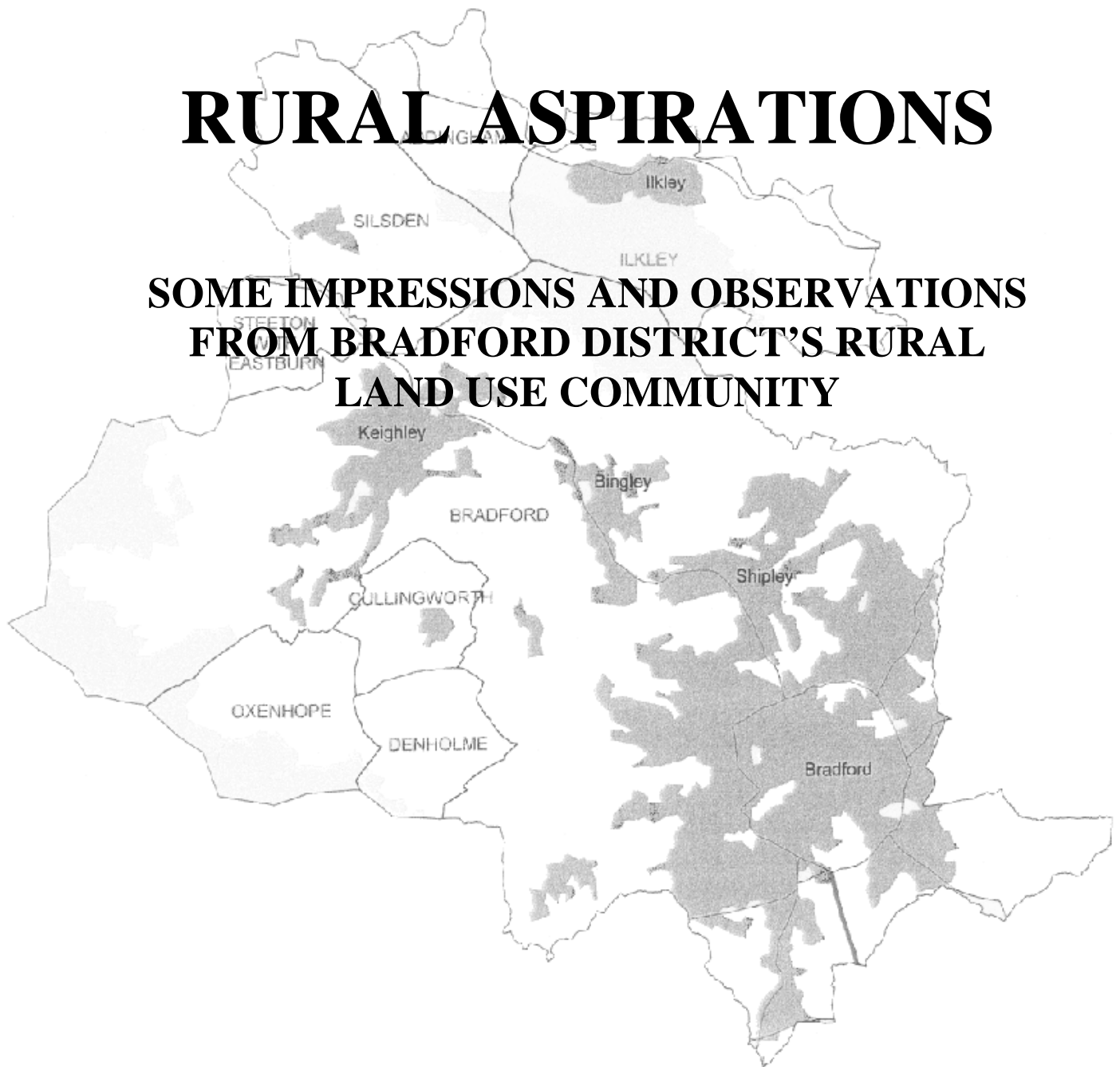


RURAL ASPIRATIONS

SOME IMPRESSIONS AND OBSERVATIONS FROM BRADFORD DISTRICT'S RURAL LAND USE COMMUNITY



**A report by the
Rural Affairs Development Team, Policy Development Service
City of Bradford Metropolitan District Council**

MARCH 2002

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We thank all of those who contributed to this research: to the interviewees who gave freely of their wisdom and their time; the NFU members at the local branch meeting; to the mostly anonymous returners of questionnaires. The reward for the latter, as for all the others that took part, will hopefully arise as a positive outcome from this report.

While they were no part of this research, we must thank the earlier contribution of two farmers who in inviting us to their farms and in their generosity with working with us and openness in answering questions, gave us the confidence to work more with the agricultural community. These are Gareth Gaunt from Sicklinghall and Len Evans from Steeton. Sadly, Len is no longer with us.

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ABBREVIATIONS

ADAS	Agricultural Development Advisory Service
BEAT	Bradford Environmental Action Trust
CA	Countryside Agency
CBMDC	City of Bradford Metropolitan District Council
CLA, CLBA	Country Land and Business Association
DARD	Department of Agriculture & Rural Development
DEFRA	Department for Environment, Food & Rural Affairs
DETR	Department for Environment, Transport & the Regions (now DTLR)
DofE	Duke of Edinburgh
DTLR	Department of Transport, Local Government and the Regions
EA	Environment Agency
ERDP	England Rural Development Programme
EIU	Economic Information Unit
EN	English Nature
ESRC	Economic & Social Research Council
ETB	English Tourist Board
FBAS	Farm Business Advisory Service
FMD	Foot and mouth disease
FoB	Forest of Bradford
FRCA	Farming and Rural Conservation Agency
FWAG	Farming & Wildlife Advisory Group
GIS	Geographical Information System
GOYH	Government Office for Yorkshire and Humberside
IACS	Integrated Administration and Control System
IFM	Integrated Farm Management
LANTRA NTO	Lantra National Training Organisation
LEAF	Linking Environment & Farming
LEAP	Local Environment Agency Plan
LFA	Least Favoured Area
LMI	Land Management Initiative
LPA	Local Planning Authority
MAFF	Ministry of Agriculture, Fisheries & Food (now part of DEFRA)
NFU	National Farmers Union
NGO	Non-Governmental Organisation
NNPA	Northumberland National Park Association
PPG7	Planning Policy Guidance 7
RDA	Regional Development Agency
SBS	Small Business Service
SME	Small & medium enterprises
UDP	Unitary Development Plan
YTB	Yorkshire Tourist Board
YW	Yorkshire Water

SUMMARY

This fact-finding research has been undertaken by part-time staff of the Rural Affairs Development Team of the Department of Policy and Executive Support, CBMDC – with the majority of the data collected between October 2001 and February 2002.

The aims of the research have been to:

- ✚ Establish a view of the current state of agriculture and rural land use in the Bradford District
- ✚ Inquire into the aspirations in the medium-term (5-10 years) of the agricultural and rural land use community of Bradford District
- ✚ To look at the medium term strategies of those organisations within and without the District that may serve those aspirations
- ✚ Ascertain from those stakeholders what the Local Authority may do to assist or contribute to the fulfilment of those aspirations
- ✚ Enhance the Local Authority's understanding of its agricultural and rural land users and enhance its relationship with them

This has been a study of perceptions, listening to the District's rural land users as they describe their business, air their pressing issues and look to their future. They were not entirely used to being asked what help they needed from the Council, but nevertheless welcomed the attention. The primary method used to gather information was therefore face to face interviews, taking the research to their place of work. Additional data was obtained using sector-related questionnaires, and an evening meeting of farmers provided an opportunity to hear in one go, a variety of views and recommendations. As we talked to rural land users, we were able to identify a number of services available to them, and so we went to talk to them as well.

The perceptions are reported without being tested for legitimacy. We came across a number of probable misperceptions, but if there was a fault it often lay in lack of information rather than in misunderstanding. We developed a picture of rural land users being on top of immediate needs for information, but having less time or easy access to search out guidance on new information or options. It does exist for rural land users, as we have seen, but it could be a need for matching delivery with better promotion.

The context of our research is ultimately the Rural White Paper. Bradford District, with its large rural area, must take notice of policy on farming, but the ability of a local authority to act on agricultural matters is less than it can be, compared to its usual public service delivery. There, and particularly those services like planning, it can have a direct and supportive affect. Thus its better role is often as prime mover in forging partnerships that seek to support and promote the communities it engages with. To be able to engage with the rural land users of the District requires an understanding of their situation, and it is in the inquiring into that situation that provides one of the better routes for engagement.

The interviews we report provide a study in the round of rural land use in the Bradford District. Each interview rewards patient reading because each throws up interesting information on the various sectors, but also because a pattern emerges of common issues that is also seen from the questionnaire returns. We summarise those common issues in the conclusion, and we show them to be similar to those found in other contemporary studies. They include concerns about the ageing farming population, the loss of local abattoirs, planning and pressures to diversify, uncertainty about new access from the Right To Roam and the importance of tourism for the rural economy. We have also pulled together some contemporary thinking on the future use of rural landscapes, as this may become more pressing in semi-upland areas if there is not an upturn soon in farm incomes.

We end on a list of suggestions from the rural land users for what Bradford Council may do to help them. The Next Step for us all is to see where we may begin to work on these suggestions.

1. INTRODUCTION

The nation-wide outbreak of Foot and Mouth Disease (FMD) in 2001 made itself felt in a much wider context than just the agricultural community. This alone would have been sufficient reason to justify a refocus of the nation's thoughts onto its rural businesses and landscape. There were, however, processes initiated before the FMD outbreak that had already taken seriously the rising concerns about the profitability of farming and the social exclusion of some in rural communities (see **Farming Pressure Points**) and the will for a better understanding of how rural landscapes contribute to our overall wellbeing.

This report describes research on the rural aspirations of land users in the Bradford District and on the aspirations of some of the organisations that provide services to these land users. The research was commissioned by the Policy Development Service of the City of Bradford Metropolitan District Council (CBMDC) and work started at around the time of the last few cases of FMD that arose in the autumn of 2001. It was not an inquiry into FMD. Thus it is only a reflective commentary on the outbreak because of the continued effects at that time of the curtailment of auction markets, the effective suspension of some advisory services, and the fact that livestock movement restrictions were still in place.

The research could have taken place at any time in the last few years because it asked that participants looked to their medium term future (5-10 years) rather than just their current concerns. Thus in one sense the research may have benefited from its timing since there has undoubtedly been a more reflective mood amongst rural communities and their associated services, and a greater willingness to talk about future options. While FMD will have left few unmoved, the outbreak of the disease and our findings must be seen in the light of the many other issues in rural land use, and against the processes that had already started that are targeted at those issues.

As an overture to the research, we therefore present a brief review of those processes initiated at national level by Government, and of those national initiatives that have set a challenge to local government. These provide the context for the current work, which itself builds on earlier work instigated by the Local Authority.

The National Focus

Against the backdrop of a Common Agricultural Policy (CAP), successive UK Governments have built plans and initiatives for where they have freedom of action and, latterly, where they have been able to use reforms of the CAP to develop a distinctive national approach in supporting agricultural and rural enterprise.

The recent Rural White Paper – **Our Countryside: The Future** (2000) - built on the Government's **A New Direction for Agriculture** (1999); on an evaluation of rural policy in the report **Rural Economies** (1999); and on the **Action Plan for Farming** (2000). It showed the links between the medium-term future of our countryside and the new funding streams developed through the EC Rural Development Regulation - the second pillar of support of the CAP. Government has used this modulation of agricultural subsidy to target £1.6 billion funding over seven years through the **English Rural Development Programme** (ERDP, 2000). This programme will support schemes that enable rural enterprise to better meet the needs of consumers, increase the ability to adapt and diversify, and to ensure that rural development and enterprise is carried out in an environmentally responsible way.

The ERDP consolidated existing schemes such as countryside stewardship and farm woodland into a broader mix of support that includes non-food crops, vocational training and rural enterprise. Underpinning these schemes are recently developed rural strategies such as in the **Draft Soil Strategy for England** (2001); **Towards Sustainable Agriculture: A Pilot Set of**

Indicators (2000); exploration of non-food crops in the **Government Industry Forum on Non-Food Uses of Crops**; in the **Guidance for Local Biodiversity Action Plans** (1999); and the forestry strategy in **A New Focus for England's Woodlands** (1998).

As a result of FMD, Government has also set up three independent inquiries into the lessons to be learned from the FMD outbreak of 2001 and the future of farming and the countryside. The independent inquiries are:

- ✚ **Inquiry into the lessons to be learned from the foot and mouth disease outbreak of 2001** and the way the Government should handle any future major animal disease outbreak, to be chaired by Dr Iain Anderson;
- ✚ **Scientific review by the Royal Society** of questions relating to the transmission, prevention and control of epidemic outbreaks of infectious disease in livestock, committee to be chaired by Sir Brian Follett FRS;
- ✚ **Policy Commission on the Future of Farming and Food**, to be chaired by Sir Don Curry (report released on the 29th January 2002).

Prior to the setting up of these inquiries, Government had also created a **Rural Task Force** to look at the urgent priorities in rural recovery and appointed **Lord Haskins** specifically to look at rural recovery in Cumbria, a worst hit area. In response to reports from these in 2001, and in showing progress on implementing the Rural White Paper (**England's Rural Future**, 2001) Government continues with announcements on new rural initiatives, some of which will be referred to later in this report.

A Local Focus

Bradford is a two-thirds rural district (24,438ha out of a total of 37,000ha) but is mostly seen as a big city and one big town. With over two-thirds of its population living in urban areas, it is perhaps not surprising that a significant focus of economic development and social regeneration has been centred on the urban areas.

Counter balancing this has been the local authorities commitment to an overarching principle of **sustainable development**. This principle seeks to integrate social, economic and environmental considerations into the endeavours of people, where ever they are situated. It provides a framework in which there is an encouragement to look at the whole picture and to discover the links and interdependencies that exist between the varying communities and activities in the District. It also creates the opportunity to explore and understand a vision of the future for that whole. (See **A better quality of life – A strategy for sustainable development for the UK**, 1999)

The Sustainability Team within the Local Authority has, over the years, supported a variety of initiatives that have created opportunities for partnership working within the District. The team has undergone a number of name-changes as the emphasis on sustainability has evolved in the Local Authority: Environmental Action Unit; Local Agenda 21 Unit; and now are integrated into the Policy Development Service of the Department of Policy and Executive Support.

In the mid-nineties, Bradford District gained a national reputation for innovation in devising and supporting urban food growing initiatives, with voluntary organisations working in partnership with the Local Authority. This innovation continues to this day with a firmly established **Bradford District Healthy Food Network**, where the base of interest has been broadened by the involvement of the Health Authority and by the cementing of food and nutrition work into the plans of statutory and voluntary public organisations. The network developed a Food Charter and there is a food strategy document in the making for the District.

A **Rural Development Network Day** was held in Bingley in January 1999, organised by the Shipley and Keighley Constituency Area Panels of CBMDC. The day brought together a wide variety of people interested in rural development and provided workshops on rural health,

transport and youth issues, villages in the future and making things happen in the village, improving the countryside and rural economic development (a report of the Network Day is available).

Contacts made during the network day, and particularly the rural economic development workshop, provided the stimulus for the Sustainability Team to begin to develop work around rural issues. Over 1999, the Sustainability Team set up a **sustainable farmland management programme**, involving a range of stakeholders within the District and including statutory agencies. It commissioned research on the District's agricultural land use and employment to provide base information for the programme. This research is reviewed in a later section.

The programme created a forum for a **Sustainable Farmland Management Network** in which its members could discuss current issues and hear presentations. Topics of the presentations have included:

- ✚ Farm waste management, including disposal and the options for collection of sheep dip and plastic films
- ✚ **Low-impact development and peri-urban productivity in SE Bradford** (2000). The network adopted this report and findings from it were submitted to the public consultation on the Rural White Paper.
- ✚ Feasibility study on yoghurt making in the Bradford District (Business Link, 2000)
- ✚ Public rights of way in the Bradford District from the Rights of Way Section, CBMDC
- ✚ Feasibility study for on-farm composting from Oceans Environment Ltd.
- ✚ A presentation on the Walking for Health Project, based in Keighley

Documents that circulated amongst network members were **Rural Land Use: an Overview of Demands** (Len Evans, 1999) the draft **Heritage Strategy** of the Standing Conference of South Pennine Authorities (SCOSPA – the document was released in June 2001) **Codes of Good Agricultural Practice for the Protection of Air, Soil and Water** (1998) and the **Local Environment Agency Plans (LEAPS) for Airedale and Wharfedale** produced by the Environment Agency (1999).

The FMD outbreak curtailed the Sustainable Farmland Management Network activities, but the Sustainability Team continued an involvement with the District's farming through attendance at progress meetings on **rural recovery** between the Local Authority and farming and business representatives, and through providing representation at regional rural recovery meetings along with other local authorities, DEFRA, statutory agencies and the military.

During this time, the Sustainability Team began to develop a programme of implementation of the Rural White Paper. Reviews of the housing service and of the youth service in CBMDC allowed the opportunity for advocacy on behalf of the rural community, resulting in the appointments of a **rural housing enabler** and of a **senior rural youth officer**.

Another key element of the Rural White Paper is support for people in rural communities to have a stronger voice in shaping their own future through **parish and town councils**. The Sustainability Team has linked with Parish Councils in the District to improve partnership working and the delivery of service at all levels. They do this against the backdrop of a recent consultation document from government (**Quality Parish And Town Councils Consultation - Helping Rural Communities Shape Local Services**, 2001).

The bid to become Capital of Culture has required Bradford District to renew its **strategy for tourism**. The Sustainability Team has been involved in the consultations and has provided, along with others, advocacy on behalf of rural areas. It is perhaps significant that a key selling point for tourism in the District is **Brontë Country**. It should be remembered that the literary descriptions of key locations are based in a rural landscape that is managed by agriculture.

In the autumn of 2001, the Countryside Agency (CA) launched a new report **Connecting Town and Country - joint working of local authorities in urban and rural areas**. This report describes case studies of joint working between two-tier local government systems and partner organisations to bridge the urban-rural divide. Its message has particular currency for a metropolitan administrative area such as the Bradford District that combines significant urban and rural populations. Here is what Pam Warhurst, deputy chair of the CA said at the launch:

"People living in towns and the countryside can feel that they are different and have little in common - in reality their experiences and problems are often similar. As foot and mouth disease has demonstrated, the prosperity of rural and urban communities is interlinked. Many people from villages use services in towns, while town-dwellers rely on a range of raw materials produced in the countryside. Town and country are interdependent and this must be reflected in the work that local authorities are doing. Our research shows that more than a third of local authorities already recognise this and have taken up the often difficult challenge of working with others to meet everyone's needs."

It was in wholehearted empathy with this analysis that the Sustainability Team commissioned the research (in October 2001) that is to be reported here. The research was a logical next step and can be seen as essential for the continuing evolution of Bradford Council's response to the Rural White Paper.

While the research was being completed, the Sustainability Team held a conference on the 17th January 2002 entitled **Rural Renaissance in the Bradford District**. An information-dense preliminary Executive Summary of the research was provided in the delegate pack for this conference. Reports from the **Rural Economy** workshop of the conference are included in the data for this research. A conference report is available – **Rural Renaissance Conference – Post Conference Pack** - that details the speeches of Chris Baines, independent environmental advisor; Alan Buckwell, Chief Economist of the CLBA; and Pam Warhurst, Deputy Chair of the CA; as well as reports from all the workshops.

Bradford District's Agricultural Land Use

The Sustainability Team commissioned research in 1999 (on the behalf of the Sustainable Farmland Management Network) to provide an overview of **agricultural land use and employment** in the Bradford District. The work was carried out by Steve Schofield of Sustainable Wealth West Yorkshire, an initiative of the Forum for the Future. It was accomplished through desk research using existing national and local sources of statistical information as well as some interviews with agencies and Local Authority services.

The report entitled **Bradford District's Agricultural Land Use and Sustainable Development** was published in January 2000. Its main findings documented a reduction in agricultural land, a reduction in the level of agricultural employment and a reduction in the number of farm holdings. The predominance of dairy, beef and sheep farming in the District was confirmed as was the decline to a virtual disappearance of horticulture and arable farming that was first indicated in the **Bradford District State of the Environment Report** (1994).

A surprising finding was the anomalies between data held on agriculture by different sources such as the Farming and Rural Conservation Agency (FRCA - now absorbed back into DEFRA) and the Economic Information Unit (EIU) of Bradford Council. Schofield made the distinctions that the FRCA figures were based on information provided directly by farmers in the Annual Census of Agriculture, whereas the EIU based theirs on surveys provided by the Office for National Statistics, or on local economic data such as VAT registration. This begged the question as to what either approach was measuring: did either include farms with low turnover; small, part time farms; non-active farms; or farms where the land was rented out and farmed by another; or farms that were being used in a different way (equestrian or forestry)? Clearly, land use has complex patterns in the District that were not revealed by economic activity alone.

Before leaving Schofield's report, it should be noted that the decline in horticultural and arable activity in Bradford District is consistent with the shift in structure of British agriculture during and since the 1980s to a **geographical polarisation**. This is generally observed as an increasing regional specialisation of farming activities with horticulture, arable and mixed farming retreating to areas considered more favourable (profitable) and giving way to more exclusively pasture-based systems. The decline in farm numbers can often be due to consolidation and there is the tendency for farms to concentrate on a narrower range of activities so that labour and other needs are simplified. Farm enterprises may also develop other sources of income from on-farm, non-agricultural activities and from off-farm sources. Finally, there has been a trend for woodland ownership to become increasingly distinct from farm ownership. All these factors indicate change that can be difficult to accurately monitor and quantify (see **Drivers of Countryside Change**, 2001).

Purpose and Aims of the Research

This research work was undertaken to provide information for CBMDC that can be used in rural policy development and in the implementation of the Rural White Paper. The aims of the research were to:

- ✚ Establish a view of the current state of agriculture and rural land use in the Bradford District
- ✚ Inquire into the aspirations in the medium-term (5-10 years) of the agricultural and rural land use community of Bradford District
- ✚ To look at the medium term strategies of those organisations within and without the District that may serve those aspirations
- ✚ Ascertain from those stakeholders what the Local Authority may do to assist or contribute to the fulfilment of those aspirations
- ✚ Enhance the Local Authority's understanding of its agricultural and rural land users and enhance its relationship with them

Methodology and Work Programme

The research was carried out by Robert Pheasant, BSc MSc, and Mark Fisher BSc DPhil, working as part-time members of the Rural Affairs Development Team of the Department of Policy and Executive Support, CBMDC. Dave Melling, sustainability co-ordinator of the Department of Policy and Executive Support, managed the progress of the research.

It was recognised early on that the research results would be unlikely to lend themselves to statistical analysis. Additionally, the use of focus groups was not considered feasible because of the known difficulties of finding the right time and place for us as outsiders to necessarily gather together a sufficient number of stakeholders. Previous experience had shown, however, that the farming and other rural land use communities usually equipped themselves with local representatives through the affiliations they had or the organisations that they were members of e.g. National Farmers Union (NFU), North Yorks. Smallholders Society, Country Land and Business Association, Young Farmers and the British Horse Society. We therefore determined to contact these representatives through their affiliations and organisations, and take our research to them.

The research thus became essentially a study of perceptions and aspirations through interviewing the various stakeholders at their place of work. The goal was to reach a range of stakeholders so that the sum of activities they were involved in was broadly characteristic of the District, as defined by the data gathered in the Schofield report. Other targets for the research were identified as providing services into the District for rural land users e.g. Forest of Bradford, Business Link, FWAG, LANTRA, LEAF and ADAS.

The stakeholder interviews lasted for between one and two hours and followed a loose framework of questions that sought to elicit their impressions of their current state and aspirations for the future (the framework of questions is shown in Appendix 1). Suggestions were welcomed for what they thought the Local Authority might do to assist them with their aspirations. Often, the progress of the interview allowed some questioning of the stakeholder's experience of the services provided by the Local Authority and of the most effective methods of communication that reaches the stakeholder. We report these interviews in full in the data section. They include interviews with:

- ✚ Farmers: dairy, beef, sheep and pig
- ✚ A smallholder
- ✚ The principal estates officer in Asset Management of CBMDC
- ✚ The manager and senior rural surveyor of the Rural Estates Team of Yorkshire Water plc
- ✚ A regional representative of the NFU
- ✚ A regional representative of the CLBA
- ✚ A business advisor manager and a farm business advisor with Business Link West Yorkshire
- ✚ A farm advisor with FWAG
- ✚ The project manager for the Forest of Bradford
- ✚ A sustainability officer (CBMDC) on the tourism strategy and rural tourism

We were able to attend a local meeting of the Bradford and Bingley NFU Branch at the invitation of its Chair and the regional representative of the union. This two-hour meeting provided us with our one opportunity for an event similar to a focus group. The turnout of 22 members and their willingness to share their thoughts made it very successful. A report of this meeting is included along with the interviews.

In some cases, questionnaires with reply paid envelopes were used to gather data, and the returns collated. There were a number of reasons for the use of questionnaires (examples are given in Appendix 1):

- ✚ The CLBA felt unable to provide individual contact details, but generously offered to forward a mail out to all their members in the Bradford District
- ✚ The British Horse Society did not respond with any contact details and so questionnaires were sent to stabling and riding enterprises taken from the phone directory
- ✚ Poultry enterprises taken from the phone directory
- ✚ As a follow up with the attendees at the local branch meeting of the NFU.

A few telephone interviews took place with organisations such as LANTRA, LEAF and ADAS to determine their activity, if any, in the Bradford District. The results of these are reported in the data section.

We gave a presentation to participants in the '**What is the Rural Economy**' workshop at the Rural Renaissance conference (see above). The presentation covered land type and agricultural output from the Schofield report (see earlier); some national trends on farm income data (from **Drivers of Countryside Change**, 2001); a schematic of the farm product distribution chain for the District and another on the services provided into the District, both gleaned from our research; and a summary of the aspirations we had collected from the rural district (the second half of the presentation is shown in Appendix 2). The workshop was then presented with a set of basic questions to consider before being split into two work groups. The total number at the workshop was around 40, representing a broad range of stakeholders from farmers, rural business, transport, advisory services, planning and economic development officers, DEFRA and Yorkshire Forward. We provide reports of the two work group discussions in the data section.

Interpretation and Reach

We have reported all perceptions as received. They were not tested or corrected for legitimacy since if they were indeed misperceptions, then they indicate shortfalls in provision of information to stakeholders. They can also be a challenge set for organisations exercising responsibility or providing services.

The total reach of the research work was near the 250 mark. This is made up from the following:

- ✚ 20 people during 15 interviews
- ✚ 22 members at an NFU Branch Meeting
- ✚ 40 people attending the Rural Economy Workshop at the Rural Renaissance Conference
- ✚ 8 people through telephone inquiry
- ✚ 160 or so questionnaires mailed out

The number of questionnaires returned was 26. Adding these to the interviewees and attendance at meetings makes a total of 116 people who were directly involved in the research.





An aspiration is a joy for ever, a possession as solid as a landed estate, a fortune which we can never exhaust and which gives us year by year a revenue of pleasurable activity.

ROBERT LOUIS STEVENSON, "El Dorado", *Virginibus Puerisque* (1881)

The public buys opinions as it buys its meat, or takes in its milk, on the principle that it is cheaper to do this than to keep a cow. So it is, but the milk is more likely to be watered.

SAMUEL BUTLER (d. 1902) "Materials for a Projected Sequel to *Alps and Sanctuaries*", *Note-Books* (1912)

There's no limit to how complicated things can get, on account of one thing always leading to another.

E.B. WHITE, title chapter, *Quo Vadimus?* (1939)

2. THE ASPIRATIONS OF BRADFORD DISTRICT'S RURAL LAND USE COMMUNITY

A: INTERVIEWS, THE NFU BRANCH MEETING AND RURAL ECONOMY WORKSHOP REPORTS

The Farmers

MARK ASHTON, NORR FARM

Norr Farm is a dairy and beef farm of 108 acres of pasture that sit below and to the west of Norr Hill. Mark Ashton has built his family home above his parents farmhouse, who first came to the land in the mid 1940's. The land rises above and below the two farmhouses at about 720ft (220m). Mark now runs the farm by himself and is also Chair of the Bradford and Bingley Branch of the NFU.

The dairy herd of 45 Friesians provides the main source of income with in previous years 4-5 beef cattle and a few pigs bringing in the rest. In the last year, calves have been retained on the farm both as the usual replacements for the dairy herd, but also because of the poor price, taking the number for beef cattle upto about 45 as well. There are no longer any pigs. Mark tells me that the farms around him are mostly beef. Sheep farms in the District are found predominantly towards Oakwoth, Keighley and beyond. He says that as a broad rule of thumb, there are more sheep where there is a lower population density i.e. less dogs.

Pasture provides seasonal food along with silage produced in bales and a clamp. Turnips and kale are grown each year to reduce the need for bought in concentrates. This allows for a gradual replacement of pasture around the farm by reseeding fields with rye and red clover after one season down to the fodder crops. Yard slurry and overwintering litter is returned to the fields and there is dressing when needed with lime or calcified seaweed, phosphate and some sulphate. Farm machinery is kept to a minimum, with contractors and their equipment brought in to do the seasonal work and for some of the reseeding.

No surplus fodder is produced in the District and would have to be brought in from the Yorkshire plain. Straw for bedding is also brought in with prices moving upwards. The farm generates little waste, as there are few inputs: natural wastes are recycled and wastewater is managed into the landscape. Plastic film from silage bales constitutes the greatest waste. At present it is put into the domestic waste stream. Plastic sheeting used with the silage clamps has its life extended by multiple reuses.

Markets Milk is collected by Zenith and beef cattle are taken to Wharfedale Market in Otley (Leeds). The slaughterhouses, when used, are also outside the District at Liversedge (Kirklees) and Rawdon (Leeds). Milk prices fell last year to 15p/litre, but have risen again this year to 20p/litre. Beef prices have varied depending on when cattle were finished enough to take to market and how many butchers and competitors were there on the day (there were no animal movements and thus no income from this between February and May in 2001). Animals are brought back if the price bidden is not good enough. Otley market (Wharfedale Farmers Auction Market, Leeds Road, Otley) is favoured over slaughterhouses as the latter pay prices that are fixed at last February's price (not subject to the bidding that goes on at markets) and animals can't be brought back.

The demise of local slaughterhouses at Denholme and Keighley has proved a disincentive for farmers to bring back meat after butchering and freeze for local marketing. The further distance of transport, the rising costs of vet inspection before, and Meat and Livestock Inspection after slaughter, and the busy nature of the slaughterhouse makes it unworthwhile just to take a couple

of animals. Local produce markets don't address the reality of a lack of local slaughtering, or provide sufficient capacity to take butchered animals when ready.

Because of FMD restrictions, movement licences are needed to take livestock to slaughter (the licences from Trading Standards are reasonably quick) and to move cattle across the road to fresh pasture (these licences from local DEFRA – can take upto four weeks).

Communication Local NFU members have a winter series of branch meetings where they learn together of new farming policies or information. Mark is only casually aware of the English Rural Development Program from last winter's meetings (when it was still at its early stage and there was limited experience of its workings). He expects to hear more during this winters meetings. Thus there is the potential for considerable delay in information exchange if it is solely based on these branch meetings. Mark believes it is possible for the Rural Aspirations research to take advantage of one of these meetings.

The branch membership is served by a newsletter and a magazine – a West Riding newsletter and a regional magazine produced from the regional office. While not targeted on the District, Mark believes these publications could be used by Bradford Council to get information out to local farmers.

Mark is not aware of the Area Panel system of Bradford Council and Neighbourhood Forum meetings.

Mark thinks there is a tendency amongst farmers to look to national Government and beyond to Brussels for support for farming. He expects that local farmers would generally expect the Local Authority would have little role and would have little interest or recognition of local farming.

Trading Standards Mark reflects a concern about the perception of Bradford's Trading Standards Officers as being unhelpful and discouraging. In this there is a comparison with Leeds Officers who are more prepared to discuss infractions and their resolution (such as defects in livestock trailers) rather than move straightaway to citation for offences, as is the case with Bradford Officers. The impression is that the Bradford Officers have a policy of swooping down on offenders rather than entering into a useful and explanatory dialogue.

Mark makes the suggestion that Bradford Trading Standards can resolve this situation by working with farmers to highlight their overall concerns and thence allow farmers the chance to take action themselves. A solution would be for Bradford Trading Standards to occasionally set up and staff an information stand at Otley Market, where many of the District's farmers take their livestock.

Planning and Diversification When Mark came to consider building a new family home on the farm (as is often the case when a farm is handed on to the next generation) he took the approach of inviting a Council planner out to the farm before going ahead with any major design work. His dialogue with the planner on site led to two major changes to Marks initial plan (location and type of house) which had a considerable bearing on the ease in which Mark later received approval for building his new home.

Mark is aware that the encouragement for farms to diversify will often lead to schemes where planning issues are involved. Mark himself thinks that diversification requires the farmer to have a particular interest in the activity to be diversified into, which will act as a restraint in general. New ventures such as tourism in particular also depend on their success by being one of the first into the market. Mark is aware of farmers who have looked for diversification, but have come up against difficulties with the planning system that have not been helpful.

Mark suggests again that dialogue early on is the key, but he suspects that Bradford's planners should not wait for farmers to come along with their diversification plans. They should think

about preparing themselves for this likelihood by considering a range of examples so that they get a feel for how they are to approach this.

Register of Farm Workers Mark thinks it is unlikely that many of the livestock farms like his will be able to offer anything like additional fulltime employment. He is concerned though that his local village has lost to purchase most of the Council housing stock and that the modest private homes are being swept up by people moving to the countryside. Younger people are being lost to the village, as they have no homes. Mark thinks it is not necessarily so that if these young people had homes there that they would need local employment since work would only be a bus ride away. What that could mean is that younger people could still be close to the rural activities and may make a contribution.

Where Mark does see an employment opening is in providing farm cover (particularly relief milking) for when he wants to go on holiday or away for a few days on business or on a course. He suggests that the Council consider setting up a register of suitably experienced farmworkers who would be available to be employed to cover these periods.

Vets Mark says there is an unfortunate cycle whereby vets bills are continuing to rise for farmers, making them disinclined to call as often or as early for their services. This has meant that veterinary practices have looked more towards small animal work for their income (pets) despite many of them missing the work with livestock. The perception is that the veterinary profession locally is not directed towards farmwork and thus probably does not price itself accordingly.

Education and Training Mark says his most pressing priority is training in the use of computers. The encouragement coming from the NFU is for all farmers to go online so that communication (both ways) can become more timely. He has not been part of and is not aware of any initiatives on rural connectivity as exemplified by the project carried out by Park Lane College (Leeds).

Mark has sought and received occasional training that would help him as a farmer through what was the Agricultural Training Board and is now LANTRA. Sometimes the training is brought to his or a nearby farm. Other examples are a day course away at Keighley College on plumbing, and other day courses at Craven College.

Mark sees livestock farming as very price sensitive at present and speculates that there may be a shift to more farmers seeking part time work away from the farm. Most of the training that farmers receive is in general skills and does not lead to a qualification. He thinks farmers will be looking for training for new skills that come with a marketable qualification that allows them to bring in additional income. Mark cautions that there are sensitivities around how this sort of training should be seen (i.e. self-respect, perception of re-training for work versus taking on new skills).

Farm Advisory Services Mark has made use of advisory services such as ADAS. He is aware of a free advisory service operated by David Hills (Skipton). His own farm planning is of necessity to maximise efficiency, reduce inputs and wastage, and his falling, fluctuating income has been the determining force. Mark was interested in the details of a contract recently advertised by Derbyshire County Council. This would provide services for Whole Farm Environmental Action Plans that could be used for devising conservation action programmes. In addition, Farm Analysis Reports would be produced covering areas such as farm activity and resources, geography, climate, land use, conservation features and values, tourism opportunities, planning and development, and appraisals for action.

Mark was also interested in the concept of upland farm landscapes contributing to improved overall water management. He purchased one hundred trees last year, which he lined out. He intends planting them out this winter.

Tree Planting Mark was unaware of the Forest of Bradford and their aim of increasing tree cover on farmland in the west of the District. Mark would welcome help with the planting out of his tree stock. His contact details have been passed on to FoB.

Horse Riders Mark has a bridleway running through his farm. His experience from this leads him to two conclusions: the District is at saturation point with horses; the born-again riders (i.e. later on in life learners who have moved out to live in rural areas) have great difficulty in opening and then closing farm gates. Riders who learn at an earlier age have less of a problem.

JOHN COLLIER, DENBY HILL FARM COTTAGE

John farms 160 acres of grassland to the south of Oakworth, of which 100 acres are rented. The land is contiguous and supports 70 beef cattle (10 suckler cows) and 250 sheep. His parents bought the original farm of 28 acres in 1932. It was farmed as dairy and sheep, with John increasing the owned land and renting more, until two years ago when milk production ceased with a son leaving the farm and taking the dairy herd to a farm in Staffordshire. John is chair of the Worth Valley NFU Branch that meets in Haworth.

The farm has few inputs with some compound fertiliser, and generates little waste. Contractors make big bale silage. Two blocks of rented land have been placed by their owners into the Countryside Stewardship Scheme, which has restricted his use of them, but does mean there is income to maintain walls etc. John has noted that silage yields are markedly reduced after land first goes into the Stewardship Scheme.

Over the years, butchers sheep from the farm were taken to an abattoir in Keighley and a small one in a knackers yard at Denholme, with the carcasses going to a butcher in Keighley– both abattoirs are now closed. Presently, eight sheep are taken fortnightly to an abattoir in Ilkley (Agar Rowland, Wholesale Butchers, Little Lane – a CBMDC abattoir) and butchered for sale by the same butcher in Keighley, except the two carcasses that John takes home for freezing and personal sale. He would have sold on his cattle to fattening units this year if restrictions had not been in place.

Abattoirs With local abattoirs originally only three miles away, much livestock could have been slaughtered, butchered and sold locally. Ilkley at 13 miles represents increased costs, both in having to get livestock there and the carcasses returned. The loss of abattoirs puts pressure on supply for local butchers and John sees more of these and other corner shops disappearing each year. It is only the small abattoirs that will take small numbers of animals. The larger abattoirs are busy places and will only take larger consignments. If John had more to sell, he would have to use the markets.

Markets John has at one time used most of the areas livestock auction markets, including Bingley (closed), Otley (one out of two closed), Skipton (N. Yorks.) and Gisburn (Lancs.). John is keen to see markets maintained because they set a base price on livestock that is valuable in trading from farm to farm. There is also the social cohesiveness that markets encourage.

The drawback is the increasing dominance of supermarkets as they are ultimately the major recipients of livestock from markets via their preferred slaughterhouses. For example, Morrisons own a proportion of Woodheads; dealers buy at markets from a number of farmers and then supply Woodheads with sufficient pooled stock in response to the needs of Morrisons. Additionally, a range of export markets have disappeared in the last decade, depressing the price and opportunity to sell bull calves, the loss of export of sheep to Spain, and losing the market for lamb skins to Russia via Turkey. There is insufficient capacity in very local sales to compensate for these losses.

John has considered the recommendations from Lord Haskins about farmers forming marketing co-operatives. He does not see how this would benefit him as it would further reduce his ability to get the price he wants for his livestock (the co-op would be going to market and not him) and he is concerned that the system would operate with outsize lorries collecting and pooling livestock from local farms, but disrupting the narrow access of the local area.

Communication John gets his farming information from updates, magazines and winter meetings with the NFU and from the Farmers Guardian and Yorkshire Post. He understands that NFU have been pressing for fax and internet communication, but John feels he gets all the information he should get only a few days later from his usual sources.

Patterns of Land Use John rents land from five separate owners and has been fortunate to put all these parcels together side by side. Land becomes available to rent for a number of reasons: people stop farming, stay in the house but rent out the land; two farms close to John have developed holiday cottage villages around their farm buildings but rent out the land; a barn is sold off with a paddock that at first is used for horses but eventually becomes available for rent when the daughter moves away.

John registers all the land under his name for qualifying subsidy through the Integrated Administration and Control System (IACS) of DEFRA. Thus whereas the registration is in one name, it encompasses land from a total of six farm holdings. This may contribute to the discrepancies in the numbers of farmers in the Bradford District between different information sources.

Footpaths and Right To Roam John says his farm is criss-crossed with footpaths. He welcomes true ramblers as they respect the farm, but his main problem is with local people walking their dogs. The closure of footpaths due to FMD was a boon this last year as it gave John confidence that his sheep would be undisturbed by dogs in his more problematic fields down by the River North. John felt it might be useful to have a means whereby farmers could meet with local people and talk about their issues with dogs, and about the general issues that farming is facing.

The Right to Roam legislation also concerns John because he feels there needs to be considerable clarification over what types of land the rights will extend. He would welcome any initiative that provided this.

Tree Planting John has seen some nearby farms increase their woodland cover, one farm having substantial plantings and a pond created by volunteers who turned up en masse, and then return to carry out maintenance (Covey Wood). He pointed out that the trees create a woodland habitat that cattle make use of as part of their original, natural environment. As with the observation of both benefits and disbenefits with the Stewardship scheme, John cautions that increased woodland cover may also lead to an increase in fox populations. Foxes do not trouble most lambing, but first-time ewes or difficult lambing are always targets. John does think that farmers will increasingly take up the various land management schemes promoted recently and look to careful stocking rates.

Outlook John recognises the encouragement for diversification, but points out that there are already two holiday cottage developments, and that successful diversification only works if you are first or have a particular experience to work on. In many ways, John doesn't feel he has much control on what goes on away from the farm. He has concerns about lack of influence on price and on welfare once animals have left his farm. He says farmers live from year to year and can't suddenly change direction at short notice. John wants to keep on farming and hopes that the things outside of his control improve.

KEITH DOWNS, MILNERFIELD FARM

Milnerfield Farm is predominantly a dairy farm of about 200 Friesians. Keith farms 750 acres of grassland all told, near Bingley and at another farm in Skipton. There are usually about 150-200 fattening cows and around 1000 breeding sheep split between the two locations. Some land is rented, as it becomes available through becoming unwanted by new owners or when farmhouses are sold off separately from the land.

Inputs at Milnerfield reflect the range of activity, with much coming from the East Riding and the rest from overseas: concentrates for the dairy cows, barley, maize, molasses and straw. Hay, and pit silage is cut by contractors. Keith uses compound fertiliser on the fields, and some lime if a soil analysis warrants it on reseeded. The farm produces little waste.

Keith uses Otley and Skipton markets for store lambs and beef, but lost his livestock to FMD at the Skipton farm. Returning sheep to Milnerfield from fattening have been delayed. Milk from the dairy at Milnerfield is processed and bottled on site for his own delivery round. Some of this is sold into shops and onto other delivery rounds. Zenith takes any surplus when it arises. Keith was part of the scheme that looked into yoghurt production to be sold into the local Asian food businesses.

Abattoirs and Markets Keith acknowledged the loss of local abattoirs in the District and its affect on transport cost and subsequent difficulties for local sale. Keith explained that historically in the District (i.e. before bulk collection) dairy farms were more often than not closer to habitation than sheep farms because they were then well placed to sell their milk regularly to the local population. Sheep farms tended to be further away from habitation and invariably on land that would certainly support breeding, but not always fattening. The greater isolation of sheep farms coincidentally reduces the contemporary problems associated with dogs.

Keith sees that the closure of local abattoirs has inevitably led to the loss of local production and distribution to the local populace, both from direct sales from farmers and from the reducing number of butchers and other small shops. This leaves open the way for supermarkets to become dominant with their buyers setting price levels and supplying the much larger abattoirs, often tied to supermarkets.

Costs associated with the further distance travelled to markets and abattoirs were added to by other cost burdens of inspection and regulation. Post BSE movement restrictions had reduced market opportunities; in particular the value of bull calves disappearing as the export market disappeared. Keith admits that there may be an overproduction of sheep for the home market, but is concerned that we import beef when this could be supplied by our own farmers. He feels that there is not a level playing field in agriculture between the UK and its European partners.

Keith has heard of the Bingley local produce markets, but points out that even if they were capable of taking meat, they would probably only have capacity to sell one animal whereas he would take up to 50 cattle to market. Keith doesn't think the marketing co-ops that are being encouraged would have enough clout to get good prices for livestock. One possible benefit of them may be the opportunity to get discounts on bulk purchases of inputs.

Communication Keith gets his information from DEFRA, the NFU and its magazines and newsletters, and he takes the Farmers Guardian and Yorkshire Post. He obtained a fax machine recently and finds it daunting. Some of his records are kept off-farm on computer, but he maintains hand-written records as security. Keith would probably only consider getting into computing if he had personal tuition, but he does feel it is passing him by.

Keith attended his local Neighbourhood Forum meeting when there was discussion about proposals to install speed bumps along his lane. Keith was concerned that he only heard of the meeting by chance and rang the Council for details. Keith believes that wider consultation on the

speed bumps should have been carried out, as there would be consequences for more than just the residents fronting on to the lane.

Footpaths and Right To Roam Keith has little problems with his footpaths. Where he is concerned is in the interpretation of what land will be included under the Right to Roam legislation. He has seen in-by land included in draft plans and believes this is mistaken since the land is improved and walled. Keith feels there is need for general clarification on this legislation.

Farm Advisory Services ADAS only provides initial consultation for free, but Keith is aware that there are commercial advisory services available that are helpful in setting directions and for helping with taking decisions. Keith noted David Hill, Chartered surveyors, Auctioneers and Valuers, of Mill Bridge, Skipton.

Outlook Keith's priority is to survive. He explains that he always has work to do and that diversification would only bring him more. This was a consideration in eventually deciding against going into yoghurt production - it was not just the expense of buying in the new equipment needed and learning how to use it. Keith does employ people in milk processing.

Keith fears more and more people will be going out of farming, especially with an ageing farming population not being replaced by sons and daughters, who increasingly look to other lives. The worse off will be tenants with no equity. For the younger farmers, Keith sees a case for training for new work whether to bring in additional income or for a main income. What Keith really needs is to know what is wanted from him and agriculture in general. He wants solid markets to produce for and a sense of fairness in the supply and distribution chain.

THE GREENWOODS, MILKING HILL FARM

Two generations of the Greenwood family (father John, son Miles and his wife Liz, a meat inspector) farm about 250 acres below Lumb Foot. The farm has about 360 sheep and 60 cattle. The farm is riddled with footpaths – they are a significant element to the Greenwoods since they know that they have 64 stiles on these footpaths and that their average yearly use is by 50,000 people. This is Brontë tourist land.

Inputs are cake concentrate feed and compound fertilisers with occasionally some straight nitrogen fertiliser. Silage is cut by contractors for production in pits. Little waste is produced other than household waste. Along with many farms during FMD, the Greenwoods have had to carry their waste off their farm to get it collected.

The Greenwoods use markets at Skipton (N. Yorks.) and Gisburn (Lancs.). They are builders as well as farmers, using what spare time they have had to renovate two buildings – they are now for rent as holiday cottages - and building a home for the son to move in to. The holiday cottages are an important source of additional income that they are keen to continue to develop.

Abattoirs and Markets The Greenwoods saw the closures of the local abattoirs in the District as breaking the local cycling of livestock production through local butchers to the local population. These abattoirs would have easily taken a small number for slaughter (say two animals per week) that the larger abattoirs will not do. There are still some smaller abattoirs at Ilkley (Agar) and Yeadon (Pennys) where it is possible to take just a few animals, but these markedly increase travel costs. In addition, Income from fifth quarter product such as hides has disappeared.

The Greenwoods express a range of feelings around markets. While the price setting is key to their livelihood, they are concerned that they have no control over the way their animals are graded and weighed at market. This last year, the increase in paperwork, inspections and the

need for licensing for movement has added burdens. The level of service provided by the chain through Trading Standards and on to DEFRA sometimes gives the Greenwoods the impression that there is a poor understanding of the business of farming. They sometimes feel that they never get to talk to anyone who can make a decision.

Errors in paperwork can cause loss of income: stock bought up by dealers for supermarkets may travel to slaughter as far afield as Scotland and Wales and it is difficult to correct paperwork at these distances, thus the animals are lost. The 21-day rule for FMD quarantine means that if stock is brought back from market, then the whole farm is affected and turnover is reduced. Animal welfare is suffering when injured animals have to wait for vet inspection before despatch and entry into the food chain. In addition, fewer abattoirs will now accept casualty stock.

On the positive side, the Greenwoods value the markets as a day out to meet people and relieve stress. An important feature that Miles sees is the opportunity to pool knowledge and experience of new schemes or regulations that come out. He points to the difficulty in wading through every document that comes in on farming, but with the spread of people at markets it is possible to fill in the gaps from what others have read or experienced.

Communication The Greenwoods get their information from DEFRA, the NFU, informally at markets (see above) and take the Farmers Guardian. They attend local NFU branch meetings and Liz and Miles go to Young Farmer's meetings. John has attended Neighbourhood Forum meetings and is on the mailing list for minutes from each meeting. Liz and Miles sought out training in the use of computers and attended a course at Keighley College. They have also enrolled on a free course provided by Three Peaks, a training group for farming based in Skipton. They believe the N. Yorkshire Council funds the course.

Footpaths and Right To Roam The footpaths throughout the farm are an attraction to tourists to the area and consequently are also part of the package that the people renting the Greenwood's cottages will receive. It appears likely therefore that the footpaths in this area receive more attention than most from wardens in Bradford Council. While there is obviously dialogue with the wardens, the Greenwoods point to the lack of notice and, more importantly, consultation when a warden comes to repair a stile. The Greenwoods cite one example where a single stile was repaired that was in less need of it than other stiles that the warden returned over with unused material. The Greenwoods seek better communication.

They also have concerns over the Right to Roam legislation in the interpretation of what type of land will be covered and whether it is more than just the real ramblers who will seek such extended access. Most people they think are happy with good, well-marked paths that are not muddy. They have received a notice that told them where they could view draft maps of access. The Greenwoods, however, would like some general explanation and clarification of the legislation, not just for themselves but also for the general public who they fear will interpret it as being open access to anywhere.

Farm Advisory Services and New Schemes The Greenwoods took advantage of a free half-day advisory service from David Hill, Chartered Surveyors and Valuers from Skipton. This was an early delivery of FBAS, commissioned by Business Link. The session looked mostly at market opportunities.

Miles has spent some time reading through the English Rural Development Plan and looking within that for funding opportunities that would fit with the farm. The form filling again seems tiresome. Miles thinks that more effort needs to be put into making the system more accessible through someone taking responsibility to explain the various schemes and how to apply for them.

Diversification The Greenwoods recognise the pressures on farmers to diversify. They feel that not every farmer will be able to do it or even succeed - they may not have suitable access or

parking available to support new building uses, or they might be entering a market too late on or be taking trade from others.

The Greenwoods began their diversification when they renovated two buildings and turned them into holiday cottages. These have been fully booked this year since March and bring in monthly cheques from the letting agency. The Greenwoods would also like to redevelop more properties to provide accommodation for young people who grew up in the area but who may be forced to leave.

The Greenwoods experiences with the planning system, local planners and enforcement officers have not been satisfactory. The problems stem from the lengthy timescale to process applications, the difficulty in communication with the planning office while attempting to progress them, and to the sometimes-unhelpful attitude or idiosyncratic interpretation that some officers adopt at site meetings. The Greenwoods did subsequently employ a third party to mediate with the Council and progress their applications. The Greenwoods are concerned that there does not appear to be any recourse open to them for complaint. They were not aware who their local Councillors were.

Outlook The Greenwoods say they can't look more than six months ahead in what they are doing. They see around them an ageing population of farmers of which most will have retired within five years time. They see a trend of less sons and daughters taking over farms, or even seeking tenancies from large landowners such as Yorkshire Water. Those that stay in farming are increasingly likely to work part time off the farm, although this is not as easy as it seems as regular hours would be in conflict with the needs of livestock management, particularly at lambing time. Overall trends in farming indicate that there will be increased 'ranching', driven ultimately by supermarkets and their increasingly dominant position in the livestock market.

What they fear is a gradual degeneration of farm landscapes around them as it becomes less managed or unused. They are seeing this already in land that has been entered into the Countryside Stewardship Scheme. The Scheme life of ten years is quite often perceived as a means to see out a farming career upto retirement. Meanwhile the farm is managed less progressively. The tenancies available from Yorkshire Water require maintenance of boundary walls, but have little emphasis on maintenance of internal walls and structures.

EDDIE LEACH, MANOR FARM

Eddie Leach has been breeding pedigree large white pigs for 48 years. The breed originated in Yorkshire and the pigs are distinguished by their large size, erect ears, white colour, pink skins, and long deep sides. They are valued for their bacon production and for crossbreeding to improve other strains.

He currently has 70 breeding sows and followers, dispersed in pens and farm buildings contained on the 5 acres of the farm. Eddie explained that the heavy clay nature coupled with upland rainfall meant that his soil was unsuitable for raising pigs outdoors. The pigs are fed with 20 ton of pignuts a month, which comes from Hull in one lorry load. He buys straw for bedding through a neighbouring farm. He uses vets Green, Grieves and Thompson from Keighley. Eddie has a nephew who works with him on the farm.

Markets and Quality Assurance Eddie is a member of the British Pedigree Pigs Association. He selects the best of his offspring for sale as breeding stock, sold through a breeders marketing group based in Carlisle (Scotlean Pigs Ltd.). His breeding stock has been exported to many countries over the years. However, the outbreak of FMD caused cancellation of his last export order of 12 boars to Spain. The breeding stock fetches a better price than the ones that are sold for bacon.

The pigs not selected for breeding have been taken for the last three years to Woodhead Brothers abattoir in Colne (Lancs.) and sold for bacon. Prior to that, his bacon pigs went to a small slaughterhouse in Dewsbury. This along with another small slaughterhouse in Halifax is just surviving. Over the years, Eddie has seen the closure of slaughterhouses in the District, starting with the one in Bradford and then more recently in Denholme and Keighley. Some of Eddie's animals that are overweight or "different" are taken to Thirsk, as are the culled sows. They may then pass through Cheale Meats of Essex and the products are exported to Germany.

The farm is part of a quality assurance scheme, Assured British Pigs. Pigeat sold with the Quality Standard Mark must not only be from assured pigs, but also hauled on assured vehicles (a maximum number of twelve pigs can be transported to slaughter) and killed in assured abattoirs. Where further processing takes place, this must also be in assured premises.

Communication Eddie gets Farmers Guardian, Pig Farmer and Pig Breeder and receives the usual circulars from DEFRA. Although he is surrounded by small sheep and cattle farms, he rarely meets his neighbours as they go to different slaughterhouses or markets. He does, however, have contact with other pig farmers within and outside of the District. He is not a member of the NFU and has not heard of Neighbourhood Forums.

Diversification and Co-Operatives Eddie is 75 years old and relies on the support of his nephew to help him work the farm. Eddie is unsure whether farm incomes will rebound in the near future, but he sees no reason why he should change. He is unlikely to diversify into other activities. When asked whether he would have done so if he was 20 years younger, he said that pig farming 20 years ago was very successful and so there would have been no need to. More recently there was a national scheme to retire pig farmers (the Pig Industry Restructuring Scheme of DEFRA) but this was now closed.

Eddie knows of a pig farmer in Devon who has been able to make the same income from a decreased production by direct marketing the produce. Eddie however pointed to the isolated nature of his location and thought it unlikely that people would travel out of the city to buy his produce. Eddie has also belonged to a breeders co-operative, but he said it was never totally successful, as members always wanted to do the same thing rather than supply a variety.

Outlook Eddie says there is not enough money in farming nowadays. He has not made any money in the last two years. FMD was not the only problem (i.e. through restricting export sales of breeding stock) because the prices for pigmeat continued to fall due to competition from continental pig producers – Eddie has seen a fall in price paid of 15p a kilo since Christmas. He wonders how it is that continental producers can stay viable? The low price for bacon meat also affects the market for breeding pigs in the UK, as there is less interest from other pig farmers to restock. Eddie, however, is going to carry on doing the thing he knows best.

BRADFORD & BINGLEY NFU BRANCH MEETING

The meeting was attended by 22 members and the regional NFU representative.

Semi-Rural Versus Rural Farmers face difficulties in farming in a semi-rural area compared to the more rural areas of North Yorkshire:

- ✚ They have all the problems of urban areas as well as the difficulties that farming is going through
- ✚ The urban population doesn't care about farmers, making them feel they are of no consequence
- ✚ Farmers feel they are less tolerated by the general public if they hold up traffic with their farm vehicles – people are more tolerant of farming in more rural areas
- ✚ The problems of fly-tipping and trespass are on the increase

Footpaths and Right To Roam Footpaths historically were based on routes that people

walked to work. That is not necessarily the case now and many footpaths seem to serve no purpose, some being rarely or never used, or used only for dog walking. All present at the meeting can point to a FOOTPATH TO NOWHERE that seems always to be the one that is best maintained with new styles and a new signpost (sometimes immediately vandalised) indicating poor use of money by the Council. Although 95% of walkers are considered to be accommodating, it is the 5% that won't listen that create the concern. There is also the fear that some footpaths make it easier for access to strip and steal roof slate off barns.

The meeting had not heard of the Footpath Forum in the District and thus there was an opportunity to have a representative on the Forum, which already had representatives from the Cullingworth Parish Council and Cullingworth Footpath Association.

There was general concern over the lack of information available on Right To Roam, and the process of consultation and its timescale. The Ramblers Association and other access organisations were probably making their views well known, and so farmers should be encouraged to have their voice heard. Two things were of particular concern:

- ✚ the access designations were unlikely to have been done by field walking since in-bye land and other areas of walled or improved land were thought to have been included
- ✚ there was to be no compensation for the landowner for these new rights of access

The Countryside Agency was tasked with drawing up the plans and for driving the information and consultation process. The Council was only required to provide venues for display of the draft plans. The Countryside Agency should be encouraged to organise information meetings where the legislation could be explained (happening in pilot areas).

Planning and Diversification Concern over delegated powers given to individual planning officers so that it circumvents decision making by planning committees. Farmers want existing areas of development around their farms to be regarded as brownfield sites, thus fitting in with the urban policy of using those areas first for development and possibly for low-cost housing. Permission for on-farm development often depends on proving financial viability and this is not always straightforward when outside agencies are providing baseline advice on viability.

The general feeling was that there isn't a simple understanding of what is involved in the planning process. Those who would be enthusiastic for diversification would have done so already. Any contemplating it now fear the planning system acts as a restriction. Good new ideas should be developed for diversification that moved away from the common prescription of golf courses etc.

Outlook It was reflected that in the past 50 years, many of the farmers in the area had kept hens and pigs and had produced milk, all of which circulated locally and maintained the viability of farming in the District. The contemporary problems of regulation, lack of local abattoirs, young people not staying in farming, and the difficulties of being undercut by less well-regulated production elsewhere in the world, had closed those markets and was driving down viability. Domination of supply by supermarkets was feared since they could switch at any time to source from these other countries. The supermarkets may also be effectively killing off local milk processing and distribution as their low pricing for milk was being used as an incentive for customers to shop in their stores more frequently.

It was vitally important that young people be encouraged to come in to and carry on farming. The ageing population of farmers – the average age is thought to be 58 – means that there is an uncertain future for many farms. Off-farm working may be one answer, but the hope was that farming could be returned to greater viability so that it could become attractive for farmer's sons and daughters to stay on and take over.

Initiatives that come along for farming always seem to end in jobs for those leading them rather than in any progress for farming. Locally, policy documents in the District always concentrate on

the urban areas alone. There always seemed to be a culture clash when dealing with the Council, leaving farmers feeling that they weren't understood and were in need of a mediator.

All this leads to the depressing outlook that raises the question of whether to continue in farming. Some farmers will want to continue, but what will happen to the land of those that don't? A countryside managed by farming was seen as a positive attraction for the District and should be part of any strategy to encourage businesses into the District. Would the Council make a good case for this both locally and nationally? Would they support new initiatives for management of semi-upland areas?

Farmers recognised that the trend was for subsidies to be switched from production to stewardship schemes such as Countryside Stewardship Scheme of the ERDP. There was concern that the modulation of EU subsidy that created funding for the ERDP was simply taking away income from all farmers. However, the schemes did provide funding for farmers to look after the countryside. Some suggested that farms in the more rural areas above Skipton were more likely to get into the scheme, whereas others felt that the Organic Farming Scheme was drawing away money unnecessarily when at present there was an overproduction of organic milk. What may be needed was a stewardship scheme tailored specifically to the needs of the District's farmers, that will allow them to look after the countryside and may be that also allows them to do this without necessarily producing food.

Farmers could work together with the Council on countryside stewardship when their lands bordered. Farms near Baildon Moor have a common concern with the Council on the control of bracken. Farms around the moor carried out management that encouraged the flourishing populations of grey partridge, lapwing, cuckoo, sparrowhawks and woodpeckers. This was of value to the potential perceptions of Baildon Moor and suggested that the Council could raise its profile as an important wildlife habitat in the same way that efforts are made through initiatives in the South Pennines.

Farmers themselves needed to concentrate as a priority on their marketing. While all farming was currently looking for guidance as to what the nation expected of them, it was important that they stay optimistic. Concentrating on the essentials of a quality product, priced right and well distributed would encourage people to buy it. More value should be expected from organisations that receive funding from farmers. The example was given of the Milk Development Council that is seen to advertise milk well, but does not work on the hard issues.

Other markets and market links could be sought, such as producing for ethnic populations. Local branding of produce could be considered, encouraging a consistency in product. It was agreed that people had become unfamiliar with using butchers and did not know what to ask for. Some education work was needed there. The public should also be educated to understand that there is already traceability in livestock production. As an alternative for some farmers, non-food crops may be considered. Above all, it was important to get the auction markets going again as soon as possible, and to look into reinstating markets and abattoirs inside the District.

Smallholder

PAULETTE SCHRADER AND LILLIAN LEGGETT

Paulette and Lillian are smallholders living in a hilltop village south of Keighley. Their land of about 1.75 acres is across the small village road from their house, and forms a neat, stone-walled rectangle that runs gently uphill. The field, which has a Parish Holding Number, is pasture with a small, immature field-corner woodland at one end, and stables with other penning at the roadside end.

Paulette and Lillian found their smallholding six months ago through word of mouth after having

moved up from Essex. Their move to the District a year ago was based on it being more affordable to buy land with an adjacent house, compared to where they were previously. The cost of buying the smallholding is made possible by income from daily commuting to work in Leeds. Eventually bringing up their three horses, they have since added two pet sheep, two geese and nine laying chickens. Their holding has other smallholdings around it and a large sheep farm. They have good links with neighbours and local farmers and buy straw and haylage through them. Horse feed and chicken corn is bought from Firth's in Keighley each fortnight. They have the choice of two large-animal veterinarians in Keighley. They would like to resow their pasture at some point, and increase the area of tree plantings. They seek information and advice on both these activities.

Communication In previous years, Paulette and Lillian used to take the Smallholder Magazine. They are now members of the N. Yorks. Smallholder Society having also heard of them by word of mouth when they moved up here. They value the quarterly newsletter from the society, in particular its small ads. section, although they haven't yet attended any of the society's functions. They are not online at home, being wary of the possible cost. They have had no contact outside of the usual with the local authority, and were unaware of Neighbourhood Forums.

Diversification They would like to take on more land, probably renting at least two more acres, and explore ways of bringing in income from the land. Their aim is to reduce their dependency on their outside income and gradually replace it from diversifying use of their potentially larger access to land. They have been considering worm farming and products from chickens and goats. They have not yet sought any formal business advice, but would wish to make use of any potential for local advisory services to help them. They would also like to enlarge their stables and probably bring in a temporary caravan to act as office and storage space. They are aware that there may be planning considerations for these and again would welcome advice where this is provided. With a bus service running between their village and Keighley, they consider there is access to their potential enterprise and the possibility of developing employment.

Bridleways and Traffic Calming As horse riders, and being new to the District, they have concerns over the sign-posting and general state of bridleways. Their experience has been that some bridleways suddenly seem to disappear, with them ending up on moorland with nowhere to go. Better signing would help, but they also suggest that a clear bridleway map could be produced for the District. They also believe that the maintenance of bridleways needs attention, as the condition in parts of some of the bridleways could be considered dangerous for horse riding.

Road traffic is also a concern for riders in horse riding areas such as where they live. Speed limits for small rural roads sometimes seem set too high or are not enforced. They think a case should be made to consider traffic calming measures where there are difficult locations, such as some of the bends on small rural roads.

Outlook Paulette and Lillian look to the next 5-10 years with optimism, having achieved a major goal in becoming smallholders by moving to the District. They think their optimism will be grow even further if they can be given some assistance in looking at the range of opportunities available to them to diversify.

Large Estates

ERIC FELTON, ASSET MANAGEMENT, CBMDC

Bradford Council owns an agricultural estate of about 20 farms, about 20 smallholdings and various parcels of land let for grazing. The farms and holdings are spread around the District (i.e.

Ilkley, Keighley and Apperley Bridge) but there is a concentration around Esholt. The latter resulted from the Council inheriting in the 1930-40's the land holdings of the Esholt Estate. These were transferred from the water authority when it split from the local authority. The farms and holdings are predominantly in what could be called a peri-urban location (i.e. adjacent to urban population rather than in fully open countryside) with the largest farm encompassing about 80 acres (the median is around 13-17 acres). The smallholdings have about 3-4 acres of land. The land let for grazing has arisen from the splitting of former agriculture holdings (farmhouse possibly sold off) or from former school grounds, or from former recreation grounds.

Asset Management of CBMDC was previously Property Services, which responded to policy and needs in the operational management of assets determined by other services in the Council. Asset Management now takes both a policy and operational role in all areas of asset management, including acquisitions and disposals and works to the new Asset Management Director.

Eric Felton is the Principal Estates Officer in Asset Management. His objective, as with all of the other Council assets, is to manage the letting of the agricultural holdings so that they obtain a reasonable return. Eric feels this is becoming harder to do for a number of reasons. Tenancies under the Agricultural Holdings Act impose a duty of maintenance and repair of farm buildings on the Council while the tenant commits to maintenance of the land. The costs associated with repair and maintenance and the administration costs are rising against an increasingly insufficient income from tenancies, making the letting barely worth it.

The future letting of holdings is becoming uncertain. The current tenants are an ageing population with little interest in investing in the holding, particularly since their children seem uninterested in continuing with the tenancy. Holdings are advertised for expressions of interest when they become available, but this is not often particularly for the farms. The concern is that the farming difficulties in recent years, such as BSE and FMD, will have reduced demand from new tenants wishing to come in to farming.

Communication and Information Because of the duties required of the landlord, there is frequent contact between the tenants and representatives of the Council. Eric's colleague in Asset Management, Melvin Jagger, fulfils an advice and liaison service with the tenants while carrying out a monitoring role in property inspection, progress chasing and asset management. The advice is on such things as stockproofing of fencing, methods of dealing with traveller's horses encroaching on farmland and other intrusions associated with nearby urban populations such as unauthorised footpaths, and people and vehicle trespass. Melvin also gives direction for finding information on grant sources. The liaison is between the tenants and other services in the Council to resolve issues.

Melvin also provides a link between engineering and planning services in the Council and private farm owners in the District. He also provides advice internally on planning applications and their viability. Eric importantly noted that while this information and liaison role was important in Asset Management, it was provided without any professional indemnity and thus does not involve any commercial advice.

Asset Management take Farmers Weekly and receive consultations from DEFRA when related to agriculture. Two of the surveyors on staff have extensive knowledge of agricultural holdings.

Diversification and Re-letting A number of Council tenanted farms have diversified into ventures such as golf driving ranges, horse livery and a farm park with uncommon livestock and petting animals. These businesses are now subject to different pressures with the driving ranges losing out to golf clubs, an oversupply of livery and an outbreak of salmonella reducing visitor numbers to the Farm Park.

Asset Management welcomes proposals for diversification from both present and from incoming

tenants in the hope of maximising the chances of continued letting. It is recognised that after the first wave of diversification, successful new ideas have become less easy. Also, there is always the concern that the change in use leads to a reduced need for all the land of the holding. This sometimes has consequences for the good management of the unused land.

Holdings coming up for re-letting are advertised for expressions of interest, and require a proposed management plan and some indication of what rent would be offered. Decisions on awarding a tenancy compare the plan with the historical viability of the holding and it is not always the highest bid that is taken. In addition, the re-letting is made more amenable to diversification by making it take the form of a Farm Business Tenancy instead of an Agricultural Holdings Tenancy. This tenancy is more like a business lease in that it has a term and is not transferable through succession.

A Strategic Role for Land Assets An historical strategic role for Council farmholdings was as a stepping stone for new entrants into farming. The contemporary strategic role is very different. On the one hand, there is little available flat land in the District. Thus selected disposal of some of the farmland holdings can fulfil a need to make available building land in locations where additional housing is judged to be pressing. On the other hand, the clustering of many of the land holdings can be seen as forming an open space break between housing ribbons and thus takes on the role of being a Strategic Gap or Green Wedge, providing a means for control of development.

There is no presumption to routinely dispose of Council landholdings. The decision to dispose of a Council farm most often is based on the land holding being remote from other Council-owned land holdings and thus not having any relevance to a strategic gap policy. The general policy on disposal may change, but if it does there would still be the opportunity to exert some development control through leases and covenants on the disposed land.

The entry of all assets into the Council's GIS facilitates the ability to look at various options for the landholdings and for policy development towards strategic use of Council landholdings. It also makes for easy discussion and subsequent incorporation of policies into updated UDPs.

Outlook Eric would wish for nothing more than an improvement in farm incomes whether from agriculture or from a diversified activity, but with a preference for it coming from agriculture. This may lead to a better return from letting the farms, smallholdings and grazing land. Eric is familiar with proposals for improved income that encourage local markets such as Farmer's Markets and adding value through local processing. However, he is unsure that these are a panacea for the District's products and conditions.

MIKE PEARSON AND ANDREW SIDEBOTTOM, RURAL ESTATES TEAM, YORKSHIRE WATER plc

The Yorkshire Water estate comprises landholdings that cross several administrative boundaries. The prime reason for its ownership is to protect water catchment areas. Not all of the land is around reservoirs. The whole of the estate – spanning all parts of Yorkshire and stretching into the Peak District - is made up of 230 Agricultural Holdings Act tenancies, 10 Farm Business Tenancies and 100 short term lets and grazing. Major contiguous holdings in the District lie to the west of Haworth and on Bingley Moor.

The Rural Estates management has operational drivers that relate to business guidelines for their tenants and to other landowners in catchment areas; to the overall value of owning and managing the estate; and to the asset management plan of Yorkshire Water.

The business guidelines include informing tenants on the need for farm practices that protect catchment areas and including information on avoiding the storage or disposal of hazardous

substances. They also provide good practice information to other farmers and landowners in catchment areas, and encourage all farmers to consider the Countryside Stewardship Scheme as one means to aid in catchment protection.

Value for money means the estate has to be managed so that it does not become a major liability. In recent business planning, the Rural Estates Team has looked at the local and wider trends within farming that can affect the value of the business. These include the following:

- ✚ CAP reform
- ✚ An ageing tenant base
- ✚ Tenancies that could be under threat
- ✚ Serious problems of succession of tenancy
- ✚ Hard to let tenancies
- ✚ Unattractive units
- ✚ No long-term commitment from tenants

The overall asset management plan of Yorkshire Water looks at capital expenditure on the investment base of treatment works, pipeworks and the rural estate, with some planned expenditure around the latter. The Conservation and Recreation team has a separate budget, but its expenditure is related to the rural estate. Its recent focus has been on access. Yorkshire Water has a practical commitment to speedily opening up access to land through the Countryside Rights of Way Act, and working with tenants to make that happen. Some conflicts about access and shooting rights are arising, which could result in shortfalls in income as shooting can generate £1500 per person per day.

Andrew is developing new approaches for managing the farm's estate. He has been looking at the feasibility of using a farm manager rather than have farms tenanted, but with the criterion that it has to be viable. In addition, Andrew points out that the tenant base creates the opportunity to test out new ideas, and he would be interested to become involved in suitable projects initiated by DEFRA.

Yorkshire Water does not exclusively provide conservation advice to its tenants and thus there is no barrier to tenants seeking advisory help from FWAG. Andrew's impression is that the estate farm tenants information on grants is poor and so he will shortly be meeting with local DEFRA officials to talk about Countryside Stewardship Scheme and other grant schemes. He would then probably circulate the information as a newsletter to tenants.

The Rural Estates Team appreciates that their role is important for landscape management in the areas covered by the estate, and would wish to link up wherever partnerships would prove valuable.

OTHER LARGE ESTATE OWNERS

Potential estate owners were contacted by telephone.

CO-OPERATIVE WHOLESALE GROUP The Co-op purchased its first farm in 1896. It is now the UK's largest commercial farmer through its Farmcare Group. CWS Farms formed the group with the takeover of Broadoak Farming in 1998. It operates through 34 agricultural businesses, comprising over 100 farms (85,000 acres) owned either by the Co-operative Group or managed by Farmcare for private landowners. Farmcare works through modern agricultural development, such as integrated crop management, which aims to optimise high yields and crop inputs while reducing production costs and any adverse effects on the environment.

Christine Tacon, Farmcare manager, informed us that there were no farms in the District owned or managed by the Co-op.

NATIONAL TRUST does not own any farms in the District.

We also contacted the Countryside Service of CBMDC who were unaware of any large estates in the District other than those owned by Yorkshire Water and the Local Authority.

Regional Representatives

TONY BOWEY, REGIONAL NFU REPRESENTATIVE

Tony Bowey is the regional NFU representative. When asked what his own aspirations were for the farming industry, Tony said that if farming was to survive within the United Kingdom it must become economically sustainable and attractive to young people. Given that the current annual income of many farmers has slumped to between £4-5k this not surprisingly turned out to be a widely held view.

Continuing with his analysis of farming within the UK he went on to suggest that in keeping with the majority of Britain's manual sector, the lack of young people entering farming meant that the industry now faced a skill shortage, and that if the country were forced into isolation through conflict or lack of access to the world's markets, we would be unable to feed ourselves despite have sufficient land to do so. This was a perception that he further supported by explaining that what Britain currently exports in the way of agricultural produce is not actually a surplus as per traditional economics, but potentially the food from our own tables.

Outlook Despite this somewhat gloomy prognosis Tony expressed a degree of optimism about the future, by stating that over the next 10 – 20 years he believes there will be a farming renaissance that will see the disappearance of the type of small scale farming enterprise that is typical of Bradford, (100 acres / 50 head of cattle), as they amalgamate to become much larger businesses. This perception is based on what he sees as his understanding of demographic movement trends and the experiences of fellow farmers in Sussex. He sees the future of Yorkshire mirroring that of the South where those with sufficient residual capital opt to migrate to the countryside to pursue the idyllic life of farming, only to find its actually 'harder than it looks'. This results in them either employing farm managers, or more commonly renting their land out at very cheap rates, a situation that is mutually beneficial for both parties and one which sees small scale farms increasingly operating over much larger acreage.

This perception was not however, one that the regional representative of the CLBA (Dorothy Fairburn) had agreed with, as she felt that farmers would be extremely reluctant to give up both their land and homes. It may well be that such a conflict of opinion stems directly from the membership base of each organisation, and it would not seem unreasonable to argue that somebody owning ten thousand acres and a stately home (i.e. a CLBA member), would clearly be more reluctant to give up their property than a 'culled out' NFU member with 100 acres.

How can the Local Authority help? When asked how he thought Bradford Council could help his members achieve their mid-long term business aspirations Tony felt that the single most important area in which the Local Authority could help was with 'planning'. He felt this was crucial at a time when farmers attempting to respond to increasing pressure to diversify, were often prevented from doing so by being refused the planning permission that is necessary for them to make the change from one business practice to another. In addition he suggested that those younger farmers (i.e. those under 35), who he felt are much more receptive to change, are not being given the planning permission they require to bring their farms from the 40s/50s into the 21st century. The NFU are also regularly getting feedback from their members that suggests that the interpretation and application of the rules within the Bradford district appears to be inconsistent.

It was always felt essential that if this research was to engage with all agricultural stakeholders then the aspirations of the 'young farmers' must be sought. Unfortunately, despite repeated

attempts to establish a dialogue with this group, no feedback has been obtained. The inference being drawn therefore is that those farmers falling into this category either don't see their long-term future in farming, or are happy with the way things are.

Local Markets Another area in which the Tony Bowey believed that the Local Authority could be of assistance was in helping to define exactly what the requirements of the local markets are. It was his opinion that the majority of farmers are very bad at marketing and only stop short of waiting for somebody to knock on their door to buy their produce. He suggested that this situation has arisen because in the past traditional marketing methods have always been used, which has left many of today's farmers simply unable to interact within modern day markets. Regardless of the reason, he feels that Bradford Council needs to employ a local market advisor who could identify the requirements of the Bradford community. He recognised that this would require in depth research, but felt that if such research was undertaken then those farmers that are willing to diversify would be receptive to trying new forms of agriculture in the light of new evidence.

Other points/frustrations He raised an interesting point about locally produced organic milk in that there are some farmers producing milk organically which they sell at 24p /litre, however, the demand is such that their produce is only sold off as organic milk 2 days out of every seven. This means that for the rest of the week their organic milk goes in the pot with everybody else's and they only receive 17p /litre, thereby greatly reducing any profit margin that being organic was intended to bring.

DOROTHY FAIRBURN, YORKSHIRE REPRESENTATIVE CLBA

Membership Within Yorkshire the CLBA have approximately 4300 members (an undisclosed number of which are also NFU members), the majority of which manage / own 300 acres, although, some manage / own as much as 15,000 acres. This proved to be an interesting statistic given that of the 120 CLBA members responding to questionnaires their average land holding was 8.5 acres. Given the variation in land holding and member's capital assets however, Dorothy Fairburn was understandably unable to give an accurate assessment of what her memberships mid-long term business aspirations are. She felt that in many cases her members would not know their own aspirations with regard to their land, but felt that some of their generic concerns might be to see a reduction in bureaucracy, a realistic income that would attract young farmers back into the industry, and recognition of how they actually manage the environment. For some of her members she also thought they might hope to see a rise in the value of their land as some of those with the largest landholding bought purely as a business investment.

How can the Local Authority help? When asked how CBMDC could help her members achieve their mid-long term business aspirations, Dorothy thought that Bradford did a lot already to help agriculture and particularly the environment, however she also thought that what the Council did was not very well advertised. The same applied to NGOs like the Bradford Environmental Action Trust (BEAT), as she knew nothing of the Forest of Bradford, and therefore felt certain that her members didn't.

A further response to this question was to state that in the past the Dales National Park and local farmers had not always got on well, however, the introduction of the Dales National Park Scheme has greatly eased the tensions between both stakeholders, and she therefore suggested the CBMDC should contact Adrian Shepherd, who runs the scheme, to see if he can offer any recommendations. The Dales Park now pays farmers to maintain the landscape, provides a focus for queries and also provides countryside stewardship grants. It was suggested that in the first instance Bradford Council should make a permanent position for somebody to act as a dedicated point of contact within the Council and fulfil the type of role the Adrian Shepherd currently does.

Planning and Diversification Like the NFU, the CLBA felt that the majority of contact their members had with the Council was a negative experience, especially as it generally involved either appealing against a planning decision or arguing over issues of access. It was felt that more work needed to be done with planning officers and that there is room for education on both sides. North Yorkshire Council has produced an extremely useful planning guidance document and it was suggested that Bradford should consider doing the same.

Rights of Way In addition York City Council were cited as a good example of partnership working over issues of access, as they have established a dialogue with landowners and other stakeholders to make diversions to rights of way more logical and workable that are based on agreement rather than legislation. If this is not already happening in Bradford perhaps it should be.

Communication and IT Training The CLBA also felt that the Bradford District is small enough to enable the Council to collate a database of all farmers and their e-mail addresses that would allow electronic information to be disseminated quickly, whilst at the same time putting farmers easily in touch with each other, rather than periodically at market. It was also suggested that the Council should sponsor IT training for farmers and that this should be available in dedicated evening sessions open only to farmers rather than to the general public. The Council's IT training centre in St Peter's House would adequately fit this requirement and existing lessons would only require the minimum amount of alteration to make them 'farming specific'.

Her top idea, however, was that the Local Authority should sponsor IT training for farmers. She thought that this should be available as dedicated sessions, perhaps in the evening, and only open to farmers rather than the wider public. Further information on this could be obtained from Jackie Bruce, the regional representative of LANTRA National Training Organisation.

Once again this was a useful meeting that put a different perspective on agricultural aspirations whilst at the same time raising several of the issues that we have heard before.

Farm Advisory Services

CAROLYN COLEMAN AND JIM WILLIAMS, BUSINESS LINK, BRADFORD

The Small Business Service (SBS) is a Government agency that champions the interests of small businesses. The SBS manages a national network of Business Link services throughout England that are run by local providers. Business Link supplies independent and impartial business advice, information and a range of services to help small firms and those trying to start up new businesses.

The Farm Business Advice Service (FBAS) was launched in October 2000 under the Governments Action Plan for Farming. FBAS was developed by MAFF (now DEFRA) in conjunction with the SBS and after consultation with farming industry representatives. Local Business Link providers are delivering the Service.

FBAS is designed primarily for farmers with small or medium sized businesses that haven't had mainstream commercial business advice before and are unsure which direction to take in the future. The Service is open to all farmers in England who have a County Parish Holding number and who spend at least 75% of their time working on their core farm business. It is available on a first come, first served basis and funding is available until March 2004.

Delivery of FBAS Carolyn Coleman supervises FBAS for the area, and has four Farm Business Advisers working for her, all having particular areas of expertise. Jim Williams is an adviser across West Yorkshire, but is a farmer in his own right. A farm advisory service in

Skipton (David Hill, Chartered Surveyor etc.) noted in the farmer interviews was one of the early Farm Business Advisers taken on by Business Link before FMD took hold. The target set for the area in October 2000 was for 150 farm visits and action plans. About 35 have been delivered so far of which 20 or so were in the District. Call for the FBAS has been markedly reduced since FMD, particularly among the small-sized sheep and beef farmers.

The free service covers up to 3 days of a Farm Business Adviser's time during which they carry out an initial interview by phone followed by a farm visit to analyse the business (half-day). The adviser then develops an Action Plan for the business in discussion with the farmer (one-day producing the plan and a half-day discussing it). As base information, the adviser has a National Whole Farm Recovery Plan to work from (specified by MAFF and SBS) and then tailors it to the individual circumstances and needs of the farmer, and in light of local business knowledge of the area. The Service does not provide grants or offer specialist business or technical advice, but the adviser does signpost services that do, and any potential funding streams that are needed to implement the Action Plan. There are also recommendations on any scope for improvement in efficiencies and skills, particularly in record keeping. The adviser will return to see how the farmer is progressing with the Action Plan and amend it or offer further help (two half days). The process is risk-free for the farmer, except for providing the adviser with trading accounts and any other records useful for the analysis.

Service Promotion Farmers heard originally about FBAS from a leaflet sent out from MAFF in September 2000. Various diary features on the service have appeared in the agricultural press, and David Hill would have used their contact database to spread word. The advisers are also beginning to market the service. However, with the easing of the FMD situation, more local information and promotion of the service is needed to encourage its uptake. Farm Business Advisers have in the past been to local NFU Branch meetings to explain the service, but not to meetings in the District.

Business Link provides FBAS as their major form of support for rural communities. They have in the past applied individually for additional funding (MAFF Agricultural Development Grant) to carry out a feasibility study into yoghurt production supplying the local restaurant trade, and continue an interest in developing this. There is the potential to use their mainstream business support service for rural business if it meets the usual criteria (less than 10 employees; have the capacity to develop or be a start-up etc.). And there are ways for them to work indirectly by supporting smallscale initiatives such as start-ups in the supply chain and for speciality markets.

Farming Outlook As a farmer himself, Jim has firm views on the business issues facing the farming community at present. He sees a major concern being the lack of young people staying on or coming in to farming. It has to be made attractive to them. A stronger market orientation, looking to new markets and forming producer and marketing co-operatives, would strengthen farming's viability. Jim also believes that the basic business skills of farmers can be raised, from form filling to the use of information technology.

The Local Authority Business Link presently receives money from Bradford Council to fund Environmental Business Support. They would welcome funding for developing business capacity in the Districts farming community. Business Link points to a particular need for farmers to receive training in information technology. Carolyn identified a pot of legacy money from the old TEC that could be used to deliver computer training by peripatetic teachers, possibly delivering courses for the European Computer Driving License. Business Link also indicates that a policy for tourism would be an aid to rural areas and would fit into a business strategy that encompasses farm diversification.

JULIAN CARLISLE, FARMING AND WILDLIFE ADVISORY GROUP, WEST RIDING

The Farming and Wildlife Advisory Group (FWAG) is a national charity based at the National

Agricultural Centre, Stoneleigh, Warwickshire. Regional groups throughout England are supported by local voluntary committees and co-ordinate the work of 80 Farm Conservation Advisers. West Riding FWAG is based in Wakefield and covers West and South Yorkshire. Advisers provide practical, confidential, on-farm advice to farmers and landowners based on a whole-farm approach. They also provide advice on the range of environmental grant schemes available to farmers and can prepare grant applications for the farm. Initial farm advisory visits are funded by DEFRA and funding for additional work comes through charging for services such as more detailed advice, involvement in Biodiversity Action Plans, and in co-ordination of programs with other organisations like the RSPB, Environment Agency and English Nature.

Farmers with greater than 10 hectares can request a free advisory visit, which lasts for about two hours. Often the farmer will have heard of the opportunity through the RSPB, although DEFRA, some local authorities and word of mouth are other routes. FWAG's approach looks at conservation across the whole farm environment, and identifies methods for improvement year-on-year. During the visit, the Farm Conservation Adviser looks at the existing wildlife resources on the farm and identifies management practices that benefit wildlife and their habitats without compromising productivity or economic performance. These are often related to the targets for stewardship schemes in the area and cover hedges, walls, grasslands and field margins, wetlands and watercourses and woodlands. General farm practice in uses of fertilisers, pesticides and farmyard manure are also scrutinised.

The Landwise Report A Landwise report is produced (3 hours are paid for) that discusses ways in which existing practices can be altered to improve the value of the farm for wildlife: this includes zero-cost and low-cost options. Where indicated, DEFRA codes of good practice are provided (i.e. soils, water etc.). Information is also given on grant schemes that support wildlife management on farms, such as the Countryside Stewardship Scheme, Environmentally Sensitive Area Scheme, the Woodland Grant Scheme and the Farm Woodland Premium Scheme. If appropriate, information on funding from other areas of the ERDP is provided, such as the Rural Enterprise Scheme and Vocational Training Scheme.

In the last reporting year, Julian has carried out 30 farm visits under the Landwise Report scheme, whereas they were expecting probably only 15 (an additional advisor position is being discussed). Six of those advisory visits have been in the District and three resulted in farms entering into the 10-year Countryside Stewardship Scheme (seven last year). Currently, three farms around Baildon Moor are awaiting their first visits. Julian thinks that farmers view this scheme as an opportunity for a guaranteed income, which is in compensation for the management practices required by the scheme. Thus the FWAG service results in bringing in income for farmers in the District. However, it should be noted that only 75% of capital expenditure is funded under the Countryside Stewardship Scheme and thus has to met with the farmer's own money. Also, the payments under the scheme are based on income forgone.

Partnership Working FWAG has an involvement in the many co-operative landscape management initiatives of the region, working with RSPB, English Nature, the South Yorkshire Forest, the South Pennines, White Rose Forest and the Forest of Bradford. They are involved in farm walks organised by LEAF (Linking Environment And Farming) on their demonstration network farms. FWAG also organise their own farm walk events each year on themes developed from the national office and for a target number of events. Farms in the Countryside Stewardship Scheme in the District are used as example for these farm walks.

Funding, Sponsorship and Promotion FWAG West Riding receives financial support from six of the nine authorities that its area covers. Wakefield supply office space and others contribute in the form of grants or other small sums that support their general work, or by way of sponsorship of events like farm walks. FWAG is increasingly looking to turn this funding into service level agreements to ensure greater continuity. Bradford Council does not provide any financial assistance to FWAG. Contact with the Council has been primarily with the Countryside Service. Julian would welcome any initiative that raised the profile in the District of the service to

farmers provided by FWAG and welcomes the opportunity to co-operate in any rural processes or initiatives where appropriate.

CATH LONG, FOREST OF BRADFORD

The Forest of Bradford (FoB), is part of the Bradford Environmental Action Trust (BEAT), and was originally set up as a partnership project with the Local Authority. Its mid-to-long term aspirations are:

- ✚ To increase woodland cover within Bradford to 6.5% of suitable land available
- ✚ To promote community ownership of woodlands
- ✚ For woodlands to be managed by the Council for recreational use and by private landowners for improving biodiversity
- ✚ To assist woodland owners and managers in managing their woods in a sustainable manner, whilst at the same time making a small profit
- ✚ To link up the 6.5% of available woodland to form a wildlife corridor
- ✚ To support owners of private woodlands in opening their woods to the public

In an attempt to achieve these goals the FoB contacted all addresses within the district that contain the word 'Farm' and offered to work with the landowners to increase the district's level of tree cover. This was taken up by a number of businesses keen to plant trees as windbreaks in order to protect silage crops or provide shelter for livestock.

In all cases Ian Butterworth from the Forest of Bradford conducted a site visit to determine whether the relevant funding criteria was being met, and if it was supervised the planting of saplings on the area agreed with the landowner. Despite the foot and mouth crisis they planted free of charge 30,000 trees in 2001 and 40,000 trees over 22 hectares in 2002.

The Forest of Bradford have given considerable thought as to how they can work in partnership with the Local Authority and have included within the district's 'Woodlands Strategy' a list of how the Council can help them achieve their mid to long-term business aspirations. These include:

- ✚ Informing landowners about the FoB.
- ✚ Including woodlands, trees and forests within Local Biodiversity Action Plans.
- ✚ Incorporating trees and woodlands into planning policies and guidelines.
- ✚ Ensuring that trees and woodlands are included as planning conditions wherever possible.
- ✚ Informing tenants on Council farms about advice and information available from the FoB and other advisory organisations.

Cath Long also stated that in the past the Council had assisted BEAT by offering stationary support and 'Council Officer time', both of which were valuable commodities that have since been withdrawn. She felt that the FoB were doing a good public relations job for the Council in the projects they were undertaking and that it was not therefore unrealistic to expect some type of financial support from them.

She also explained that within the FoB organisation is the Youthwood Project, which attempts to use the environment, and in particular woodlands, to engage young people excluded from mainstream education. For the last two years this project has been run by a part time youth worker and has proved to be extremely successful, it is therefore a service that both the FoB and BEAT are keen to retain.

OTHER ADVISORY SERVICES

A number of other free or paid-for advisory services that land users in the District may take

advantage of. We interviewed these by telephone to get some idea of their involvement in the District:

ADAS provides a range of professional research and advisory services to land users, including agricultural development and farm conservation. Mick Robson works in their Rural Property Service and described ADAS involvement in the Bradford District (and the whole of Yorkshire) as:

- ✚ Advice for all developments that involve agricultural land and the rural economy, from new farm buildings to conversion work – agricultural to commercial, diversification schemes, and including leisure enterprises
- ✚ Initial surveys, concepts, planning, design, tendering and work supervision.

Mick confirmed that he was involved in delivering advice for the scheme for farm businesses where there was a refunding of expenses for one-days planning consultancy on applications for diversification through the Rural Enterprise Scheme of the ERDP (**Planning Consultancy Advice for Farm Diversification**, 2001)

LANTRA NTO is the government-recognised National Training Organisation for the land-based sector of Britain. LANTRA's role is to provide a focus for the development of the skills, knowledge and enterprise of the land based sector, and to increase business competitiveness and support sustainable development.

Under the Action Plan for Farming, LANTRA were provided with £1.8 million to fund a year long analysis of the training needs of farmers and to promote the benefits of training. LANTRA used the funding to provide free skills audits in agricultural and horticultural businesses throughout England, the scheme coming to an end in March 2001 (**Action Plan for Farming SkillCheck**, 2000). A total of 10,000 SkillCheck assessments were carried out March 2001 that covered the training of 24,450 people. IT training was found to be the most requested area of training.

Jacqui Bruce is the regional contact for LANTRA and her area stretches from Leyburn in N Yorkshire down through S Yorkshire. She explained that although SkillChecks through the Action Plan had ceased, there would be an element of funding through the ERDP to continue skills audits. As well as all the standardised training courses that LANTRA promote throughout the country, Jacqui organises special training days for farmers, mostly in the areas of dales and moors of N Yorkshire that attract additional funding.

The local training agent for LANTRA is Target Training in Skipton, who can answer inquiries on training programs. Jacqui has worked with Bradford Business Link and would welcome the opportunity to work with more organisations in the District.

LEAF is a national charity that helps farmers improve their environment and business performance and create a better public understanding of farming through their nationwide network of demonstration farms. An object of LEAF is to encourage farmers throughout the UK to adopt Integrated Farm Management (IFM) and to promote the benefits of that approach to consumers.

IFM is a whole farm policy that integrates beneficial natural processes into modern farming practices using advanced technology. It aims to minimise environmental risks while conserving, enhancing and recreating natural habitats. Farmers join LEAF for a modest membership fee and are provided with a detailed self-assessment audit of their farm. Feedback on the audit is provided that helps farmers set targets to improve their business while enhancing the environment.

From FWAG, we had heard of LEAF demonstration farms in the region that were used for farm walks as demonstrations of good practice. We contacted Sue Simpson at LEAF and she checked her membership of nearly 2,000 to reveal that there were no members in Bradford

District. Sue would welcome opportunities for promoting IFM and LEAF in the District.

Rural Tourism

SONJA REWHORN, SUSTAINABILITY TEAM, CBMDC

Sonja works on rural issues and has recently had been involved with consultation on a tourism strategy. She defines tourism as any movement of people within the UK, whether it is the afternoon outing, a weekend visit to relatives or even business journeys. It is a major benchmark of consumer confidence. As disposable income rises, lifestyles change and translate into more tourism. FMD last year took away much confidence so that all tourism suffered, and not just that in rural areas.

In earlier years, Bradford Council has had a strategic Tourist Officer. At present there is a head of Tourist Information Centres, a role not necessarily involved in policy development. The Council has five Tourist Information Centres in the District (such as in Bradford, Ilkley etc) all standardised to ETB/YTB systems.

Tourism Strategy In preparation for its bid to become a Capital of Culture, the Council has had to develop a new tourist strategy as part of its submission. The process has involved consultation meetings and a feedback session in City Hall, from which YTB have drafted the strategy. It is currently being considered by the various services of the Council with the view to identifying their potential role in its delivery. When the document is finally released, it is expected that money and resources will be put towards it. Sonja hopes that the strategy will show that tourism is not something separate from the local population and only an activity for incoming visitors.

Sonja identified a recent Government Initiative on rural tourism. Rural Affairs Minister Alun Michael and Heritage Minister Tessa Blackstone, had joined forces with a range of interested organisations and associations to formally launch '**Your Countryside, You're Welcome**' (2002) a new campaign to encourage people into the English countryside in 2002. The campaign will focus on many organised access events, with a focus on a special week in March and events on through the summer. Farm visits for schoolchildren will be one activity promoted. Sonja feels that the emphasis for these visits should be broadened from the usual walk around farmyards and looking at livestock in sheds to include exploring the 'natural space', looking for the variety of habitats and natural landscape features.

Sonja points to the possibility of a Rural Action Zone being set up in the Clitheroe-Settle area, in line with the original proposal of inter-agency and partnership approach of the one in Cumbria. This, along with 'Your Countryside, You're Welcome', is a strand in "England's Rural Future", the Government response to the recommendations of the Rural Task Force and Lord Haskins. The nearby zone will be watched with interest, but Sonja cautions on approaches that create special zones since they also, by definition, have boundaries that may arbitrarily cordon their activities thus creating disadvantage outside of the area.

Sonja confirmed her commitment made at the Rural Renaissance conference that she was intending to run a series of seminars in the District on how organisations could get involved in rural affairs. One of them would be on rural tourism, and would be informed by the tourism strategy when it was released and by national campaigns when details became available.

Sonja identified that a wide range of thoughts and ideas exist for promotion of tourism, from overall strategic planning to the many small-scale local initiatives. The success, at any level, was however vitally dependent on all the basic services being in place (transport, health, crime prevention, retail etc.) and accessible to the visitor.

Duke of Edinburgh Award Scheme It's important to see tourism in its broadest form. For example, young people on their Duke of Edinburgh (DofE) Award Scheme are tourists. A recent Government Green Paper has recommended that all 14-19 year olds should have access to the DofE award scheme. In Bradford District alone, this is potentially an additional 56,000 young people walking in the countryside. It would make sense that they are encouraged to make use of the District for their hikes rather than probably leave for the Lake District. Thus the suggestion is that they could take public transport to their starting point (one possibility could be Nell Bank in Ilkley) and either continue their hike within the District or cross into others. A scheme that makes good use of the countryside in the Bradford District may be attractive for other, large authorities such as Birmingham who may look for opportunities to come here for their hikes.

There would likely be an encouragement for rural diversification in the District from this approach, based on the facilities that would be needed to support it. There would need to be campsites with water supply, toilets and maybe wash basins and showers, providing opportunities for farmers and businesses in terms of campsite fees. Sonja believes it is important that when developed from new, these facilities are of a good standard so that they attract a similar respect to that of holiday cottages. While the income may be modest, the capital outlay and overheads may also be low.

The youth of today are the adults/consumers of tomorrow. Thus Sonja believes that the more children who experience the rural areas of the District, through such things as a District-tailored DofE scheme, the better will be their appreciation of the countryside and the greater the chance that they will be custodians of it.

Right to Roam There is the potential that there will also be more outdoor access in all age groups after the Right to Roam legislation comes into effect. And here, Sonja provides a note of caution, as there is the likelihood of an increase in the number of ill-trained and ill-equipped people getting into difficulties and needing recovery. She sees the various Walking For Health Initiatives of the present and indicates that an important aspect of their work should be the provision of training courses for rural walk leaders to gain the nationally graded Basic Expedition Leadership Award.

Rural Economy Workshop

REPORT OF WORKGROUP ONE

🚧 **Farmer / Cheese maker:** At a time when farm incomes are continually declining, farmers are being told to seek business consultancy advice. In most of the cases where funding is applied for, the opening question is generally 'which surveyor or consultant are you using', therefore not employing these services, that being with them crippling costs, is almost impossible. Could a free consultancy advice service be provided that is funded on a 'farming certificate'? The current system is economically unsustainable.

An additional comment to this was that if the idea of a free consultancy service was taken up it must be informed and would require much research. It was pointed out that there are some bodies within Bradford, the Bradford Business Environmental Forum being one such example, that do bring together like-minded experts to disseminate information to other businesses.

🚧 **Rambling Association rep:** During the foot and mouth disease, the Rambler's Association, the Glen Tramway and the Old Glen public house coalesced to see what could be done during the crisis. During this period, small businesses lost thousands of pounds. Therefore how can we generate/invigorate the rural economy? Two ways would be to-

- 🚧 Increase the footpaths as they are pivotal to tourism
- 🚧 Spend time and money regenerating the region's footpaths, which at present rate as some of the worst maintained in the country.

- ✚ Something CBMDC could do is to allow farmers to run their farming businesses as a second business; i.e. the Council could take a more flexible approach to working patterns.
- ✚ **Transport.** It was felt that the availability/lack of availability of public transport underpins the state of the rural economy and the urban - rural interconnection and, as the majority of employment opportunities are in urban areas, an effective transport system is essential. Also transport is vital if education and training opportunities are to be maximised.
- ✚ **Tourism.** As businesses engaged in tourism become more dependent on computers for on line bookings, account keeping etc, those small businesses such as B&Bs that have no ITC expertise or IT facilities are missing out. A problem that is compounded in some rural areas where the phone lines are unable to cope with high Internet demands. In some of the most inaccessible areas of Scotland computers have been placed in village halls and people have booked IT time the same way as they would book the use of the hall. Could this type of facility, i.e. an expansion on the service already offered in Bradford libraries, be introduced in the district?
- ✚ People are not aware of the range of facilities and grants available to them. Therefore could a **One Stop Shop**, i.e. a vehicle that visits rural areas providing information and advice on services, be introduced? There was some mention that Bingley are attempting to secure funding to do this.
- ✚ CBMDC's website is not helpful to tourism.
- ✚ The likes of the CLA and the NFU are not talking to each other because they have different agendas.
- ✚ **Slaughter Houses.** There was an Organisation called the Humane Slaughter Organisation that had a mobile slaughterhouse. Could this be introduced to Bradford?
- ✚ **Image.** The agricultural policy is very close to breakdown. Bradford suffers from one important factor, its IMAGE. The names Calderdale and Kirklees don't conjure up images of inner city decay, the name Bradford does. Therefore Bradford needs to come up with a way of promoting its rural hinterland. Also tourism has an extremely important role to play in the District, especially as it probably represents the quick fix that the rural economy needs.

Not everybody agreed with this and there was some argument that you shouldn't put all your eggs in one basket, as the latest foot and mouth epidemic has proven.

REPORT OF WORKGROUP TWO

Income figures for farming present a mystery as to how farmers are able to survive. (Askham Bryan College was reported to have available localised income figures.) One possible reason is non-farming income, which is less easy to quantify. In some cases the non-farming income/business does better than farming, leading to fears that it will result in less farming or loss of farming. The sideline businesses will eventually marginalise farming. This indicates that the rural economy is more about being in business rather than being in farming.

The smaller farms are seeing their income squeezed and need to be given a range of choices about what business and business mix they can take on. This has still to include some form of stewardship of the land as part of that mix, and providing the financial support for farmers to do that. With an ageing farmer population, there needs to be a restructuring of the farming industry to bring in youth. There may need development of a redundancy package for farming, as there has been for other industries, although there weren't many instruments available to fund that redundancy. Compensation for losses due to FMD has provided some farmers with a type of retirement package.

The state of tourism and its contribution to the rural economy generated a number of questions:

- ✚ What does tourism contribute to the District?
- ✚ How and to what extent has it been affected in the last year by FMD and by the civil disturbance in the city?
- ✚ And how has any change in tourism affected agricultural businesses?

A meeting had been held between various stakeholders in tourism and the local authority at which there had been the feeling that tourism had been depressed. However, indicators were improving now with for example Ilkley becoming busy again. Not all had been gloom as a farm cottage near Stanbury had been booked up all season. Opportunities for change of use for tourism as part of farm diversification should be high.

An example would be along the corridor of the Leeds-Liverpool canal. The canal was under used, but use could be stimulated by developing the potential of smallscale businesses along its length, such as mooring stops that can charge fees. Other small businesses may locate and use the transport potential of the canal. In addition, METRO had a rural projects initiative to see where there could be a tie-in between promotion of public transport and rural tourism, and were currently looking for new schemes.

Bradford Council was currently reforming its tourism strategy in a process that had started in the last month. The perception was that tourists speak well of the District, probably more favourably than the people who live in it do. It was thought that tourism was most significant where there were the honeypot areas of say Brontë Country or Saltaire. This raised two issues in terms of rural areas making more of tourism:

- ✚ Potentially there is a need to put some emphasis on marketing the tourist potential of other places in the District
- ✚ The recognition that much of the rural area of the District was two miles or less from the honeypot tourist sites and so there was little reason why they could not work off the back of those sites.

It was explained that the Council had always had a tourist strategy and resources for it in place. This did not however mean that the rural areas should become dependent for this on the Council since it should be recognised that tourism is primarily a private sector business. The Council's most important role in tourism was to keep the basic services going that aided in attracting tourism - litter prevention and removal being one of them.

It was stated by a representative of Yorkshire Forward that the RDA did not wish to be regarded just as a provider of pots of short-term funds, but wished to work strategically for Rural Renaissance.

The workshop participants were asked for some key points to share:

- ✚ There was a call to make a commitment to work on the issues raised today and to see how we can all work together to help take these things forward.
- ✚ Provide rural land users with help and training to run businesses in the broader sense, and which is to include tourism.
- ✚ For the District, possibly in collaboration with Leeds, to develop some distinctive marketing of its own produce in the way that Yorkshire Pantry does. (Yorkshire Pantry, despite being open to all Yorkshire producers does charge more for their service to those from outside North Yorkshire and classes them only as associate members.)
- ✚ The phalanx of acronyms – DEFRA, GOYH, EN, EA, CA, RDA – need demystifying and the organisations themselves need being made more accessible to the general rural population. The organisations should also be encouraged to link up and work effectively together to support rural renaissance.
- ✚ Plans and Policy, CBMDC, make the commitment to ensure that their service is user friendly when rural land users are in pursuit of diversification.

B: ASPIRATIONS FROM QUESTIONNAIRE RETURNS

Sector	Specialisation	Aspirations	How CBMDC can help
Farming	Dairy (6 returns)	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. To carry on Farming 2. To expand and become more efficient 3. To turn over marginal land to woodland planting rather than grazing sheep. 4. To introduce a fully automated robotic milking system for 150 cows and open for 'open days' 5. To be able to produce food at competitive prices 6. To be able to develop farm buildings free from embargoes 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ✚ Help the farming community realise what is available in the way of planting, walling and hedging grants etc. ✚ Improve the signposting of footpaths especially those that don't really go anywhere! ✚ By being more sympathetic and helpful when walls / fencing that is owned by the council is vandalised or falls into a poor state of repair. ✚ Introduce a 'point of contact' in the Council that farmers can talk too. ✚ Cut the Red Tape ✚ Show a political commitment to farming ✚ Promote the drinking of milk. ✚ Take a more proactive view to planning. In particular a relaxation of the planning laws to owner occupation. At present this is a major force in preventing diversification. ✚ Introduce traffic calming on the country lanes. ✚ Support the remaining abattoirs. ✚ Educate children about rural life and promote rural Bradford whilst explaining that the countryside is also somebody's 'factory floor.' ✚ Reduce 'Fly Tipping' and the theft of dry stone- walls through education. ✚ Ensure that owners of neglected land keep it free from ragwort and in a reasonable condition.

Sector	Specialisation	Aspirations	How CBMDC can help
Farming (cont.)	Beef (2 Returns)	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> To breed stabiliser cattle for beef improvement group which will assist in establishing a beef animal that will grow and finish on grass, (a sustainable animal). To be able to produce food at competitive prices. To obtain planning permission for 1 dwelling in order that 'I' can expand my herd. Purchase more land adjacent to current enterprise to enable (3 above) to take place. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ✚ Cut the Red Tape ✚ Provide some sort of indication of what the planners would and wouldn't allow on farmland.
	Sheep (2 Returns)	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> To produce food at competitive prices 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ✚ Cut the Red Tape
	Poultry	There were no questionnaires returned from this sector	
Equestrian	Livery (4 Returns)	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> To stop losing money To consolidate business due to excessive business rates. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ✚ A reduction in business rates. ✚ Financial help to small businesses. (Note: this business diversified from farming to equestrian 20 years ago but had to close down the riding school and training centre six years ago and has always struggled with: planning, rates H&S, insurance etc)
	Riding School (1 Return)	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> To own more land over the next ten years To become a successful equestrian centre 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ✚ By making training facilities available at local colleges. ✚ Giving out information on grants. ✚ Reduce the Business Rates Bill
Business	Land Owners (10 Returns)	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> Continue grazing sheep Restore the damage done to tracks, gates, boundary walls / fences and ditches by the Forestry Commission. To be brought out of the 'Green Belt'. To improve the landscape with a view to recreation. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ✚ For the Police to allocate more time to counter poaching / lamping and fly tipping. ✚ If the Council stopped delivering logs free of charge to firewood merchants 'we' would be able to sell our thinnings from woodland management. ✚ Fill up the 'Brown Land' quickly. ✚ More information made available to smallholders concerning grant schemes. ✚ Produce an information leaflet giving conservation advice, guidance on pest and weed control and relevant contact numbers.

3. CONCLUSIONS

A Summary of Findings

An analysis of the information supplied during the case study interviews and the returned questionnaires has highlighted a number of recurring themes that are common to the broad range of stakeholders consulted. These not only relate to the aspirations of the agricultural community, and to how they feel that the Local Authority can help them achieve their medium to long-term business goals, but also to the wider issues facing an industry on the brink of collapse.

Planning

More issues surrounding the District's approach to planning were raised than any other single point across the whole of the agricultural sector. It was widely felt that the planning system was not only unsympathetic to the requirements of the agricultural community but in many cases that it either severely hindered or prevented diversification from taking place. It is acknowledged however, that this oversimplifies the stance taken by the Local Authorities Planning Department and that examples of consultation and partnership working that eased the planning process were also cited. It is therefore evident from the research that there is an urgent need to improve the dialogue between the council and all agricultural stakeholders.

Local Markets and Abattoirs

The closure of local markets and abattoirs was continually raised as being instrumental in breaking the cycle of localised livestock production, processing & consumption, and one that has incurred additional financial hardship by increasing the distances travelled to and from the point of sale / slaughter (and see the first slide in Appendix 2).

Knowing what is wanted

Like all professionals, the farmers that contributed to this research are desperate to produce quality, well-marketed products that sell for the right price. However, they argue that this can only be achieved if they are aware of what the District, and the nation, requires from them, as basing mid to long-term business plans on a 'best guess scenario' is extremely problematic. They also argue that as farming works year on year, it is unable to change course abruptly and therefore alterations to existing business strategies are subject to lag, a problem that they feel is compounded by seemingly small-scale fluctuations in both consumer demand and agricultural policy.

Pressure to diversify

When discussed with the farming community, the subject of diversification received an extremely mixed response, largely because many of those consulted felt that the authorities were promoting diversification as some sort of panacea, whilst at the same time putting in place institutional / bureaucratic obstacles that in many cases make it impossible. In some quarters it was also felt that diversification had already occurred where it was most likely to, and that pressure for more diverse business practices will remain unmet. Not all farmers or landowners have an interest in anything other than farming and therefore lack the inclination to broaden their business interests.

It should also be remembered that diversification is not a new concept and that it in no way guarantees financial success, as one of the stakeholders from the equestrian sector pointed out. This business diversified from farming twenty years ago and at the height of their enterprise ran a successful livery, riding school and training centre. However, the transition into the leisure /

service sector brought with it the same type of financial problems encountered by any other SMEs, consequently this particular enterprise was forced to offer a livery only service.

There are of course numerous examples of successful diversification projects. However, the current scope for diversification is considered to be either extremely limiting or lacking in novelty (i.e. golf courses, holiday cottages etc).

Right to Roam

The Right to Roam legislation concerned many of the stakeholders consulted and it was widely felt that clarification for both the landowner and 'countryside visitor' was urgently required.

Point of Contact in the Council

Previous contact with the Local Authority has for a large number of stakeholders been a negative experience that has predominantly involved issues surrounding planning applications or Council Tax. It was widely felt that the relationship between the stakeholders and the Council could be enhanced if a central point of contact, who understands both the complexities of agriculture and the networks of the Council, was employed.

Tourism

Promoting tourism within the District was considered to be pivotal to the development of the rural economy and it was widely felt that Bradford suffered as a result of its image. It was therefore suggested that the Council should take the opportunity during the 'Capital of Culture' bid to promote the District's rural qualities, and also to improve the standard of footpaths and visitor facilities.

Robustness of Approach and Findings

This research set out within the confines of modest resources to engage with rural land users in the Bradford District. Rural land use communities are becoming more used to this as the literature shows an increasing frequency of such studies. Partly, it is in response to the declining profitability of some areas of farming (see **Drivers of Countryside Change**, 2000) but increasingly it is a response to a national trend of looking past food production towards new approaches to overall sustainable rural land management (**Farmers are vital to the future of the countryside - but not just in their role as food producers**, 2001). We present evidence here from recent studies that show that this research on the Bradford District is consistent with the approach of other studies, and to have produced findings that have common currency amongst rural land users.

During 1998, the Northumberland National Park Authority (NNPA) became concerned about the continuing news of acute economic pressures facing the farming industry throughout Britain. It was felt that the widely promoted measures, such as diversification to new types of business enterprises on the farm, or through farm family members seeking work off the farm, may not have the same utility in the sparsely populated and geographically remote rural areas of the Northumberland National Park. Thus the NNPA commissioned an updated farm survey to act as a baseline for future policy. The aim of the survey was to provide a comprehensive profile of the agricultural economy, the nature of farming practices, and the current and future plans of the farming community. One important function was to use the survey as an opportunity to seek views and guidance from the farming community on how the NNPA might assist in achieving a more secure future for farming in the National Park.

During 1999-2000, some 164 farmers were interviewed in the Northumberland National Park about their farming activities, and how they were responding to the pressures and opportunities that they faced (**Farming in Northumberland National Park: Findings of the 1999-2000 Farm**

Survey, 2001). Peter Samsom is an officer working in the National Park on a Land Management Initiative (LMI) funded by the Countryside Agency. Peter succinctly described the main findings of the farm survey in an e-mail question posed in a sustainability discussion forum (and see **A View of the Future for Remote Countryside in Northumberland**, 2001):

“The Northumberland National Park LMI has as a specific task to identify a new vision and objectives for land management in the remote uplands. The remoteness of the area is a strength in some ways but also a weakness: the much trumpeted solution of diversification is difficult to achieve here and the level of on-farm diversification is very low, much lower than elsewhere in the country. The population density is low, so trained staff are difficult to get and there are not many people in the immediate vicinity to sell products to, distances are long so transport costs are high. In essence, these hills are excellent for producing livestock, sheep and beef, either for breeding stock or for meat, and most of the farming is very extensive.

However, you cannot escape the fact that farmers, their families and a large section of the rural communities are very dependent on the support that farming has had through the livestock subsidies, the much maligned Common Agricultural Policy. The outbreak of Foot and Mouth Disease in this area is having a big effect on the rural communities in the short term, but it also offers an opportunity to re-think land management in these areas. It is in that rethink that your help is so important. Farmers must know what society wants them to do, how support for the farming sector can be re-established.”

The Policy Commission on the Future of Farming and Food held regional stakeholder consultations as public meetings, gathering in information for its later report. The meeting held in Darlington in the NE was attended by a number of farmers and a cross-section of rural agencies, farm and producer associations and local authorities. A record of the comments and key issues discussed is given in Appendix 3 (**North East Regional Stakeholder Meeting**, 2001). The similarity in issues is again apparent such as the need for better marketing, co-ops not being in the UK farmers' culture, farmers wanting to keep on farming but cannot on current income, an ageing farm population, and fears for land management without farming.

Diversification is a strongly topical issue in rural land use. It can, however, cover a variety of different means to increase income for rural land users. A strategic review of the agri-food industry in Northern Ireland (**Vision for the Future of the Agri-food Industry**, 2001) set out to analyse the challenges and opportunities facing the industry and come forward with a vision for its future development, together with recommendations on how that vision is to be realised. Off-farm employment was seen in the review as a way forward that does not involve people having to leave farming completely. They report on a recent survey of rural employment in Northern Ireland:

- ✚ only the largest dairy and beef and sheep farms, even in years of higher incomes, are able to maintain reasonable levels of family income without depleting the farm's capital base;
- ✚ male farmers are willing to travel long distances to work but tend to have lower-paid jobs as they lack the formal education and training to obtain more highly paid employment;
- ✚ female spouses of farmers tend to have higher levels of education but are less willing or able to travel to work and depend on jobs in the near locality. Salient factors in this regard are lack of childcare facilities in rural areas and inadequate transport. As many female spouses are engaged in the education and health sectors, this makes them particularly vulnerable to rationalisation of public services in rural areas;
- ✚ even with off-farm work, the income levels of farm families tend to be low because of the unskilled/low skilled nature of much of the work;
- ✚ on-farm diversification is not an option for most small farms.

The latter point is probably the more common understanding of diversification. In October last

year, Planning Minister Lord Falconer launched a report into planning and farm diversification, saying that some councils were eager to help while others dragged their feet. The report contains a Perception and Opportunities study based on farmer workshops, telephone surveys of farmers and questionnaires to planning applicants (**The Implementation of National Planning Policy Guidance (PPG7) In Relation To The Diversification Of Farm Businesses**, 2001). The summary of this study can be found in Appendix 4, and some similarity with the current research can be found.

The planning report also pointed to an example of a local authority area that had developed local guidance for planning and farm diversification. North Yorkshire County Council published a 40-page guide following concern that planning was providing insufficient support for farm diversification (**A Planning Guide to Farm Diversification in North Yorkshire**, 2000). Its production was partly funded by Yorkshire Forward (the Regional Development Agency) and the seven local authorities and two National Parks of the County have supported it. It provides a comprehensive but simple guide to the planning system and how it works for farm diversification, the general issues to be addressed by such development and specific guidance on a range of potential diversification activities, from agricultural contracting to camping barns.

The idea for the guidance arose out of the Agriculture Group of the County Council, which is a group of farmers and their representatives (including the CLA and NFU) brought together from time to time to look at specific issues such as farm diversification. The County Council, the District Councils and the National Park Authorities are considering whether to adopt the guide as Supplementary Planning Guidance.

The Future of the Countryside

Last December, the Government took action to stop the ploughing of moorland in the Peak District National Park (**Government acts to prevent moorland destruction**, 2001). This is a tragedy since it shows how legislation that was meant to improve countryside access can go awry. A farmer was said to be ploughing up wildlife rich moorland to stop the public from having access to it under the Countryside and Rights of Way Act (2000).

Our study has revealed considerable uncertainty amongst rural land users over this new right of public access to mountain, moor, heath, down and registered common land. A pilot area for the new access exists to the west of the District that has thrown up inconsistencies, particularly over in-by-land. There was a call from farmers to work now in the District to improve communication on the impact of this new legislation. Rights of Way in themselves leave few unmoved in the rural community: some see advantage for tourism, others just see irresponsible walkers and their dogs.

The Countryside Agency also sees tourism as an important element in their vision for the future of the countryside (**A strategy for sustainable land management in England**, 2001). They speculate that less land will be used primarily for food production with more land being used for crops for industry and for energy. In addition, more land is likely to be managed mainly for conservation, woodland, recreation and community benefits.

Research with the farming communities in the counties of Wiltshire, Gloucestershire and Oxfordshire (funded by the ESRC) looked at the benefits of farmers combining together to jointly implement 'whole landscape management'. This implied farmers co-operating across privately owned boundaries to develop the conservation and biodiversity value of the whole landscape through planting hedges and buffer zones. They were also asked to consider the reflooding of the Thames Valley (**Designing and Evaluating Sustainable Agriculture Landscapes**, 2000). The authors concluded that this approach would enhance farmers standing with the public and would provide a good principle in attracting subsidy for environmental objectives.

Chris Baines in his speech to Bradford District's Rural Renaissance Conference (**Future**

Countryside, 2002) talked about the rural landscape being redesigned to bring about better water management. The flooding of the last few years could be avoided by paying for the land to function as a part of flood protection. Thus broadleaved woodlands would be planted in uplands, and farmland in lowlands could be allowed to flood as seasonal and permanent wetland.

Land management also has a role in climate change. A report from the CLBA looks at the many different activities in the rural landscape that could help (**Climate Change and the Rural Economy**, 2001). Soil acts as a carbon sink when soil organic matter levels increase, and as a carbon emitter when they decrease. Practices to increase soil carbon not only reduce atmospheric carbon, but also deliver many other public goods, such as improved biodiversity. The greatest dividend comes from conversion of arable to agroforestry. Significant amounts of carbon can be accumulated by conversion of arable to grassland and by improving crop and grazing management. In addition, there is scope for changing soil management practices to accumulate carbon, for example appropriate conservation tillage and maintaining winter cover crops.

Our study received a call from farmers to consider a new future for the rural landscape of the District, and to support action to find funding for it. Ian Hodge takes speculation on future rural landscapes further. In an article in *Land Use Policy*, he tries to understand how a shift in emphasis towards delivering countryside goods (as averse to bads) can be funded and managed (**Beyond agri-environmental policy: towards an alternative model of environmental governance**, 2001). He lays out a number of models such as payments for positive actions (through tolls as a signal of willingness to pay, or through financial support of conservation organisations) to the complexity of setting up new institutional systems that link the demand for countryside goods with the control of the land.

Perhaps we should finish with the simple message of William Sutherland that funding habitat restoration is probably the best approach for rural landscapes. Sutherland says that although some agri-environment schemes can be beneficial, others generate negligible gains. An alternative is to combine carefully targeted agri-environment schemes with large-scale habitat restoration. Restoration provides the opportunity to deal with several problems simultaneously, such as sea-level rise, water-catchment protection, and flood defence while at the same time as increasing and safeguarding biodiversity (**Restoring a Sustainable Countryside**, 2002).

Bradford District Rural Land Users' Suggestions for Action by the Local Authority

This is a compilation of all the suggestions for action provided during the interviews and in the returned questionnaires.

- ✚ Continue to build links with rural land users and develop the partnerships that will be supportive
- ✚ Initiating partnerships and connections between farmers and the local district
- ✚ Provide an entry point to the council that is experienced and knowledgeable on rural issues and on the council's relevant policies and services for rural land users i.e. a rural telephone desk.
- ✚ Introduce a 'point of contact' in the Council that farmers can talk too.
- ✚ Co-ordinate footpath maintenance more effectively and provide clarification on the 'Right to Roam'
- ✚ Improve the signposting of footpaths especially those that don't really go anywhere!
- ✚ Set up a register of casual farm workers in the District that can provide farm cover.
- ✚ Act as an enabler for taking education and training to rural land users that will enhance their business efficiency or make them more competitive in non-farm work i.e. use of computers and internet, accredited qualifications for other trades or work
- ✚ Access to IT and other accredited training
- ✚ Making training facilities available at local colleges.
- ✚ Review its policy on tourism to see where there are synergies with the rural economy
- ✚ Promote and support the advisory services provided by other agencies and organisations that enhance conservation and business use of rural land in the District
- ✚ Develop with stakeholders a long-term view of the management and use of the semi-upland landscape of the District, acting as an advocate for this at regional and national level, and securing the funding that will make this realisable.
- ✚ Look for common interests in land management and promotion between council-owned land and adjacent farms in areas where biodiversity and landscape character are a common good i.e. Baildon Moor
- ✚ Develop a bridleway guide map for horse users
- ✚ Identify and develop traffic calming measures where there is a high activity of horse riding on small roads and near bends
- ✚ Introduce traffic calming on the country lanes.
- ✚ Trading Standards should develop information exchange with farmers on their role and particularly on their Enforcement Policy. A suggestion is an occasional staffed information stall at the auction markets in Skipton and Otley that are used by the Districts farmers
- ✚ Help in realising what is available in the way of conservation and other grants
- ✚ Help the farming community realise what is available in the way of planting, walling and hedging grants etc.
- ✚ Giving out information on grants
- ✚ Cut the Red Tape
- ✚ Take a more proactive view to planning. In particular, a relaxation of the planning laws to owner occupation. At present this is a major force in preventing diversification.
- ✚ Provide some sort of indication of what the planners would and wouldn't allow on farmland.
- ✚ Planning department should prepare themselves for farm diversification by seeking guidance and examples, and develop an approach on this
- ✚ Educate children about rural life and promote rural Bradford whilst explaining that the countryside is also somebody's 'factory floor.
- ✚ Show a political commitment to farming
- ✚ Promote the drinking of milk.
- ✚ Support the remaining abattoirs.
- ✚ A reintroduction of local abattoirs and auction markets

- ✚ To be able to source products locally
- ✚ Assistance in identifying local markets that cater for the cultural mix of the District
- ✚ By being more sympathetic and helpful when walls / fencing that is owned by the council is vandalised or falls into a poor state of repair.
- ✚ Reduce 'Fly Tipping' and the theft of slates off roofs and dry stone- walls through education.
- ✚ Ensure that owners of neglected land keep it free from ragwort and in a reasonable condition.
- ✚ Financial help to small businesses
- ✚ A reduction in agricultural business rates
- ✚ Reduce business rates
- ✚ Informing landowners about the FoB.
- ✚ Including woodlands, trees and forests within Local Biodiversity Action Plans.
- ✚ Incorporating trees and woodlands into planning policies and guidelines.
- ✚ Ensuring that trees and woodlands are included as planning conditions wherever possible.
- ✚ Informing tenants on Council farms about advice and information available from the FoB and other advisory organisations

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Hollyshaw House, Hollyshaw Lane, Whitkirk, Leeds LS15 7BD Tel: 0113 2643233
(www.adas.co.uk)

BRADFORD DISTRICT HEALTHY FOOD NETWORK

c/o Trevor Simper, Heartsmart, Bradford District Health Promotion Service, Leeds Road Hospital, Maudsley Street, Bradford, BD3 9LH Tel: 01274 223932

BRITISH HORSE SOCIETY - North and Yorkshire

Ms Wendy Suddes, Development Officer, email: bhsnorthandyorks@aol.com
(www.bhs.org.uk)

BUSINESS LINK – West Yorks. (Bradford Office)

Devere House, Vicar Lane, Little Germany, Bradford BD1 5AH Tel: 01274 230075
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CBMDC – Asset Management

3rd Floor, City Hall, Bradford, BD1 1HY Tel: 01274 752266.

CBMDC – Countryside Service

8th Floor, Jacob's Well, Manchester Road, Bradford, BD1 5RW Tel: 01274 752666

CBMDC – Development Control Planning Service

Transport & Planning Division, 3rd Floor, Jacob's Well, Manchester Road, Bradford, BD1 5RW
Tel: 01274 753773

CBMDC – Rights of Way Section

Holycroft, Goulbourne Street, Keighley, BD21 1PY Tel: 01274 618300

CBMDC - Shipley Constituency Area Panel

Area Co-ordinator's Office, Town Hall, Shipley, BD18 3EJ Tel: 01274 757146

CBMDC – Sustainability Team, Policy Development Service

4th Floor, Jacobs Well, Manchester Road, Bradford BD1 5RW Tel: 01274 753880

CITY OF BRADFORD METROPOLITAN DISTRICT COUNCIL (CBMDC)

(www.bradford.gov.uk)

CO-OPERATIVE GROUP – Farmcare

Farmcare, The Co-operative Group, PO Box 53, New Century House, Manchester, M60 4ES
Tel: 0161 834 1212

(www.cwsbroadoak.co.uk)

COUNTRY LAND & BUSINESS ASSOCIATION - Yorkshire

Malt Shovel House, Spring Street, Easingwold, York, YO61 3BJ Tel: 01347 823803

(www.cla.org.uk)

COUNTRYSIDE AGENCY – Yorkshire and the Humber

4th Floor, Victoria Wharf, No. 4 The Embankment, Sovereign Street, Leeds LS1 4BA, Tel: 0113 246 9222

(www.countryside.gov.uk)

DEFRA - Rural Development Service

Government Buildings, Otley Road, Lawnswood, Leeds, LS16 5QT, Tel: 0113 230 3900

ENVIRONMENT AGENCY - Ridings Area Office

Phoenix House, Global Avenue, Millshaw, Beeston Ring Road, Leeds LS11 8PG Tel: 0113 2134600

(www.environment-agency.gov.uk)

FARMING AND WILDLIFE ADVISORY GROUP (FWAG) – West Riding

c/o Regeneration Dept., Wakefield MDC, Newton Bar, Wakefield, WF1 2TX Tel: 01924 306552

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FOREST OF BRADFORD

Woolston House, 3 Tetley St, Goitside, Bradford BD1 2NP Tel: 01274 754922

GOVERNMENT OFFICE FOR YORKSHIRE AND HUMBERSIDE (GOYH) – Rural Team

City House, PO Box 213, New Station Street, Leeds LS1 4US Tel: 0113 280 0600

LANTRA National Training Organisation

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Jacqui Bruce, Regional Contact Tel: 01924 256788

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LINKING ENVIRONMENT AND FARMING (LEAF)

National Agriculture Centre, Stoneleigh, Warwickshire, CV8 2LZ Tel: 024 76413911

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NATIONAL FARMERS' UNION – North East

Agriculture House, 207 Tadcaster Road, York YO2 1UB. Tel: 01904 451550

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NATIONAL TRUST – Yorkshire & North East

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Roger & Pat Walker, "Littleacres", Pickhill, Thirsk, North Yorks. YO7 4JG Tel: 01845 567471

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SUSTAINABLE FARMLAND MANAGEMENT NETWORK

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TARGET TRAINING – local LANTRA training agent

Unit 3, Sun Hill Farm, Fleet Lane, Rylstone, Skipton, BD23 6NA Tel: 01756 730001

TRADING STANDARDS - West Yorkshire

PO Box 5, Nepshaw Lane South, Morley, Leeds LS27 0QP Tel 01133 848848

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YORKSHIRE WATER plc – Rural Estate Team

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(www.yorkshirewater.com)

Interviews: Framework Of Questions

Can you tell me about what you do and how it is going at the moment?

What are the mid-term (5-10yrs) issues/priorities that you face and how do you feel about them in relation to your farming and land use activities?

Which of the issues/priorities can be tackled by:

- The farmers and/or the farming organisations themselves?
- The farmers and organisations with assistance from the local authority?

What could the local authority do in the mid to long-term that would help the Districts farming and rural land use communities?

Questionnaires

Aspirations Of The Agricultural Community, and Land Use Statistics Questionnaire (Farmers)

Thank you for taking the time to complete this questionnaire and for contributing to Bradford Council's understanding of the agricultural community's medium to long-term (5-10yrs) aspirations.

All the data that you provide will be handled in accordance with the requirements of the Data Protection Act (1998) and will not be used for anything other than what it was originally supplied for.

Completion of the Identification Data is optional but has been requested in order that we can attempt to determine any geographic correlation that may exist between the overall data gathered. Please feel free to add any further comments that you think may be useful on the back of the form.

Identification Data (Farmers)

- a) Are you a farm owner or a tenant farmer?
- b) What is the name of your farm and where is it located?
- c) What is your age?
- d) How long have you been farming?

Essential Research Data

No	Question	Response
1	What type / types of farm do you operate?	
2	How many acres are you farming?	
3	Is the land you farm located at one single site or do you own / rent land elsewhere? (Please specify)	

4	Have you considered, or are you considering diversification?	
5	If you have already diversified please explain the changes you made. (If you answer this question please ignore question 6)	
6	What do you consider are the main barriers that prevent you from diversifying?	
7	What are your medium to long-term (5 – 10yrs) professional aspirations?	
8	Are there any services the Local Authority can introduce that would help you achieve these aspirations?	
9	Do you anticipate owning more or less of the district's agricultural land in ten years time?	
10	Do you have any other comments that you believe could benefit this research?	

Once again many thanks for the time you have taken in providing this data. Once completed a copy of the final report will be available for all those that took part.

Aspirations Of The Agricultural Community, and Land Use Statistics Questionnaire (Landowners)

Thank you for taking the time to complete this questionnaire and for contributing to Bradford Council's understanding of the agricultural community's medium to long-term (5-10yrs) aspirations.

All the data that you provide will be handled in accordance with the requirements of the Data Protection Act (1998) and will not be used for anything other than what it was originally supplied for.

Completion of the Identification Data is optional but has been requested in order that we can attempt to determine any geographic correlation that may exist between the overall data gathered. Please feel free to add any further comments that you think may be useful on the back of the form.

Identification Data (Landowners)

1. Do you have any farms on your land, if so how many?

2. What is/are the name of your farm(s) and where is/are they located?
3. How are your farms managed?
4. How long have you owned agricultural land in the Bradford District?

Essential Research Data

No	Question	Response
1	What types of farm are operating on your land?	
2	How many acres of agricultural land do you own in the Bradford District, and how many are currently in agricultural production?	
3	Is the agricultural land you own located at one single site within the district or do you own agricultural land elsewhere? (Please specify)	
4	How much of your land is dedicated to equestrian activity?	
5	Have you considered, or are your tenants considering, diversification?	
6	If you, (or they), have already diversified please explain the changes made. (If you answer this question please ignore question 6)	
7	What do you consider are the main barriers that prevent you from diversifying?	
8	What are your medium to long-term (5 – 10yrs), aspirations for the agricultural land that you own within the Bradford District?	
9	Are there any services the Local Authority can introduce that would help you achieve these aspirations?	
10	Do you expect to own more or less of the district's agricultural land in ten years time?	
11	Do you have any other comments that you believe could benefit this research?	

Once again many thanks for the time you have taken in providing this data. Once completed a copy of the final report will be available for all those that took part and will be distributed through your CLA Regional Rep.

**Aspirations Of The Agricultural Community, and Land Use Statistics
Questionnaire (Equestrian)**

Thank you for taking the time to complete this questionnaire and for contributing to Bradford Council’s understanding of the agricultural community’s medium to long-term (5-10yrs) aspirations.

All the data that you provide will be handled in accordance with the requirements of the Data Protection Act (1998) and will not be used for anything other than what it was originally supplied for.

Completion of the Identification Data is optional but has been requested in order that we can attempt to determine any geographic correlation that may exist between the overall data gathered. Please feel free to add any further comments that you think may be useful on the back of the form.

Identification Data (Equestrian)

1. Do you own the land your stables are on or do you rent it?
2. What is the name of your business and where is it located?
3. How long have you been operating from this site?

Essential Research Data

No	Question	Response
1	How many acres of agricultural land does your business manage?	
2	Is this land located at one single site or do you own / rent land elsewhere? (Please specify)	
3	Are you involved in the equestrian sector as a result of diversifying previous agricultural activity? If so please specify.	
4	What type of services does your business provide, i.e. livery, disabled riding, trekking etc?	
5	On an average week how many customers use your facilities?	
6	What are your medium to long-term (5 – 10yrs) professional aspirations?	

7	Are there any services that the Local Authority could introduce that would help you achieve these aspirations?	
8	Do you anticipate owning more or less of the district's agricultural land in ten years time?	
9	Do you have any other comments that you believe could benefit this research?	

Once again many thanks for the time you have taken in providing this data. If you would like to receive a copy of the final report please write details of where you would like it to be sent in the space below.

Aspirations Of The Agricultural Community, and Land Use Statistics Questionnaire (Poultry Producers)

Thank you for taking the time to complete this questionnaire and for contributing to Bradford Council's understanding of the agricultural community's medium to long-term (5-10yrs), aspirations.

All the data that you provide will be handled in accordance with the requirements of the Data Protection Act (1998) and will not be used for anything other than what it was originally supplied for.

Completion of the Identification Data is optional but has been requested in order that we can attempt to determine any geographic correlation that may exist between the overall data gathered. Please feel free to add any further comments that you think may be useful on the back of the form.

Identification Data (Poultry Producers)

1. What is the name and postcode of your business?
2. What is your age?
3. How long have you been farming?

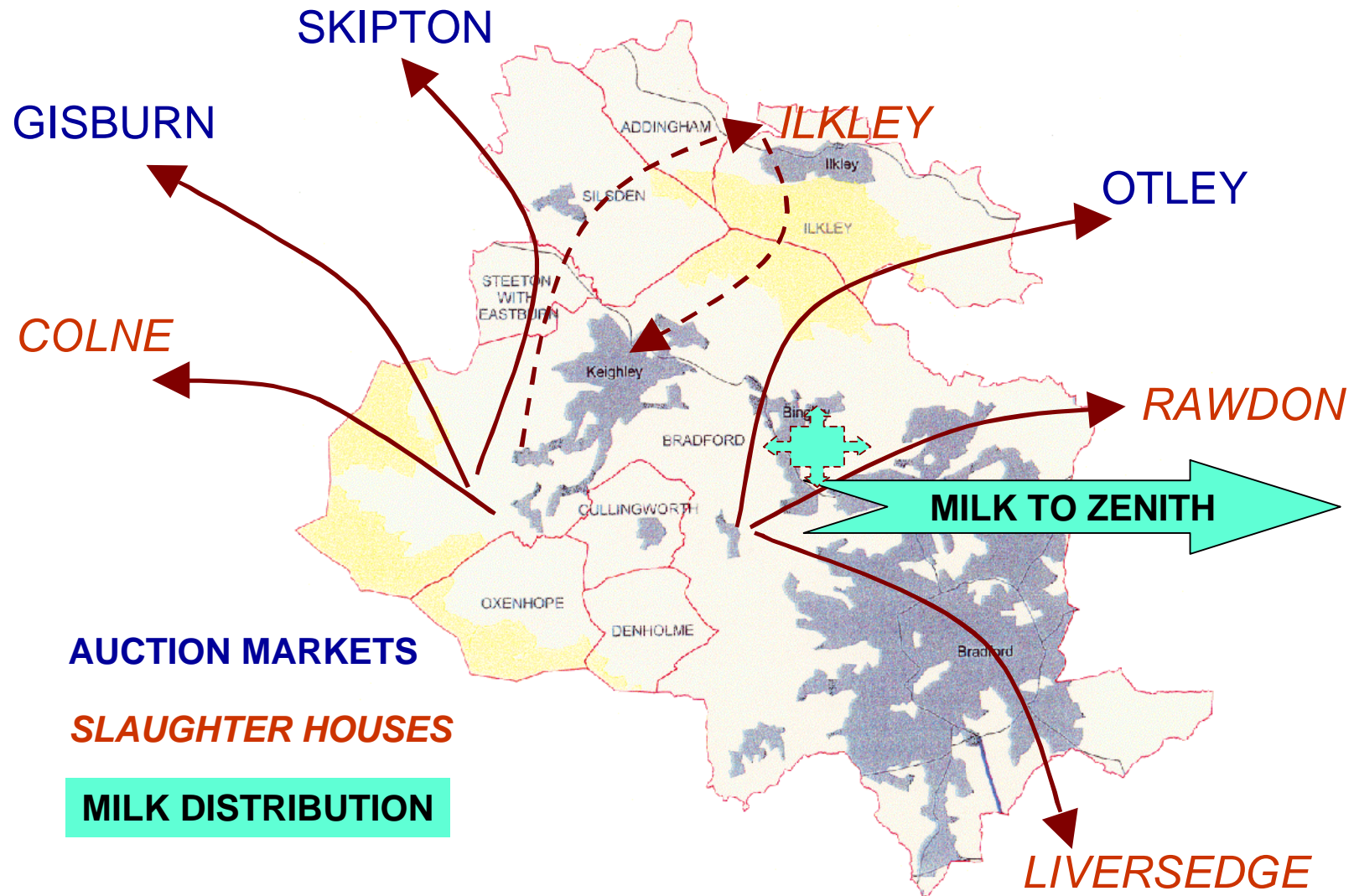
Essential Research Data

No	Question	Response
1	What type of poultry farm do you operate?	
2	How many acres does your enterprise cover?	
3	Is your business located at one single site or do you own / rent land elsewhere? (Please specify)	
4	Are you now farming poultry as a result of previously diversifying your business? If so please explain the changes you made. If not please answer questions 5 & 6.	

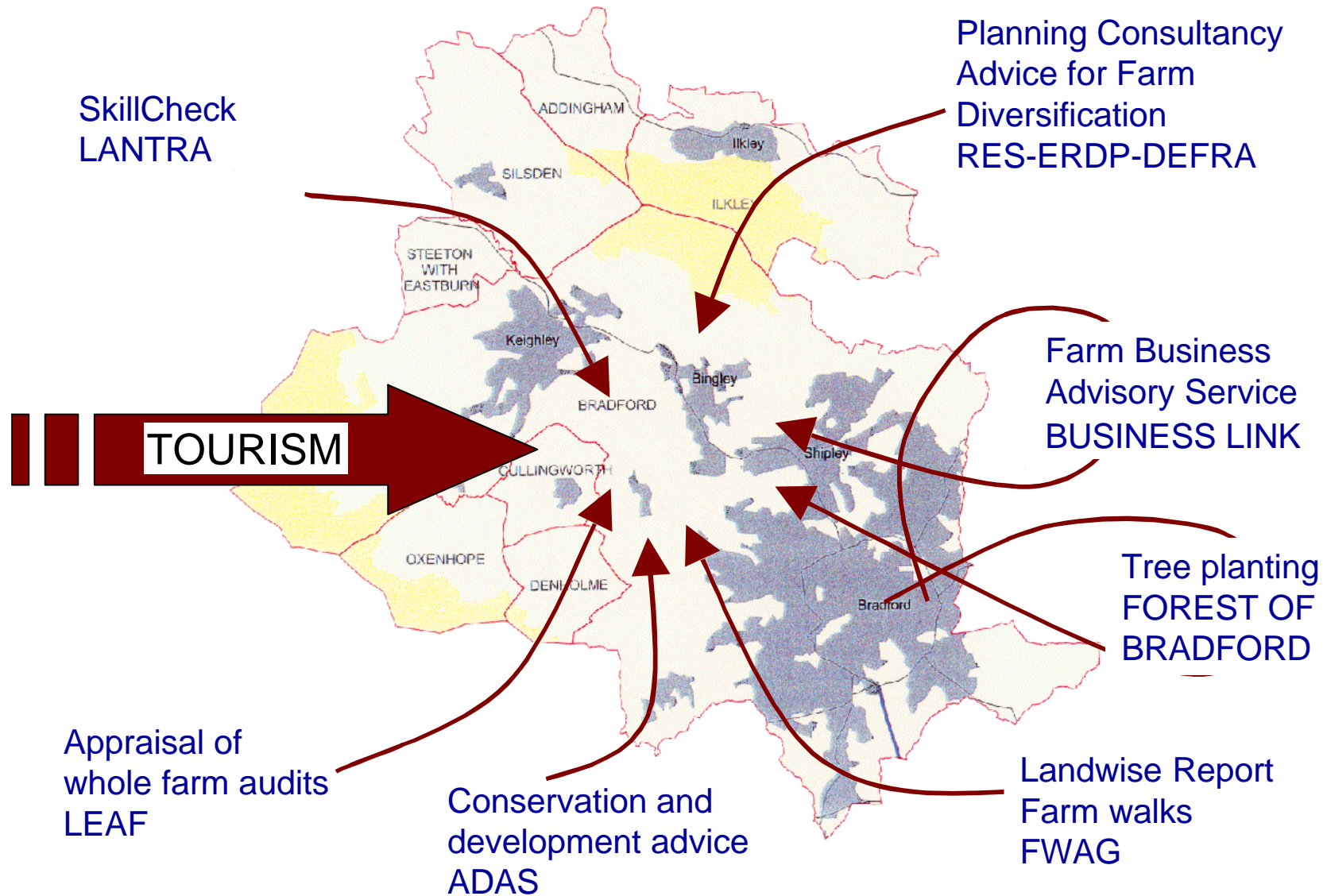
5	Have you considered, or are you considering diversification?	
6	What do you consider are the main barriers that prevent you from diversifying?	
7	What are your medium to long-term (5 – 10yrs) business aspirations?	
8	Are there any services the Local Authority can introduce that would help you achieve these aspirations?	
9	How much of your produce is bought both locally and regionally, i.e. Bradford / Yorkshire.	
10	Do you have any other comments that you believe could benefit this research?	
11	Would you be willing to discuss your business further during a visit by one of the researchers? If so please give contact details.	

Once again many thanks for the time you have taken in providing this data. If you require a copy of the finished report please ensure that your name and address are included.

LEAVING THE DISTRICT?



SERVICES INTO THE DISTRICT



ASPIRATIONS OF THE RURAL DISTRICT

WHAT THE AGRICULTURAL COMMUNITY WANTS

- To produce a **quality product** at the right price on a level playing field
- For farming to be viable enough to attract **young people** back onto the farm
- A radical reduction in **bureaucracy**
- To be **appreciated** by the public

WHAT THE AGRICULTURAL COMMUNITY WANTS FROM THE LOCAL AUTHORITY

- A **point of contact** in the Council with rural experience (i.e. a rural telephone desk)
- A reintroduction of local **abattoirs** and **auction markets**
- A reduction in agricultural **business rates**
- To be able to **source** products **locally**
- Assistance in **identifying local markets** that cater for the cultural mix of the District
- Initiating **partnerships** and connections between farmers and the local district
- A more sympathetic view to **planning**.
- More visible **policing** to reduce fly tipping and theft from slate roofs and dry stonewalls
- Co-ordinated **footpath maintenance** and clarification on the 'Right to Roam'
- Help in realising what is available in the way of **conservation** other **grants**
- **Traffic calming** in rural areas
- Access to IT and other accredited **training**
- **Financial help** to small businesses

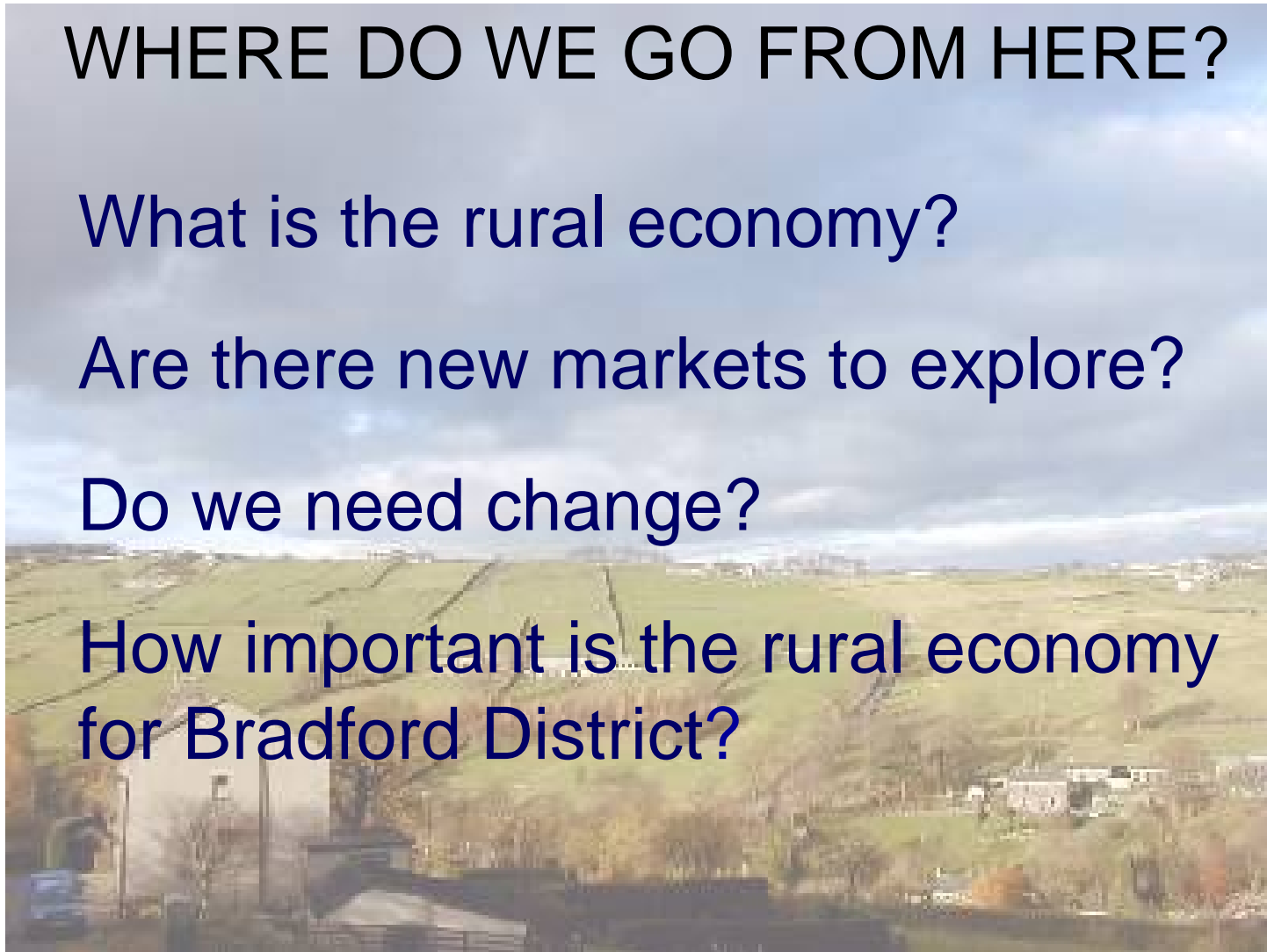
WHERE DO WE GO FROM HERE?

What is the rural economy?

Are there new markets to explore?

Do we need change?

How important is the rural economy for Bradford District?



APPENDIX 3

RECORD OF COMMENTS FROM NE STAKEHOLDER MEETING, POLICY COMMISSION ON THE FUTURE OF FOOD AND FARMING, DARLINGTON, 26TH OCTOBER 2001

GENERAL ISSUES

- ✚ Farmers must get better at seizing new market opportunities eg in alternative crops.
- ✚ There are lessons to be learned from the European industry in adopting novel approaches.
- ✚ There needs to be a better understanding of the potential for, and requirements of, alternative markets, and that information must be disseminated.
- ✚ The industry is not good at 'technology transfer'; learning new methods and skills.
- ✚ There should be more co-operation between farmers (not necessarily through formal co-operatives). Co-operation should particularly focus on marketing.
- ✚ Co-ops not in UK farmers' culture.
- ✚ An ageing farming population and a lack of a successor generation - few young people wish to enter farming.
- ✚ Farming must move into precision farming - to reduce costs and protect the environment.
- ✚ Lack of joined up advice for farmers from multitude of sources.
- ✚ Current environmental schemes have no incentive for farmers to join, as they are based on income forgone and still need part funding by the farmer.
- ✚ Farmers want to keep farming but cannot on current income levels.
- ✚ What happens to land management when no farmer is there to manage it?
- ✚ Strength of the pound vs the euro is a major pressure on farm profitability.
- ✚ Must remove the bureaucracy that farmers have to deal with, without removing the outcome wanted.
- ✚ Look to simplified payment systems eg area payments not headage.
- ✚ There is a danger that too rapid a shift of resources from 'pillar one' to 'pillar two' risks losing too many farmers need to deliver pillar 2.
- ✚ Livestock prices are unsustainable, no future for commodity beef production in UK in current climate.
- ✚ Must seek efficiency through out the food chain, reduce costs and allow more of the sale price to work its way back to the farmer.
- ✚ Industry is over regulated but not policed properly; if regulation is not policed it should be removed.
- ✚ Not sufficient control over use of brands and assurance marks
- ✚ Need more facilitation between farmers and the multitude of schemes and organisations that have input into farming.
- ✚ What options have some upland farmers if not livestock?
- ✚ Upland areas of the north are part of a sophisticated, stratified sheep industry and if that is lost then rest of chain is affected.
- ✚ Beware of reinventing new schemes when what is needed is to make maximum use of existing best practice.
- ✚ Must get consumer to pay costs of high standards and land management in price of food.
- ✚ Farmers should become more market-focused, including a market focused, contractual arrangement with government to deliver public goods.
- ✚ Real concerns over lack of skilled labour for farms.
- ✚ There is a key central tension between what the public wants of farming (which generates regulation) and the consumers' willingness to pay for the additional costs.
- ✚ The key part of the Commission's job is to create a future for farmers to look to, which they lack at the moment.

DISCUSSION OF KEY ISSUES RAISED

Research and Technology Transfer

Industry is now very bad at taking on new or good practice. Vertical and horizontal integration in the industry could help this. There needs to be some restoration of support for spreading alternative and best practice, especially in a time when farming is restructuring and is being asked to find a new direction.

Regulation and Delivery of Schemes

Too many bodies making too many demands on farmers. There is a lack of efficiency in the public sector part of the process that feeds into extra costs for farmers. No-one arguing for reduced standards or reduced safety, just that policing costs should proportionate and proper account is taken of the costs.

When delivering grant aid, (through ERDP) which will continue to be needed to assist transition, civil servants not able to recognise that or allow support of 'risky' innovative projects, when in fact the entrepreneurship that farmers are being asked to show is all about risk, and allowing some to fail.

Marketing

There was general agreement that farmers must come together to better market their products, both food and non-food. But farmers need to know the market and produce for it. Part of this had to be to move the costs of assurance schemes beyond the farm gate and have it reflected in the end price, but others had seen that farm assurance has become the baseline, not the creator of price premiums.

Retailers are willing to pay more for guarantees of quality, reliability and supply security. The industry needs to work more closely with the supermarkets, and increasingly the catering sector, to meet their needs. In return, there should be a cultural shift, led by retailers, against cheap food. People need to be educated that food can be imperfect.

This is the record of views expressed to a public consultation meeting. Its contents do not necessarily reflect the views of the Commission, or the possible content of their final report and recommendations.

APPENDIX 4

SUMMARY OF THE PERCEPTIONS AND OPPORTUNITIES STUDY - from THE IMPLEMENTATION OF NATIONAL PLANNING POLICY GUIDANCE (PPG7) IN RELATION TO THE DIVERSIFICATION OF FARM BUSINESSES (2001)

In summary:

- ✚ Key factors identified by the farmer workshops as preventing farmers from diversifying were: a reluctance on the part of farmers to consider a non-agricultural enterprise; lack of a risk-taker mentality amongst farmers; tenancy arrangements; and reliance on other members of the family.
- ✚ The findings of the telephone survey of farmers and postal questionnaire of applicants are that planning is not a major deterrent to the development of farm diversification proposals, although a very large sample would be required to categorically resolve this point.
- ✚ From the postal questionnaire 45% of applicants reported a positive experience of the planning system compared to 36% who had had a negative experience. From the telephone survey the comparative figures are 35% and 65%.
- ✚ Areas of planning policy which were identified as a particular concern by the farmer and stakeholder workshops were: the frequent urban bias of development plans; the lack of emphasis on farm diversification in older plans; and the contradictions in plans between different policies.
- ✚ Aspects of the planning process that were identified for criticism by the farmer workshops, telephone survey and postal questionnaire were: the lack of understanding amongst planners of the needs of modern agriculture; inconsistency in advice and support provided by LPAs; the time taken in determination; the role of councillors and sometimes parish councils; and the sometimes cursory treatment of applications for farm diversification.
- ✚ Key areas of improvement identified by the planning workshops were in the development of a vision for farm diversification at the local level; clarification of the policy stand on diversification involving large modern agricultural buildings and those developments no longer attached to a working farm; and review of the use of farm plans in support of planning applications for farm diversification.
- ✚ Key recommendations identified by the farmer and stakeholder workshops related to the use of rural fora; better liaison within LPAs; regular liaison meetings between LPAs and representatives of the farming community; and methods for making planning more accessible to the farming community.