activities. Healthy foods are perceived as coming from a wholesome environment and opportunities exist for linking the production of these foods with tourism and leisure activities.

Outdoor activities of a sporting or recreational nature have blossomed in the past few years. Some of these have depended upon technological advances such as hang gliding and are brand new activities which just did not exist a decade ago. Others, such as pony trekking, hill walking and sailing, have developed simply as a result of a larger number of people becoming interested in activities that had been pursued for many years. The countryside provides a marvellous setting for these new interests and there is no question that this particular area of demand will continue to grow.

The new interest in the environment is often linked with the desire of parents to use their leisure activities to enhance the education of their children. There are very clear relationships between these and the

new interests in personal health and nostalgia and together they represent a very strong driving force which will impact upon the countryside for a considerable time to come.

Walking has always been popular in the remote areas but recent improvements in access arrangements and the development of long distance footpaths has led to even more participants in the sport. The existence of well founded organisations such as the Ramblers' Association and the dramatic improvements in outdoor clothing and equipment has eased the way for newcomers and extended the walking season.

'High tech' recreational activities are having an increasingly important impact on the remote countryside. Hang gliding, microlite planes, four wheel drive vehicles, mountain bikes, off road motorbikes, waterbikes, sailboards and so on, all have enthusiastic and growing followings. These and many other sports have emerged in response to technological advances and we must assume that further advances in the future will produce yet more sports, all demanding their share of the land, water and air space. Each activity impacts on the rural scene in a different way but noise and erosion problems are particularly serious.

Many of these sports are concentrated in activity centres which are becoming increasingly popular. They reflect the new demands for healthy activity. They do, however, concentrate pressure on particular areas and extend the impact on these areas over a longer period of time during the year than is normally the case.

Traditional country sports have also enjoyed a renaissance in the past few years which has led to new opportunities for landowners to gain some extra income from providing for the new demands.

Of the other large scale sporting interests in the deep countryside pony trekking and mountaineering are the two activities that, in terms of numbers, are most important. Pony trekking, like activity centres, tends to be concentrated on particular areas which gives advantages in terms of marketing the product but can, by the very scale of the operations, impact heavily upon those areas and cause congestion and erosion problems. Mountaineering has become the largest participant sport in parts of Snowdonia and elsewhere and increasingly we are finding that disused quarries and coastal cliffs are becoming equally popular.

More important than the active sports in terms of the numbers of people involved are the passive leisure/recreational tourist activities enjoyed by millions of people each year in the deep countryside. Many of these are simply car journeys involving visiting, sightseeing and observing, but others are more specific and aimed at particular experiences.

The 1984 National Survey of Countryside Recreation indicated the very high proportion of people who are involved in drives, outings and picnics as well as the importance of informal sport, visits to historic buildings and country parks and watching events. These demands have, in turn, led to the provision of facilities to cater for the pressure.

In many respects, whether the countryside recreation activities are being undertaken by day visitors or tourists does not matter a great deal. In fact, it is quite amazing how many areas which were, until recently, considered to be remote are in reality now within day trip distance of the major conurbations.

Nevertheless, the accommodation requirements of tourists both present extra problems and provide new opportunities. The more remote areas, almost invariably, have a more sensitive landscape and require more thought to be given to the location of new developments. There have, however, been many good examples of tourist accommodation being provided either within our forests, in association with existing farm buildings or attached to existing settlements.

We must also remember the improvements that can be brought about within our country towns and villages as a result of the injection of money from tourists.

Until fairly recently there was a general consensus against which planning decisions in rural areas could be taken with a degree of certainty. The recent changes have resulted in a breakdown of this consensus and we have yet to see a new consensus emerge. Many organisations are currently contributing towards the debate on the future of the countryside and many of you present at the Conference will no doubt have been instrumental in forming the views of your organisations.

The changes that we have seen in the past few years have brought with them opportunities for diversification and conservation but they have also created new problems. Many of these problems cannot be solved through the planning process although planning solutions are often suggested. There are, however, ways and means by which the opportunities can be encouraged and the problems to some extent mollified.

What then are we as planners, particularly in the County Planning Departments, doing about coping with the problems associated with these activities and developments in the remote countryside and taking advantage of the new opportunities which they present?

In effect we tackle the problems on five different levels - European, national, regional, county and local. There is a growing awareness within the counties of the European dimension involved in the changes. European Commission Directives and Ministerial Council decisions are a prime force in the changes which are impacting on the remote countryside.

Consequently, advocacy on a European level is becoming more common and organisations such as the Council for Peripheral Maritime Regions as well as direct advocacy with the European Commission, are increasingly utilised by County Planners to influence Commission decisions. Integrated Operation Programmes and National Programmes of Community Interest, and the like, have become important vehicles for applying European grant monies to remote rural areas.

My own Council has already submitted an Integrated Operations Programme and a National Programme for Rural Wales in conjunction with two other rural Welsh Counties. We have already had approval for the National Programme and approval, in principle, of the Integrated Operations Programme. By utilising the European Social Fund, Regional Development Fund and European Agricultural Guidance and Guarantee Fund (FEOGA) monies to the advantage of rural areas through these programmes, we can assist in the development of the infrastructure, training and agricultural diversification, all of which are fundamental to the future prosperity of the areas.

We are all watching with interest the new schemes emerging from the European Commission in respect of agristructures, forestry and environmental policies, all of which will undoubtedly provide us with new opportunities to apply European monies to countryside matters. The Commission's White Paper on 'The Future of Rural Society', published earlier this summer, is designed to initiate new rural economic development and we are, in fact, promised a new rural community instrument in the near future for applying EEC funds to the regeneration of the remote rural areas.

On a national level we are involved in the debates which are currently underway on the future of the countryside. The Association of County Councils, the Welsh Counties Committee and the Association of District Councils are formulating policy stances on the main issues.

Within the regions, groups of County Councils are joining together in various forms of Standing Conference to develop regional attitudes to planning matters including issues relating to countryside recreation and tourism. Many of the issues involved have a regional dimension and the Association of County Councils is encouraging its members to join in regional groups in response to the Government's recent Green Paper on the future of development plans.

It is, however, at the county and local level that we see the greatest application of planning and management schemes. All counties have prepared structure plans setting out broad strategic planning policies for their areas and have included statements dealing with the various aspects of countryside recreation and rural tourism. These structure plans are backed up by more specific policy statements dealing with particular subjects and tourism, countryside recreation and forestry strategies either have been or are being developed in many areas.

Particularly sensitive areas often have quite detailed policy and management plans which include reference to countryside recreation issues. All of the National Parks now have approved management plans as do most of the Heritage Coasts. Areas of Outstanding Natural Beauty such as the Mendip Hills and the Wye Valley are also well catered for in this respect.

Countryside management projects such as the Gwent Countryside Management Scheme, the East Cumbria Countryside Scheme and my own county's Countryside Action Programme are all geared to undertaking positive measures to protect the landscape and provide additional facilities for countryside recreation and tourism.

Access is central to many of the recreational activities being pursued in the countryside, and access agreements, management agreements and recreational and long distance footpath schemes have all been developed in response to this demand. Two examples are the Bodmin Moor Access Project of Cornwall County Council and the Devon County Council Tarka Project. We have also seen the development of long distance footpaths such as the Pennine Way, the Pembrokeshire Coast Path, Offa's Dyke and the Viking Way. Cycleways, bridleways and provision for motorbikes and four wheel drive vehicles are equally important in terms of access and there has been a gradual build up of provision such as the schemes in Cumbria and the Peak District for cyclists.

All counties are themselves involved in the provision of facilities for recreation in the countryside either directly through the provision of country parks, picnic sites and recreational footpaths or indirectly through woodland management schemes, landscape enhancement projects, canal reclamation schemes and habitat management projects.

Can I finally return to the wider issue of rural futures because it is important that we view the growth in recreational and tourism pressure in the more remote countryside against the background of overall change. What is clear is that a well managed, well cared for, countryside is central to the economic well being of these areas. This does not only apply to recreation and tourism but is equally valid in agricultural terms where we are basing our future on the notion of 'good food from a wholesome countryside'.

We must build the economic future of these areas on the relatively few strengths and advantages which they possess. The landscape, history and culture feature high in that list of advantages and, fortunately, as I have tried to show in this paper, these are now much sought after commodities.

The farming community, particularly those in the more remote northern and western fringes of the United Kingdom, have faced very real pressure on their traditional sources of livelihood in the past few years. Most have reacted by reducing inputs into their farms as a means of maintaining income levels but there is a very real danger that, unless alternative sources of income are found, money will not be available for replacement of machinery and farm maintenance in general and a 'make do and mend' philosophy will prevail. This could well lead to a 'Hill Billy' countryside with abandoned machinery, broken fences and walls, scrub infested fields and badly managed woodlands.

Such a consequence would be extremely harmful to the economic well being and the amenity value of our rural areas. If, as a nation, we demand a well manicured countryside in which to 'recreate' ourselves then we as a nation must be willing to pay the necessary price. It must be accepted that part of the subsidy paid for sheep or cattle rearing is, in fact, paying for the countryside to be looked after by the farming community. If that subsidy is withdrawn, then the nation cannot expect farmers to continue to manage the countryside for nothing.

I am not advocating turning farmers into gardeners. What I am saying is that they are the best people to manage rural land and that part of their future activity could quite legitimately include countryside

management paid for by the nation. This situation has become even more critical with the termination of the Community Programme which was previously the main source of financial support for management schemes in rural areas. There are grant schemes available for woodland management and farm conservation work but, unfortunately, they are not sufficiently enticing to persuade the majority of farmers to participate.

We must also find better solutions to the problem than set aside and certain of the Environmentally Sensitive Area management prescriptions which are blatantly paying farmers for not undertaking particular works. Such schemes cannot possibly maintain popular support for any length of time and we must therefore devise schemes which pay farmers for positive conservation work.

The changes impacting on the countryside at the moment are so profound that it is difficult to predict the role which recreational and tourism activities will play in the future. At the very least recreational and tourism uses will be important adjuncts to agriculture in its diversified form and will provide many farmers with a useful additional income. This scenario would visualise the more remote rural areas retaining their traditional family farms with the occupants deriving a number of incomes from a variety of sources including recreation and tourism and by this means retaining a livelihood though not necessarily at the level which they have achieved in the past decade.

However, it may well be that given the advances in communications, the effect of the south east property boom and the reduction in the real level of subsidies, that family farms will not survive. In those circumstances the number of permutations which could emerge would be endless. Prairie farming, involving large areas given over to lower density grazing, and the massive extension of suburbia in the shape of five acre plots, are just two possibilities which come to mind. We could also find that the demand for recreation, in all of its multivarious guises, is such that it is in itself the largest user of land in these parts of the country in the early decades of the next century.

All of these issues have large scale political implications and it must, at the end of the day, be the political decisions that will determine the outcome - be they interventionist or laissez-faire decisions. These are very interesting times in the countryside - the spotlight is on rural areas for the first time in very many years and the next few years will be critical in determining the outcome.

We could, at the end of the process, have a countryside which is socially, culturally, economically and environmentally vibrant or we could, in fact, lose the word 'countryside' entirely from the English language.

DISCUSSION

D Campbell (Countryside Commission for Scotland)

I think I will exercise the Chairman's prerogative and direct a question to both John Collins and David Bown. Both of you mentioned the importance of the quality of the countryside as a basis for good recreation and, indeed, a good working and living environment. Do you have any views as to where the balance should be struck between the conservation of landscape and the development of recreation?

I can give you a Scottish example. We have had the experience of promoting long distance walking routes in advance of their proper construction. This has resulted in considerable erosion and detriment to landscape quality. So, do you have a view about which should take precedence? Are there different scenarios for different situations?

D Bown

From my experience it is the conservation side that takes precedence. That is not for traditional reasons but for cold economic reasons. We honestly believe that we have to build on our strengths and advantages and we have very few of them in remote areas. Clearly the look of the countryside is central to almost any future scenario. Therefore it has to take precedence for that reason alone.

J Collins

It is a chicken and egg situation isn't it? I think that the two have to go on in parallel. Landscape conservation can, hopefully, be encouraged by the recreational development. You want to use one for the other, so you have to use them carefully. Somebody has to provide positive encouragement. I found, as County Planner, that we were able to be in a position to help, encourage and guide this enhancement. What we are hoping to do is to produce a year by year action programme arising from the rural strategy so that we can see the key areas where we need to put in the kind of work which you are talking about. Where there is going to be over use - those are the ones we have to concentrate on first.

Over 20 years ago I remember being taken to the Peak District National Park to see the start of their great long distance footpath. From the visitors' centre, at the beginning of the path, it had worn into four ruts where people had walked side by side. Obviously they had to concentrate immediately on dealing with that area. You could wander about on the less used top section of the Peaks without signs of real erosion.

Similarly while thinking about the conservation of habitats, the conservation of the buildings, must also be a constantly ongoing programme. It is essential for us to be doing this if we are to have the investment in the visitor areas that we need. We are all encouraging visitors. In Cheshire, we are not just encouraging the locals or day trippers, we are encouraging the tourists. Bringing in tourists is a way

of creating jobs and bringing more investment into the county. So the whole programme of enhancement is vitally necessary; you have to spend money if you want to bring in more jobs.

N Long (Reading University)

My question is about the difference between soft and hard tourism. At a number of conferences over the past few years there has been some discussion of the concept of twinning certain areas of the countryside, possibly specific farms or villages, with certain areas of our large cities. It started with schemes like the City Farms Movement and I was wondering whether there has been much discussion of this as a possible way of fulfilling unsatisfied demand, which I am sure exists, for a real link with the countryside.

J Collins

The only example of twinning I am aware of is where, for example, the Manchester ratepayers pay for the support of the theatres and art galleries in Manchester and we, in Cheshire, pay for the support of countryside attractions like Tatton Park. Cheshire people use Manchester theatres for operas and music and they use our countryside for recreation. But there is nothing direct. It is a reciprocal arrangement of support. We are putting money in to one aspect and they are putting in money to another.

N Long

It seems to me that the best way of linking up what farmers can provide with what townspeople might want, is through prearranged visits by groups rather than by visits by the undifferentiated general public. Most farmers are not geared up to be 'open all hours' coping with the general public. If there was an organisation that was linked at grass roots level with specific groups, voluntary groups, etc, in the large cities, and I am thinking of London in particular, I am sure this would be a way forward and a way of taking pressure off some of the honeypots and encouraging a more holistic approach to tourism, recreation, and so on in the south east of England.

D Campbell

Well thank you for that. There may certainly be some mileage in considering that in the countryside around towns where there is a strong identity between the community there and the countryside they can see.

SL Angus (Farmer)

This is really a question to both speakers in relation to EEC grants to farmers for recreation, conservation, access – the whole spectrum. Are any grants being negotiated in this area?

Also, in reply to the last question, constantly throughout this Conference we have had people standing up and saying that farmers are not capable of marketing their products. Many farmers are running huge businesses with huge overdrafts. They are very experienced in marketing and management.

D Bown

In terms of the European situation, farmers are clearly helped in a number of different ways. They have their direct subsidies and help through the European Agricultural Guidance and Guarantee Fund (FEOGA). At the moment there is not a clearly defined way in which you can get European money to a specific farmer for a tourist scheme. The new papers, which came out two months ago, certainly indicate that that is the way the European Commission is thinking. My own understanding is that they are very interested in making those sorts of grants available.

Which areas they would be relevant to is another question. It might be important whether or not you were in a Less Favoured Area or an Environmentally Sensitive Area, etc. The criteria just have not been put forward yet. But it is looking rather more promising than it was two months ago.

In terms of forestry there are indications that the European Commission now has a new interest in policy. So farm woodlands might well become grant aidable.

S Angus

There was a case of a person who received grant aid for access roads - I think it was to a golf course. But I have to say that, on the other side of the story, he did want to build more fringe houses.

D Bown

There are two schemes that I am aware of for farm access road improvement schemes in the UK, grant aided by Europe. However, they are not specifically related to recreational issues at all.

J Collins

It depends, again, on the area that you are in, whether you happen to be in an area which qualifies, through one way or another, to claim grants. European money often goes into an intermediate fund. We can get some resources fed into the Cheshire areas that come within the area of Merseyside. If you are outside that area then it is much more difficult. That is why we say that our 200 miles of canals are linked in with the Merseyside area, so that the canals qualify for some support.

If you can establish a Rural Development Area with the Rural Development Commission, you can get funding in that way. So it really depends on which part of the country you are in and whether you happen to be lucky enough - or unlucky enough - to be in one of these designated areas.

D Campbell

Thank you for that question. I think there is certainly interest in EEC grant criteria being widened to cover recreation and environmental issues. I think also that the lead time could be shortened. I think that would be helpful.

JA Mitchell (Waveney District Council)

The question that is on my mind at the moment, and perhaps on other delegates' minds, relates to the title of the Conference which is 'Changing Land Use and Recreation'. We have heard from one past County Planner and one current County Planner, with regard to the whole issue of planning in the UK. Both the two planning officers were talking about county level. The missing dimension is the regional planning strategy and, more importantly, the overall national planning strategy. Could you tell us to what degree that is important to the whole issue of the changing land use and recreation?

D Bown

I think it is fundamental. Clearly there is a large chasm that needs to be filled. In terms of regional planning, the counties, and in many places the districts, are now trying to fill that gap by providing standing conferences in the south east, south Wales or rural Wales to address the regional issues because unquestionably, there can only be regional solutions to a number of these problems.

Personally, I think the national scene is much more worrying. It is partly a reflection on the philosophy of the Government. As I have already mentioned, we have lost one consensus and not gained another. We are now in a situation where change is of the essence and every organisation is throwing its hat into the ring and promoting its own needs. At the end of the day we will probably end up with a new general consensus which we will then be able to apply to planning issues.

More importantly, we are not getting very much national guidance on planning issues. Again, it applies equally to the districts and the counties. We are both in exactly the same position. There are one or two Green Papers on development plans and one or two planning policy guidance notes, but, generally speaking, the Government's policy seems to be not to interfere in this. So I would agree with you. It would have been very nice to have someone along here from central government who could have told us exactly what the Government thinks and how it sees the future of rural areas.

J Collins

I agree that the different interest groups are developing their own regional strategies within this vacuum. They are all doing it independently, so you have the Sports Council producing a regional strategy, the North West Tourist Board, in my area, producing a regional strategy, two major metropolitan areas producing their sub-regional strategies. It is this isolationism - the fact that they are not all talking together - which gives us all a great problem.

D Wain (Inland Waterways Amenity Advisory Council)

This is a very relevant and extremely important point, and we were talking about it earlier on. The answer is for all the planners to get together and tell the Government that there is a role for national guidance because, at the moment, the Government does not appear to think it is necessary.

J Collins

I think we have told them but they seem to have put those famous mufflers on.

E Owen (Wales Tourist Board)

I want to make an observation on what David Bown said. I was particularly pleased to hear him talking about tourism in the context of it being an adjunct to other forms of economic enterprise. Over the past few years I note my own Board has become aware that people may expect too much from tourism. It is almost a feeling that tourism is becoming compulsory.

David talked a lot about environmental issues and I think these need to take precedence. There are also other factors which have to be taken into account when one considers tourism. There is a danger, I think, of pushing the wrong people into tourism activities. I think this is particularly true in relation to farm tourism enterprises. Some farms are suitable for tourism enterprises, others are not.

Perhaps more importantly, some people have the personal qualities to make a go of it, others do not. Our fear in this respect is that if one pushes people into tourism, the end result will be a tourism product which is of inferior quality and which is not going to be capable of being sustained in the long term.

J Collins

I agree, but hopefully you can try and help by using local education facilities, local agricultural colleges, and so on, to run courses for these people about the ways of doing it better.

R Sidaway (Research and Policy Consultant)

I want to go back to the previous point about the vacuum in government policy. It has become very evident during the whole of this Conference that this gap exists. We have had indications in Colin Spedding's paper, for example, which hinted at this point. David Bown has shown how the European regional policies, in some senses, present the ray of hope for the way ahead.

To piece together some of the things which were said earlier, the vacuum is not only lying within Westminster, it is also in Whitehall. One of the crucial areas is the way in which European directives are implemented in each of the Member States, the way in which the Government departments react. One of the questioners from the floor yesterday suggested there is far more flexibility in implementing European directives and policies than Whitehall will allow us to believe.

Perhaps I can be slightly radical and try to follow up the mood of the meeting. The suggestion just now was that the planners should get together and try to exert some pressure on government. There is one other alternative which should also be explored and that is for CRRAG, and member agencies of CRRAG, also to raise this issue. My question then is perhaps to CRRAG, to its Chairman, and to this session's

Chairman who is, after all, the Director of one of these environmental agencies, as to whether they are prepared to pick up the challenge, and take the theme of the Conference and the issue forward?

I will make one final point. I once went to a conference in Australia and was amazed to find, with my English middle class politeness, that the conference actually passed resolutions which were presented to Government. Perhaps this Conference would like to respond to the challenge and present its resolution on this topic to CRRAG and put a little pressure on them to take the issue further.

D Campbell

Thank you Roger. You are always bound to be an irritant and a pleasant one – a useful stimulus before coffee.

D Bown

In fairness, a lot of the organisations are doing just that. The Countryside Commission has very recently come out with its fairly forthright ideas on planning in the countryside and future government policy in respect of planning in the countryside. The Country Landowners' Association has also contributed and so have lots of other people – and that is great. I think it is all part of this throwing the hat into the ring. Whether any of it will have any effect whatsoever is another matter.

D Wain

I think it would have an effect if we all got together and did it jointly. Clearly the Government do not listen to individuals. So I think we should all get together.

D Campbell

Well there seems to be really quite a strong feeling about this and I think it is something which CRRAG has to take away and think about. I am thankful for David's remarks that the agencies, including both the Countryside Commissions, have been active in their various ways in promoting policies and issues to government on a whole range of issues.

Roger Clarke is instrumental in his Countryside Commission's promotion of various issues in changing the countryside, as we have been in Scotland. The art is how to get the Government to listen.

RO Smith (Isle of Wight County Council)

There are several Councillors here, perhaps we could pass the resolution. They cannot sack us!

J Collins

Again this is something which the professional planners hope they can do. I have just recently been asked to take over the Chair of the Royal Town Planning Institute's Countryside Working Party and that in itself is the sort of issue which we want to get in on and continue to press for. The Countryside Working Party have lain a little dormant

recently while all these things were being raised. The world is moving fast and we professional planners have to move with it. I know that those members of the Royal Town Planning Institute who are here will support me on this. We can certainly feed in and work with CRRAG and other agencies to do it. So we ought to be talking together about this.

M Collins (Sports Council)

First a comment and then a question. I was involved in the planning of this Conference, when we looked at recreation and land use issues. It seems to me that part of our problem is that we do not have a national land use strategy and that the Government has regarded recreation as a secondary use, with small fragments of land often changing use quite frequently. I tried to get evidence from planners around the country and I could only find four county authorities which had decent long term land use change data. In two urban fringe counties, Cheshire and Hertfordshire, over the last ten years the movement of land from agriculture into recreation was the second largest land use change. The largest was from agriculture into housing. I wonder how many other urban or rural counties would find change of a similar magnitude. I also wonder if it is not time to start regarding recreation as a land use in its own right.

That is the first thing I would like to comment on. That might make people look a bit more seriously at the value and use of land.

Secondly, because the Government, through its Minister, told the agencies in the recreation business that it did not need a leisure policy overall, the Chief Executives and Chairmen seem to have decided that getting together is not worth while, which I think is a pity. However, it seems to me that many of the issues are equally about managing the volume of activity and we do not seem to have a consensus on activity management. The Arts Council, the Sports Council, the Tourist Boards, the Nature Conservancy Council, have all recently produced studies on the economic value of recreation and leisure to the community as a whole and to job generation.

We do not seem to be putting together the volume of land use change, the volume of activity, its importance in people's lives, and the value that participants and consumers give to it in their lifestyles, to make any sort of case at all. We seem to be letting outside forces rule where we are and where we want to be.

D Campbell

I think time has beaten us. So we will let Michael Collins have the last word. Thank you very much for that and we note what you say.

On your behalf I would like to thank both John Collins and David Bown very much indeed for both their talks and the depth in which they answered your questions.

FARM DIVERSIFICATION AND THE TENANT FARMER

Brian McLaughlin

Head of Land Use, Agricultural Resources Department
National Farmers Union

INTRODUCTION

Before going much further, I would like to reinterpret the brief for this paper and extend its coverage to include some of the general problems facing farmers who choose to diversify (whether owner occupiers or tenants). I will then consider some of the specific issues facing the tenant who is interested in diversification. I prefer to do that primarily because I feel that to concentrate entirely on the tenant dimension overlooks a number of other major considerations which I feel are too important to ignore.

Before doing so, however, I would like to:

(a) sketch in some of the policy background to farm diversification;

(b) talk a little about the response of the farming community to date.

This approach will then allow me to focus on some of the problems and issues which determine interest in and uptake of diversification, including those factors which are internal and external to the farming industry.

POLICY BACKGROUND

Although diversification on farms is not new, as a component of government policy it has relatively recent origins. In political terms it owes its current high profile to the Government's declared intentions to 'do something' about the cost of the Common Agricultural Policy and especially about the cost of storage and disposal of surplus food production which has become something of an ideological and financial embarrassment to the current Government.

In policy terms, it received some formal recognition in the 1986 Agricultural Act in which Section 22 allowed for the payment by the Ministry of Agriculture of capital grant aid for diversified activities on farms. (The subsequent administrative problems which that gave rise to with other Rural Agencies with a remit for rural employment were considerable but that perhaps is another paper.)

The much heralded ALURE proposals which first saw official light in February 1987 gave further support to the principle of farm diversification and that principle was more clearly articulated with the publication of the series of documents entitled 'Farming and Rural Enterprise' in March 1987. Within that package it was clearly argued that the Government wanted the farming industry to become more market orientated. At the same time it saw the future of farming production as

a wider range of non-food products including trees and all the other activities that are now being promoted such as tourism, sport and recreation, etc.

These proposals achieved legislative respectability with the publication of the Farmland and Rural Development Bill in October 1987 which became an Act in early 1988. The first part of the Farm Diversification Scheme came into effect in January 1988. That allowed for the payment of capital grants for up to 25% of approved expenditure to a maximum of £35,000. An additional 6.25% grant is available for eligible farmers who are under 40 years of age.

Payment of the grant is subject to prescribed eligibility criteria which govern both the applicant and the type of activity that he/she is proposing to develop. In the context of this particular Conference, participants should note the specific exclusion of 'noisy sports' from the list of eligible activities - something to which I will return later in this presentation.

Subsequently, we have seen the second part of the Scheme introduced. This allows for the payment of marketing and feasibility grants to help the development and promotion of new business on farms. These provide grants of up to £3,000 for individual applicants and £10,000 for groups for a maximum of 50% of the cost of a feasibility study. Grants of 40%, 30% and 20% of the marketing costs incurred over the first three years of a new business are also available with the same grant ceilings that apply to feasibility grants.

THE RESPONSE

It is difficult (indeed impossible) to measure the extent to which farmers are diversifying. It is certainly true to argue that the take up of farm diversification grants is not a reflection of the true extent of on farm diversification. I say that for a number of reasons:

(a) diversification is not new and a number of imaginative and successful ventures existed on farms long before the current scheme;

(b) many schemes proceed without grant aid either because the activity itself is not eligible or simply because the scale of the new project is such that the available grant is not worth bothering about.

The other issue that bedevils analysis of diversification is the fact that it is often done for the benefit of a member of the farmer's family rather than the farmer himself/herself. As a result, data on farmers taking up new activities do not always reflect the full extent of take up on farms.

From the available information, however, the pattern of farm diversification at present would appear to be as follows. Despite the political rhetoric that surrounds the new activities that are eligible for grant aid such as tourism, recreation, value added etc, the reality is slightly different. By far and away the most common form of diversification on farms is the provision of services for other farmers, ie, contract services such as spraying, ploughing, combining, hedging

and haulage (which includes non-farm services). The second most common activity would appear to be farm related enterprises such as farm shops, farm tourism. In both these categories the farmer would appear to be staying within the range of his competence, ie, he is dealing with familiar resources.

Comparatively low on the list are the politically 'sexy' activities such as horse riding, clay pigeon shooting, golf courses, etc. It seems to me that the importance of these activities tends to be greater on the column inches of the press rather than in the reality of the farm business. This is not to suggest that locally or on an individual basis, these activities are not important, but globally, they remain relatively small scale, no doubt reflecting their comparatively restricted market. I have restricted my observations to non-commodity diversification and as such have excluded activities such as goat, deer and snail farming, or crops such as linseed, borage or evening primrose.

WHAT INFLUENCES DECISIONS TO DIVERSIFY

The answer to this must be seen in two contexts: internal factors, ie, factors related to the farm or the farmer himself; external factors, ie, off farm influences.

Internal Factors

These include

(a) The location of the holding relative to demand. It is not surprising for example that the popularity of projects such as open farms and farm shops is greater in highly populated regions.

(b) The nature and topography of the holding. The diversity of resources and their quality is also a key determinant of diversification potential.

(c) The level of indebtedness. To put it simply, diversification costs money and it is seldom the answer for a farmer who is already in serious financial difficulties.

(d) The farmer's skills as a businessman. This is a major issue that seldom gets the attention that it requires. On the one hand many farmers are good at farming, ie, producing raw materials for the food industry, but not at any other business. On the other hand, even good farmers have to recognise that the diversification market is not a managed or protected market. Consequently they are forced to pit their business wits against a wide selection of entrepreneurs, many of whom have long established and high level business skills derived outside farming.

(e) The demands of the existing agricultural enterprise and the compatibility of new activities with that enterprise can be a major constraint. At its crudest level, the demands of many activities are often greatest at the same time as the existing farming activities require the greatest labour input.

(f) The tenure status of the holding is sometimes another crucial constraint. The terms of a tenancy agreement can be a major constraint to diversification. Nearly all agreements contain a covenant against assignment, sub-letting or otherwise parting with possession. Similarly, many agreements specify that the holding may be used only or primarily as a particular type of agricultural holding, eg, dairy or arable. Such an agreement would automatically preclude any non-agricultural activity unless landlord's consent were forthcoming.

Perhaps the area of greatest concern for tenants relates to the fact that most diversification activities need planning permission. There is an inherent danger here in that tenants are vulnerable when planning permission is granted on tenanted land. In short, such permission allows landlords to remove that land from the tenancy in return for which the tenants statutory maximum compensation entitlement is a sum equal to six times the rental value. We are already beginning to see schemes being submitted mainly by institutional landlords for diversification schemes (often including residential development) from which the tenant benefit is nil. This is probably an area where problems will increase in the future. In all of these situations, however, the result is an extra burden or pitfall for the tenant farmer which the owner occupier does not have.

External Factors

In addition to the issues addressed above, the farmer's decision to diversify often means that his/her future is decided on a number of policy agendas other than agriculture. Regulatory controls exist to trap the unwary. Planning is the one that has perhaps attracted most attention although in my experience highway regulations are arguably more problematic for many diversifying farmers. (Indeed it is one of the tragedies of the ALURE proposals that they exclude any specific proposals to improve rural infrastructure.) Environmental Health policies can also be problematic as indeed can Customs and Excise on the subject of subsidised fuel (red diesel) being used for non-agricultural activities.

Underpinning all of these regulatory controls, however, is the wider issue of the changing social context of farm diversification. The countryside is not only living through an agricultural policy revolution but also something of a social revolution in terms of who is now living there and what they expect of the countryside.

As house purchase in rural areas moves beyond basic considerations of shelter to embrace other matters such as environment and investment, the attitude of farming's new neighbours can be crucial. For some new enterprises, the attitude is total opposition. This is especially true of 'noisy' activities such as motorsports or clay pigeon shooting. (Ironically, many of these new neighbours are living in houses sold to them by neighbouring farmers!)

Increasingly, however, in my experience the opposition is somewhat more subtle. Opposition is not to the activity **in principle** but more to the scale of activity proposed. This is often a much more difficult

matter to deal with as you then have to become involved in the economics of the debate both in terms of justifying the need for the activity and explaining the economies of scale that underpin it.

As the need for diversification on farm continues and the repopulation of the countryside increases space, I anticipate more difficulties in this context, especially as the new populations become actively involved in local decision making.

It is for these reasons – both internal and external – that to date, farm diversification has tended to be the preserve of the more entrepreneurial members of the farming community. The successful ventures have been developed by those with flair and skill (irrespective of size of holding). This poses a problem in my opinion. As I said earlier, not all farmers share this expertise. Consequently, they do not have the necessary intellectual capital to make diversification a realistic option. But there is another dimension to this debate. As we all know, the diversification market is finite.

There is a limit to the number of golf courses or riding establishments that can be viable. If these limited markets are being cornered by the entrepreneurial farmer, what options will be available to the latecomers in the race whose financial need to diversify may be even greater than it is at present? But that is a problem that faces all farmers – whether they be tenants or owner occupiers. In short and in conclusion, the political rhetoric that has surrounded farm diversification to date probably far outweighs any benefit that such diversification will or can provide for the farming community as a whole, irrespective of the successes of individuals.

LANDOWNERS' VIEWS OF MANAGING THE CHANGE

Philip Merricks

Landowner, Arable Farmer and Nature Reserve Manager

The one word that really has come across to me here in the past couple of days has been the word 'countryside'. It is really quite extraordinary and a particularly British regard that we have over the countryside. I listened to David Bown, the Dyfed County Planning Officer, a few minutes ago and his very last words were, "We may lose the word countryside from the English language". Well, when I should have been concentrating on his paper I confess I was counting up the number of times the word countryside was printed on the front of the CRRAG programme. It actually comes to 59, which certainly means that countryside is important to you. No danger of losing the word countryside whilst CRRAG is still around!

But why do we, as a nation as a whole, value the countryside? I am a farmer and landowner; we perhaps take it for granted. We are rather surprised by everybody's interest in it. Why do we value the countryside? Do we value it for ecological or biological reasons? Do we value it for scenic reasons? Is it for economic reasons? Or, do we like CRRAG value the countryside for recreational reasons? Well I put it to you that some might think that we value our countryside much as we value our wives. As married men we might well be asked why we had married our wives. Was it for biological reasons? Or scenic reasons? Or for economic reasons? Or even perhaps for recreational reasons!

I want to try to put across to you that this regard we have for our countryside is a very odd phenomenon and it is a very British phenomenon. I value my piece of countryside, and I am saying mine as a landowner, but it is yours, it is the Nation's. It is on the marshes, it is flat, it was reclaimed from the sea 300 to 400 years ago. It has no trees, so some might think it a very ordinary piece of countryside, but I will tell you why I value it. It is not because of the efforts we make on the ground, the boring monoculture of 2,000 acres of winter wheat and oilseed rape. It is not because of the efforts we make of our 2,000 acres of nature reserve. I value my piece of countryside for its 'Big Sky'. The unique phenomenon of the Big Sky of the marshes. We have what is to many a very boring flat landscape. We have a flat wide horizon, and this is accompanied by this Big Sky which I believe is not understood by many. Artists appreciate it. It makes us feel very small and our efforts on the ground very puny. A reminder to farmers and landowners that, out there, or even up there, is somebody greater than us, or perhaps even greater than us. Perhaps even greater than the Countryside Commission!

What I will do now is to put across my views as a farmer and a landowner. The view as I see it from the sharp end, actually out in the countryside. I stress that these are merely views and this contribution is not a written paper as such.

Having so few farmers here, which is obviously bound to happen in September, I believe I should beat the drum for the National Farmers Union as well as the Country Landowners Association. As well as being a landowner I am a farmer and a National Farmers Union member. I think we should beat the drum to get the farmers' and landowners' message across to you members of the local authorities and statutory bodies.

'Managing the Change' is my subject at this Conference. Let's start right from the beginning. What are the circumstances that have brought about the change? Quite categorically, I am going to say that the reasons for the change are the turnabout from shortage to surplus of our food supplies. In the 1940s this country was very close to starvation. Farmers and landowners were given a very clear remit by Government to get on and produce food and we have responded to Government signals. The farming industry has done the job it was asked to do. Do not forget that. Even in the late 1970s, Government was churning out White Papers - 'Farming and the Nation', 'Food from our Own Resources' - we were still being given the signals by Government to produce food until very recent times.

I believe agriculture over the past 40 years has been a success story. I heard Mrs Thatcher's speech as Prime Minister when she opened the Rural Show in 1981. She quite categorically said, "If only the whole of industry had performed as well as agriculture, then the economy of this country would have been transformed". Then, perhaps she was told that agriculture only represented 3% of the population and there are not an awful lot of votes in 3%, so it appears that as an industry we are being ditched! But do not forget her words - "If only the whole of industry had performed as well as agriculture then the economy of this country would have been transformed".

I know there have been repercussions, ecological, employment, and environmental, but the agricultural industry did the job it was asked to do and as a result, at the moment, we are, or at least are perceived to be, in a position of surplus.

Coming back to what Colin Spedding told us yesterday, these surpluses may or may not be around forever. We have the greenhouse effect, the ozone layer depletion, carbon dioxide build up, the possibility of another Chernobyl. I do not pretend to understand it all but one thing I do know is that surpluses will not go on forever, and they have dramatically shortened in the past 18 months. As you saw previously, you cannot buy an ounce of skimmed milk powder out of the EEC intervention stores. Another point - the World's wheat supplies are now down to a mere 53 days. I refer you to recent reports from the Worldwatch Institute, the Food and Agriculture Organisation and the International Wheat Council. At the time of a wheat shortage in the early 1970s, when the Russians were buying like crazy in what became known as the 'Great Grain Robbery', world supplies were 65 days! Perceptions of surpluses would appear to have more importance than facts!

The other point I want you to remember, and I really believe this is important, is that the costs of shortage are very much *greater than* the costs of surplus.

We are now in September 1988, and the signals from Government, EEC, Ministry of Agriculture, from whoever, are to reduce price support, reduce commodity prices and reduce farm incomes. That is going to affect me and my colleagues. This will bring a change so perhaps I should get back to talking about managing the change.

I was asked by the Country Landowners Association to speak today. Now the Country Landowners Association represents 45,000 landowners. They are not all belted earls with broad acres, whatever view people may have of the Country Landowners Association. In my region, which is the south east, 60% of Country Landowners Association members own under 100 acres - that is not a lot. The ownership of land does not necessarily equate to having ready money available - in fact, very often it is the opposite. The people who own land are often the people with the large overdrafts, so often there will not be ready money available for investment in alternative uses such as recreation.

To pick up Brian McLaughlin's theme, I totally agree with him on this landlord and tenant relationship. It is a bit old hat and nobody wants to be confrontational about it. In 1900 more than 90% of land was tenanted, in 1988 it is less than 30%. The landlord sector has declined because of the legislative, financial and taxation pressures. It has not been very good business being a landlord for the past 80 years. So, 70% of the land of this country is owner occupied. Personally, I am quite pleased about that; I like the idea and the philosophy behind owner occupation.

You don't have to read Aristotle to understand the mind of an owner occupier. Just look at a council house that has been sold off to the tenant to see the pride of ownership that goes in to putting up a new porch, painting the windows or whatever. These householders had security of tenure, but once it is theirs, somehow it becomes different, and I think that is important. The same principle applies to land as much as anything else.

In my own case, we are predominantly owner occupiers, but we are landlords on two farms and tenants on two others. We lease 650 acres to the Royal Society for the Protection of Birds as a bird reserve. So I like to say that I can see all sides of this. The tenant, the landlord, the owner occupier, are in it together. Do not forget that you do not have tenants if you do not have landlords and vice versa, so we have to see the case for both sides.

The countryside is rather like our religion. Everyone professes an interest in their religion as they do about the countryside. Everybody gets worked up about it, but not many people are positive about it, and especially in relation to the countryside, not many people know the costs of managing it. I am reminded of a story, told to me by a very eminent man in the world of conservation, on the costs of the countryside. While being sized up by his future father in law, he was taken out onto the terrace and the man looked at his prospective son in law and said, "Look my boy, what do you see on my estate land out there?". The man did not know whether to go on about nightingales, song thrushes, Keats, Shelley or whatever, and was rather stuck for words but he managed to mumble something that embraced the romance of the countryside. His future father in law said, "No my boy you are

B McLaughlin

Certainly the grant aid system is gearing towards cooperative ventures between farmers. But I come back to a point that I think is important. The independence of the farmers is not just the result of physical isolation, they are very protective of their own schemes and this creates major problems. I will just give you a very small example.

I deal with quite a few interesting cases at headquarters but I dealt with my first inter-member dispute quite recently. This is a dimension which I did not mention in my address, and that is that one farmer's solution can also be another farmer's problem. This was the situation in a very high amenity and attractive area where one farmer decided that he was going to diversify into log cabins and holiday accommodation. It was well within the spirit of the Act, but did not take into account the fact a nearby farmer was in sheep production. He had all sorts of images of more people sheep worrying and everything else.

The problem was almost inevitable because even with the County and Group Secretary structure that we have, which is a fairly dense coverage of manpower on the ground, the bottom line was that the farmer with the diversification scheme was not prepared to talk to anybody locally because he did not want anybody knowing what he was up to, and he was frightened in case someone would get in first and steal a march on him. So there are real difficulties with the farming community because of their independence.

Again, I think there is potential, but I suspect, and I may be wrong here, that the potential will be realised more at the high income end amongst the entrepreneurial businessmen farmers as opposed to the rank and file of the farming community.

RO Smith (Isle of Wight County Council)

Philip Merricks, how do you equate managing a nature reserve with intensive farming?

P Merricks

I think with the greatest of ease. I personally have an ethic of production. I believe it is morally wrong not to use land to its optimum, whether that optimum is intensive production of agriculture or intensive production of nature conservation. I am quite happy to do both.

On Romney Marsh we are producing cereals at a very low cost per ton. We are producing high yields with quite low costs. I believe we can compete with the rest of the world. On our nature reserve I believe we can compete with the County Trust or anybody else. We are determined to make that nature reserve a damn good nature reserve, and we are maximising our nature conservation crop off that 2,000 acres.

I think this is the challenge for me as a farmer. I do not want to be paid by the Nature Conservancy Council under the Wildlife and Countryside Act to leave that land as it is. I want the challenge of managing that land and then for people to say, "Well there is a farmer

who is managing an National Nature Reserve, the largest National Nature Reserve in the English lowlands, isn't he doing a rotten job" or, possibly, "Isn't he doing a good job". That is the challenge - the maximising of the use of the land for the nation. I believe there is no conflict whatsoever.

D Campbell

I think there is a Scottish gloss to that in the sense that where you have farm viabilities which are more fragile, or where there is a limitation on prime quality land, the difficulties of striking a balance become more acute.

R Mitchell (Wakefield Metropolitan District Council)

I want to react to what both speakers have said in a way that perhaps looks at it from a slightly different angle. The implication in what you were saying was that what diversification is about is essentially maximising the income of the existing families. Set this against the background of the loss of hedgerows, the loss of species, the loss of habitats, and so on. But much less often alluded to is the loss of one particular species which is really endangered in the countryside, and that is people.

One of the speakers last night talked about the decline in the population in his parish or area, and this is universal. As somebody who grew up in a well peopled countryside, where very small farms were the norm, I find that there is something almost eerie about the emptiness of much of the British countryside.

What I would like to hear the speakers comment on is whether diversification of the farm economy should not really be part of the diversification of the rural economy? Is it necessarily farm enterprise centred, or should we be looking to alternative activities growing up around core villages in the way that the Peak District National Park have pioneered to a certain extent in a couple of villages? Should we not be concentrating on diversification activities that are labour intensive and are going to put some people back in the rural scene?

B McLaughlin

On another paper that I delivered quite recently my opening remarks were that despite the concentration on land use, the current agricultural debate is as much a people problem as it is a land problem, so I fully support the argument. I would also argue that the countryside at the moment represents one of the biggest challenges to corporate planning this country has ever seen - a bigger challenge than the cities have ever presented.

It saddens me a little that we have approached this challenge in a somewhat compartmentalised fashion. The farming community will never accept that diversification is the answer to their problems and will certainly never argue that diversification is the answer to the countryside's problems. What it will argue, though, is that it is a way of keeping one component of the countryside alive and ticking. I accept the argument that it is often the farm family rather than the farmer who does this.

But there is, without question, scope for more initiatives whereby we get diversification off farm as well as on farm. The need for that is becoming critical, particularly in the south east of the country, where it seems as though much of the response to rural economic revival is tied to one particular ship – and that is 'high tech'. With the best will in the world the opportunities for local people to participate in 'high tech' employment are scant.

So I would like to argue, and would argue while wearing my academic hat, that we must try and get a greater integration between the policies of the Ministry of Agriculture, the policies of the Rural Development Commission, the policies of local authorities and everybody else. Unfortunately, very often that cooperation stops at the rhetoric around the table.

P Merricks

I know exactly what you are driving at. Perhaps I could expand on it. For the past five years I have worked for the Rural Development Commission and the Council for Small Industries in Rural Areas and I am very much into rural employment. I am aware that my grandfather, in his time, employed well over 100 people whilst the number we employ is in the mid 20s, and we are trying to do something about it.

When we talk about rural depopulation I think it is a sobering thing to look at the south east. This nature reserve we are talking about is one estate, it is one parish. In the census of 1860 there were 461 people recorded as living there. There was a brick works, cement works, pub, a factory, school, ferries, which have all gone. When we bought the estate there were five people there – from 461 to five in 120 years. That is one entire community that has gone in south east England, in Kent, close to London, a very sobering thing.

T Trueman (Leeds Polytechnic)

Colin Spedding outlined a scenario where 10 million acres of land could come out of production, and then went on to postulate further that this would then lead to much cheaper land prices which would possibly, in turn, lead to more small owner occupancy of farmland. I wonder what our speakers think of that hypothesis? Also, does that link into the idea of repopulating the countryside and being more labour intensive in production? What sort of future does that kind of scenario hold for diversification? Obviously whatever the number of farms is that are diversifying, if this sort of thing develops and land prices fall and more people go into small farms, will they all want to diversify? In the end they would not be diversifying – they would all be doing the same thing.

B McLaughlin

I suppose if I could predict with any accuracy what is going to happen to land values within the next ten years I would not be sitting here – I would be working in the City. I do not necessarily subscribe to the theory that land prices are suddenly going to plummet because one of the interesting things about land and the countryside at the

moment is that whilst it might have lost its way as far as agriculture is concerned, we are certainly finding new ways to adapt to and accommodate new activities in the countryside.

I do not like to take a south east perspective all the time, but I live in the south east and I talk from my own experience. It is interesting that land values in some parts of the south east continue to rise. It has nothing to do with the agricultural value, it is a fact that some farmers have found a very novel way of disposing of land. They do not sell a farm with a house, they sell a house and 30 acres on the residential market, and sell the remainder of the farm on the agricultural market. In that way you keep your land values up.

I was in Dorset last week and I found the same process going on there. I have a funny feeling that the Country Planning Officer from Cheshire would recognise the same process. So I do not subscribe to the theory that land values are going to plummet to some base level.

T Trueman

He did not exactly say they would plummet, he just postulated that they may well fall. He did not say it would be a crisis.

B McLaughlin

Fall is a relative concept, let us leave it like that. You can fall from £3,000 an acre to £2,800 an acre and it is really only a blip on the screen. Coming back to your second point about what that is going to mean for diversification, diversification is business, at the end of the day. It is not some sort of leisure pursuit like stamp collecting, it has got to make money, it has got to be done on a business basis. As in the case of organic food or whatever, there will be a market for diversified products of varying kinds and that will determine the degree of diversification. There will never be great areas of land falling out of production for which we have no known use, there will always be a use for land.

Certainly farmers will find a use for the land because ultimately, as is happening in East Anglia, if we do not want to grow cereals on it we will put it down to grass, run sheep on it and take the East Anglian economy back to where it started. That raises another set of questions about the knock on effect of that for the rest of the country and the uplands, but that is another debate.

S Ankers (Greater Manchester Countryside Unit)

I wonder if I might go back to something that Philip Merricks was saying a little earlier about intensive, effective and efficient use of land – using the land to grow as much as possible but also managing the land positively for nature conservation. If carried out in the same way across the whole country, that could lead to a position where you have a rather polarised countryside with little oases of habitat surrounded by more and more bleak landscape. Is that really the kind of landscape that either Philip Merricks or the rest of us want to see and is it the best thing for wildlife?

P Merricks

That is an interesting view. I have given my own personal views. I like to maximise things that I do, but as I said to you, the countryside is managed by countless thousands of farmers. I have several neighbours who really are not maximising anything. They are doing something different, and next door something else is happening. So the countryside is still a patchwork quilt of people doing different things for all sorts of different reasons so you are getting different intensities of management.

I strongly believe in optimum production of cereals; we are still producing a lot of cereals very profitably – although it is coming down. On nature conservation, it is a challenge to me to see our wader breeding numbers going up tenfold. I think that is a real challenge. Through management, through a mozaic of grazing, through very careful water management, through advice from the Royal Society for the Protection of Birds and the Nature Conservancy Council, we have optimised our management. I do not like doing something and nothing, if I am going to do something I like to try and do it well.

D Campbell

We must draw this session to a close. I must say that I have been struck by many of the things both speakers have said. It is invidious to select, but I think Philip Merricks made an important point in saying that the period of surplus may be quite a short. So maybe a thought we should have is to identify those aspects of diversification which are robust, both in the short and long term. So on your behalf can we thank both Philip and Brian for their very stimulating addresses.

THE NEW COUNTRYSIDE OF BRITAIN

Roger Clarke

Assistant Director, Countryside Commission and CRRAG Chairman

INTRODUCTION

I am sure that those of you living west of Offa's Dyke or across the Irish Sea would endorse Duncan Campbell's introductory remarks from your own particular perspectives. In the space of ten minutes I do not think that I can really attempt to say all I would like to say about the new countryside of Britain. Instead what I would like to give you is a few personal reflections on the issues which we had hoped to address through this Conference on the theme 'Changing Land Use and Recreation'.

That will, of course, relate to what the new countryside of Britain is going to look like. But, essentially, I am going to take a slightly narrower focus and look at changing land use and recreational opportunities and the kind of themes that have been present throughout the Conference.

I would like to speak for a few minutes about different perspectives on those themes and then I will come round to some action points which I have noted and which others might wish to think about.

CHANGING LAND USE AND RECREATION

My first question is whether there is any link between these two things. It seems to me that on one level you might think that there is an obvious link but really I am not so sure that there is, at least not a very strong link.

We have heard that major land use changes may take place, 50% of our cereal land being no longer needed to produce cereals. But I think the consensus seems to be that it will not happen dramatically with a whole lot of land vanishing from farming and moving into some other area of activity.

If land use change does take place it is likely to affect areas very differentially. I thought the points that Bob Bunce was making yesterday about the polarisation of land use between intensification of production in the south and east, and farmers and land managers really struggling in the north and west, were points well made. This polarisation is something that we may well experience. So Duncan, I hear what you say, I do not expect the same patterns to emerge in East Anglia as will affect the Highlands and Islands.

One of the challenges in particular which will face us is how we maintain agricultural systems in the upland or mountain areas both in this country and elsewhere in the European Community. The European dimension in land use change is likely to remain important. Whatever our political leaders may say, we now seem to be irretrievably

committed to participation in the European community and transnational policies are likely to remain important, including the Common Agricultural Policy.

But in all these dimensions of land use change, recreation is rarely the primary land use. We have golf courses, picnic sites and country parks, but it is rarely the primary land use. This is unlikely to change very much. But what is changing is increasing recognition of the importance of recreation as a secondary land use on land that is primarily managed for other purposes - as farmland or as forest land. It is that dimension that has come through to me as being important for the Conference rather than us suddenly seeing thousands of hectares released for some unspecified form of recreation. As Philip Merricks has reminded us, we might not know what to do with it anyway.

FARMERS' INCOMES

Is there any relationship between all the discussion about diversification, and an improvement in recreational opportunities for the general public? Farmers have always had problems about their incomes. This is not a new story, although I have considerable sympathy for the dilemma in which farmers find themselves at the moment, having been given one set of messages but now being expected to work towards some new set of goals.

Clearly, the relationship between diversification and income support for farmers on the one hand, and improved recreational opportunities on the other, is not a very clear linkage. Recreational developments and tourism are only very partial solutions from the farmer's point of view to the dilemmas that farmers face.

The area of green tourism has emerged, and new types of tourism with the countryside as a resource, an area worth exploring. We have farmers making a bit of money by selling products, services or activities on their farms. Motorsports, fishing, fieldsports, clay pigeon shooting, all these are developing areas and many people are thinking very creatively about these things. So this is important but essentially they are fairly small scale activities, they are not likely to become dominant activities either for an individual farmer or in the pattern of recreation provision as a whole.

Although the Country Landowners Association is looking at ways of people paying for access to the countryside, I do not think, as a general rule, that is either desirable or feasible. In a sense, the tradition which we have of people not paying at the point of entry for access to the rights of way or to the open space is a tradition which I think we would be very ill advised to move away from. I do not think that is feasible or desirable and I do not see it as a means of helping the farmers out of their difficulties.

However, I do recognise that free access, free at the point of entry, does cost somebody money, that managing the footpath network is not cost free. In future we will have to look at how that type of activity might be financed in a better way than it is at the moment, and I will come back to that in a minute.

Farm diversification on the one hand and recreational opportunities on the other are not necessarily two things that mesh all that well together.

THE USERS

In a sense we have not heard a lot about the users' interest at this Conference. We have heard about the land management interest and the overall perspectives on change, but what are the opportunities for users of the countryside, recreational users, as a result of these changes? I think, psychologically, because intensive food production is no longer so important there are opportunities for other activities to assume a higher profile in the countryside as a result. So it is a psychological point about it being a time of opportunity for countryside recreation.

At the same time we have a population that is, in substantial part, wealthier, more discriminating, more adventurous, more active, and more willing to assert that it is their countryside and that their presence there is not a concession but is something which is part of their citizenship. I thought that the concept of land being a national heritage, as well as a personal possession, was a point well made and that somehow we have to live with those two faces of the countryside.

If recreation is to become more important, we have somehow to get recreation interest and user interest onto the agenda at a whole lot of different levels, in a way which, perhaps, they have not been in the past - perhaps because of the fragmented nature of the recreation community, the very differing sorts of demands and so on. So getting user interests onto the agenda seems to me to be important, including onto the agenda of this Conference.

ACTION POINTS

As a point of general perspective, it seems to me that thinking globally and acting locally is the message that I would take away from the Conference. It would be good to have a grand strategy which would solve all the problems but I take the point that Colin Spedding made yesterday and David Bown made today. The picture is not clear and is unlikely suddenly to become clear about the countryside of the future. In that confusing situation thinking globally, trying to see the general picture, but acting locally and doing particular things in particular places to try to move us forward is the sort of approach that I would suggest we take.

I would like briefly to refer to six points about areas for action. Firstly it seems to me that we need to work away at genuinely building in recreation as a secondary land use across much of our countryside in a way which has not in any real sense been seen in the past. In our forests, on our farmland, there is a need to develop the concept of recreational opportunities as a recognised part of the way in which that land is managed. Again there is not time to develop that theme, it has many applications and I simply invite you to think about what the applications of that concept are in the areas where you live or work.

Secondly, we need to see farmers much more - and I say 'we' here as the official community - as the countryside managers of the future, as they have been the countryside managers of the past. We must really get our minds round developing schemes for channelling public funds to support those aspects of countryside management which cannot be financed through private enterprise - the costs which are not met by the letting of the clay pigeon shooting or the motorcycle scrambling track, or whatever. Prototypes here are management agreements, offered so far for conservation rather than for recreation, the Environmentally Sensitive Areas concept, farmers being supported to undertake environmentally friendly types of agricultural management. We are lagging behind in the recreational field in developing that concept in a recreational sense.

The set aside scheme so far is a considerable disappointment both from a conservation and a recreational point of view. But perhaps there is potential there for developing or adding objectives which are about recreation as well as about surplus production.

Then there is the area which has come up several times where I feel a certain embarrassment that we have not been able to make more progress, about farmers being the primary agents for managing the rights of way network. If we are going to get the rights of way network into good shape by the end of this century then the farmers have to find ways of seeing it as an asset rather than as a liability. One of the obvious ways is for them to be supported to act as managers of that network on behalf of the nation as a whole. That requires new ways of thinking, some finance and some experimental schemes to get it going. So, I see farmers as the primary countryside managers.

Thirdly, that seems to me to have implications for the way in which the public authority community thinks about this concept of countryside management. At a fringe event last night Richard Graves was saying that there are new ways of looking at countryside management. Is it a local authority function in the future? Should it be carried out from the private sector? The Countryside Commission in England and Wales has been focussing on the area wide nature of ranger or countryside management work, as opposed to the site based focus which was important previously.

So, we have to think of new ways of applying the relatively limited amount of public sector manpower in what we currently call countryside management, so that it supports and facilitates, among other things, the initiatives taken by farmers and landowners.

Fourthly, as I mentioned a few minutes ago, I think we have to get our minds around the concept of green or soft tourism, so that there is a development of a kind of tourism which is compatible with countryside conservation and countryside recreation, linking to the asset which the countryside represents; making the most of the woods, villages, rights of way that constitute the ordinary countryside, and seeing that as a very important tourist resource. I think we need to find new strategies for getting alongside the tourism community and making sense of the concept of green tourism.

Fifthly, local action. Philip Merricks said that what we need is bottom up initiative and top down assistance. He was speaking primarily about the individual entrepreneur. Fair enough. The same might be said of local communities who, in a different sense, are custodians of a lot of countryside.

Public agencies, whether at local or national government level, need to do more thinking about how they can get alongside local community organisations in the development of recreational potential of the local countryside. So local action seems to me very important. The key for organisations such as my own is to think how we can best link to that local action which, I believe, is already there. It is simply a question of our plugging into it in the way which is most helpful.

Finally, the question of the policy vacuum. I enjoyed Roger Sidaway's comments about the role of CRRAG and his desire to pass resolutions - you always feel better if you pass resolutions, I know that. When Roger was Chairman of this organisation he refused such a request from the floor to pass a resolution at a previous Conference, so I was rather surprised at his approach. I wish I was sanguine about the likely outcome of our passing a resolution.

Nevertheless, I think there is a valid point there about the lack of political or strategic direction from the centre. It is something which a number of agencies, including my own, have drawn to the attention of Government. All I can say is that strategy is not a word which finds favour at the moment and I have been thumbing through the lexicon to find what alternative words might be more acceptable.

There is a need for a sense of political direction about our countryside. But in this rather complex and confusing world we should not expect that suddenly somebody centrally will come up with a marvellous solution which will make life easier locally. That is unlikely to happen in any conceivable political scenario and we have got to keep working away in our own particular context.

So, yes, I hear the comment from the floor about the need for strategic direction centrally and that is something which the CRRAG agencies will need to consider when they meet. As the Group is primarily about research, they will need to pass the messages about policy on to their Chief Executives. Is there more we could be doing to get together?

I also think the point was well made about local authorities being in a position, in a sense, to create a climate within which things can happen at the local level by taking some kind of strategic view about what is happening at a county, district or another level, and more local than national.

Those seem to be some of the points which have occurred to me from what I hope has been a very interesting Conference. I hope that you will have noted points that you feel to be relevant to your own work and that the confusion and complexity of the subject will not deter you from plugging away in your own particular local area of action.

CONCLUSIONS AND RESEARCH MARKET

Roger Clarke then explained to delegates that the 'research market' would take place that afternoon. This would mean that all the displays and stalls of information would be staffed by the people in the various agencies and consultancy firms responsible for the research programmes. It would be a chance for delegates to discuss what work was being carried out.

The stalls were provided by

British Waterways Board

Centre for Leisure Research

Cobham Resource Consultants

Countryside Commission

Countryside Commission for Scotland

CRRAG

English Heritage

Forestry Commission

GMA

Landscape Research Group

Nature Conservancy Council

NERC/TFSD

Produce Studies Ltd

Rural Areas Database

Seale Hayne College

School for Advanced Urban Studies

Sports Council

Wales Tourist Board

The planned workshops for 1989 were outlined. The Countryside Recreation Conference in 1989 would be held on 19-21 September in Edinburgh, on the theme, 'People, Trees and Woods'.

The CRRAG Chairman then thanked Duncan Campbell and George Hill for chairing the plenary sessions; the presenters, chairs and rapporteurs for the Workshops; those who had volunteered to lead the Fringe Events, and the CRRAG Secretary and her staff for putting the event together.

Finally he thanked the delegates for their participation in the Conference, hoped that many would return in future years, and wished everyone a safe journey home.

COUNTRYSIDE RECREATION CONFERENCE 1988: ATTENDANCE

Speakers

D Bown, County Planning Officer, Dyfed County Council

R Bunce, Principal Scientific Officer, ITE, Merlewood Research Station

D Campbell, Director, Countryside Commission for Scotland

P Clarke, Farmer, Oxford Pick Your Own Farm

R Clarke, CRRAG Chairman, Countryside Commission

J Collins, Retired County Planning Officer, Cheshire County Council

C Gordon, Divisional Director of Development, Center Parcs Limited

G Hill, Senior Rural Enterprise Adviser, ADAS

A Irving, Assistant Regional Officer, Nature Conservancy Council

B Lane, Director of Rural Tourism Development Project, Bristol University

B McLaughlin, Head of Land Use, Agricultural Resources Department, National Farmers Union

JP Merricks, Landowner, Arable Farmer and National Nature Reserve Manager

D Morgan-Evans, Inspector of Ancient Monuments, English Heritage

H Oliver-Bellasis, Hampshire Farmer

A Phillips, Director, Countryside Commission

JK Royston, Land Agent, Boughton Estates Ltd

C Spedding, Director of Centre for Agricultural Strategy, University of Reading

K Taylor, Laurence Gould Consultants Ltd

Delegates

S Alford, Divisional Rural Enterprise Adviser, MAFF/ADAS

D Andrew, Principal Planning Officer, Devon County Council

SL Angus, Farmer, Prospect Poultry Farm

S Ankers, Unit Director, Greater Manchester Countryside Unit

P Ashcroft, Countryside Officer - Recreation and Access, Countryside Commission

A Barber, Leisure Services, Bristol City Council

L Barrington, Director General, Countryside Foundation

K Bishop, Research Student, University of Reading

P Biss, Conservation and Legislation Officer, Nature Conservancy Council

S Bowley, Town and Country Planner, Michael Boddington Associates

J Bownes, Chief Assistant Planning Officer,
Sheffield Metropolitan District Council

R Brewer, Principal Planner, Scottish Development Department

R Broadhurst, Recreation Officer, Forestry Commission

A Bruin, Institute for Land and Water Management Research

R Bull, Countryside Officer, Countryside Commission

JP Burgon, Adviser on Coast and Countryside, The National Trust

JA Busby, Principal Scientific Officer,
Countryside and Wildlife Branch, DOE (NI)

A Campbell, Planning Consultant, Andrew S Campbell Associates

PR Chambers, Countryside Officer, Lee Valley Regional Authority

JG Clegg, Countryside Officer, Wakefield Metropolitan District Council

B Clough, Planning Officer, Countryside Commission for Scotland

Cobbold, Farmer, Plymouth

M Collins, Principal Officer Research and Planning, Sports Council

R Constanduros, Agricultural Consultant, Agros Associates

S Danes, Transcription Servicer, Janssen Services

L Dean, Researcher, Holiday Which? Magazine

B Denness, Transcription Servicer, Janssen Services

S Dixon, National Development Officer, British Parachute Association

P Donnelly, Estate Manager, Lyme Park

R Douglas, Tourism Manager, Northampton Enterprise

AW Dyer, Countryside Officer, Highland Regional Council

M Eaglestone, Planning Officer, Gwynedd County Planning Department

M Elson, Professor in Planning, Oxford Polytechnic

J Evans, Farmer, Gloucestershire

R Evans, Supervisor, The Woodland Centre

RG Evans, Lecturer in Agriculture, The West of Scotland College

P Falconer, Projects Manager, East Durham Groundwork Trust

J Fennell, Consultant in Environment Planning and Management,
Environmental Resources Ltd

R Ferguson, Planning Officer (Research), Countryside Commission for Scotland

J Fladmark, Assistant Director (Research and Development),
Countryside Commission for Scotland

B Flanagan, Principal Officer Parks and Countryside,
Oldham Metropolitan Borough Council

B Gall, Deputy Director, Leisure Research and Tourism,
East Lothian District Council and COSLA

R Garner, Planning and Research Officer,
The National Trust for Scotland

M Gee, Director, Dartington North Devon Trust

R Graves, Countryside Officer, Hereford and Worcester County Council

J Green, Principal Planning Officer Conservation, Wansdyke Council

S Green, Private Individual

M Hallinan, Lecturer, University College Dublin

R Hanna, Chairman, Ulster Countryside Committee

S Hare, CRRAG Helper, British Waterways

JS Harris, Senior Planning Officer, Surrey County Council

T Heselton, Senior Assistant Planner Council,
Alyesbury Vale District Council

J Hickling, CRRAG Assistant, School for Advanced Urban Studies

A Hood, Lecturer in Horticulture,
Durham College of Agriculture and Horticulture

AM Houghton, Director, CEAS Consultants (Wye) Ltd

M Howard, Principal Landscape Services Officer,
Parks Department, Bristol City Council

DM Hughes, Farmer Landowner, Gwynedd

G Hughes, Councillor, Oldham Metropolitan Borough Council

P Impett, Senior Planning Officer, Dorset County Council

A Inder, Planning and Research Officer, Hampshire County Council

P Johnson, Countryside Officer, Countryside Commission

G Jones, Planning/Development Officer, Sports Council

GW Jones, Agricultural Liaison Officer, Pembrokeshire Coast National Park

M Jones, Senior Lecturer, Sheffield City Polytechnic

WP Jones, Rural Structures and Grants Division, MAFF

FD Keast, Chief Planning Officer, Powys County Council

M Lane, Chief Research Officer, ESRC Data Archive
(Rural Areas Database)

FJ Lawrie, Deputy Director, Historic Buildings and Monuments Commission

N Long, Post-graduate student, Reading University

L Lumsdon, Manager - Tourism Unit, Staffordshire Polytechnic

I Mackay, Planning Assistant, Wakefield Metropolitan District Council

R Mason, General Secretary, British Orienteering Federation

WG McDermott, Assistant National Park Officer, Peak Park Joint Planning Board

J McLean, Member of Planning and Development Committee,
Strathclyde Regional Council

J McQueen, Countryside Officer, Countryside Commission

G Millar, Research Executive, British Waterways

S Milne, Assistant to Chief Executive, Northamptonshire County Council

JA Mitchell, District Councillor, Waveney District Council

R Mitchell, Councillor, Wakefield Metropolitan District Council

S Morris-Eyton, Land Use Adviser, The National Farmers Union

S Neate, Director, GMA Planning Ltd.

F Northcott, Research Officer, British Waterways

R Orgill, Senior Officer, Countryside and Water Recreation, Sports Council

E Owen, Head of Research and Development Planning, Wales Tourist Board

R Palmer, Land Agent, National Trust

HG Pearce, Countryside and Water Recreation Specialist, Sports Council

JC Pearson, Lecturer, Loughborough University of Technology

DK Phipps, Produce Studies, Head of Hotel and Tourism Division

S Phipps, Research Officer, Sports Council

I Rickson, Planning Research Manager,
British Tourist Authority/English Tourist Board

NRV Riding, Planning Officer, City of Bradford Metropolitan Council

T Robinson, Countryside Officer, South West Region, Countryside Commission

T Rollinson, Principal Forest Officer, Forestry Commission

A Rugman, Countryside Officer, Countryside Commission

J Saunders, Offa's Dyke and Recreation Paths' Officer

R Shaw, Senior Planning Officer, Mole Valley District Council

I Shelley, Research Officer, Wales Tourist Board

R Sidaway, Research and Policy Consultant

J Skelton, Assistant Countryside Officer, Countryside Commission

B Slee, Senior Lecturer, Seale Hayne College

B Smith, Head of Industry, Marine and Planning Policy Branch,
Nature Conservancy Council

L Smith, Senior Executive Officer, Countryside Division,
Department of the Environment

RO Smith, Chairman, Amenities and Countryside Committee,
Isle of Wight County Council

C Speakman, The Ramblers' Association

RA Stiles, Assistant Estate Officer (South West), British Waterways

J Studholme, County Planning Officer, Cumbria County Council

H Talbot-Ponsonby, CRRAG Secretary, School for Advanced Urban Studies

C Thomas, Land Resource Manager, John Kelsey Associates

J Thompson, Director, Countryside Leisure Services,
Lee Valley Regional Park Authority

PDW Timms, Land Agent, Cumbria County Council

EC Todd, Socio-Economic Adviser, East of Scotland College of Agriculture

P Trevelyan, Managing Director, ABT Consultancy

T Trueman, Senior Lecturer in Tourism Studies,
Carnegie Department, Leeds Polytechnic

D Venner, Ridgeway Officer, Ridgeway Project

D Wain, Chairman, Inland Waterways Amenity Advisory Council

G Warrilow, Assistant County Planning and Development Officer,
Staffordshire County Council

JD Watts, Senior Assistant, Advisory Section,
North York Moors National Park

PH While, Area Rural Manager, Cambridge County Council

PJ White, Senior Assistant National Park Officer,
Dartmoor National Park

RG Wilkins, Assistant Countryside Officer,
Hereford and Worcester County Council

J Wilkinson, Senior Research Officer, Sports Council

SC Woodward, Researcher, Centre for Leisure Research

J Worth, Head of Recreation and Access Branch, Countryside Commission