



2015

A year in review

Countryside and Community Research Institute

Welcome

This annual review presents some of the highlights of the CCRI's work in 2015; our research and the difference that is making to those working with us. This year the CCRI team has been successful in gaining new investments but also sharing the results of earlier research with an ever larger audience.

Get more information about the work of the CCRI at www.ccri.ac.uk



Dear Friends and Colleagues

As we approach the Christmas holidays, it seems an appropriate time to reflect on our work over the past twelve months.

This year we have continued to reflect our interest in the robust and holistic evaluation of rural policy, building our expertise and expanding our research focus in readiness for the significant policy challenges that lie ahead, not only for rural areas but also for urban areas. Some of our recent research has considered the role of cities in the future of agricultural food production and has highlighted changes in the conceptualization of the rural-urban continuum, while through other work we have started to engage with renewable energy and energy policies.

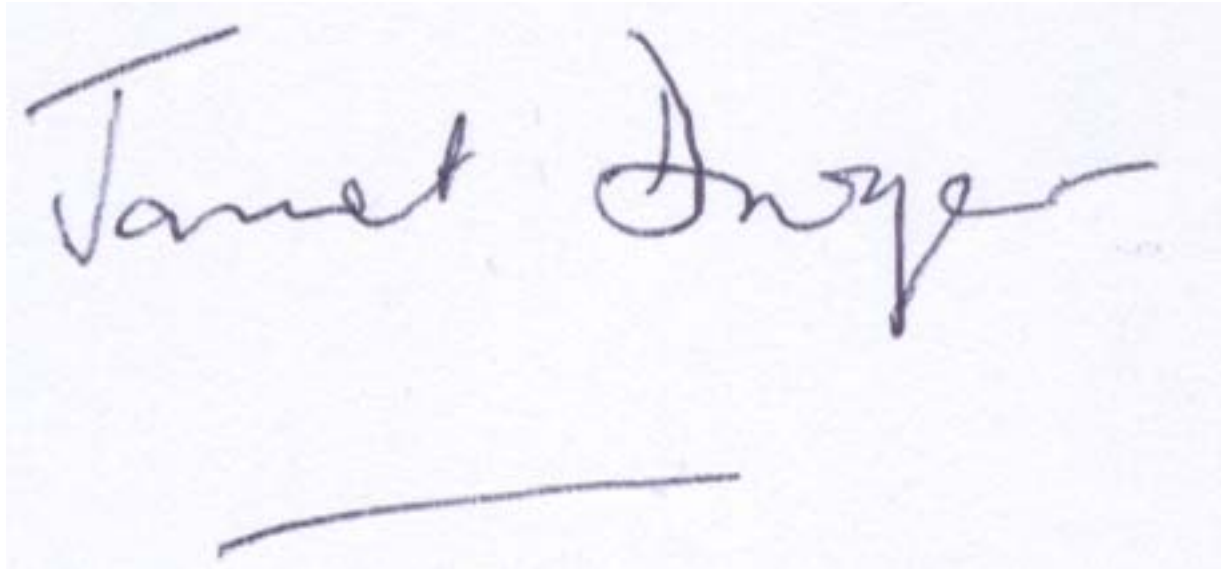
We started the year with our Policy Conference, 'Countryside Values for the 21st Century', which took place in London in January. This year's conference was based around three themes; 'Inclusive Food Systems', 'Well-Being, Happiness and Rural Policy' and 'Learning and Innovation for Sustainable Farm Businesses'. A diverse audience enjoyed a range of presentations that highlighted the links between research and

theory in geography, social science and economics, and changes in policy and practice on the ground, which was reflected in the media coverage.

Following our previous success in the EU 7th Framework (FP7) funding programme, this year we have been successful in three consortium bids to the new Horizon 2020 programme, the biggest EU Research and Innovation programme ever with nearly €80 billion of funding available over 7 years. This means the work of the CCRI is increasingly international; we now work with universities and businesses across Europe to find solutions to the pressing questions of sustainability.

We have been fortunate to have a range of scholars and students based with us this year in the CCRI office. Our friends from Japan are regular visitors, as we help them study the footpath system and rights of way legislation in the UK. Every year we welcome French students who study with us as part of completing their masters degrees. This is not to forget those visitors we hosted as part of launching the global short course on the commons. They add a great deal to our research team.

I would like to take this opportunity to wish you a peaceful Christmas and a Happy New Year and invite you to peruse the summary below which highlights some of the work and activities of the CCRI during 2015.

A handwritten signature in dark ink on a light blue background. The signature reads "Janet Dwyer" in a cursive script. Below the signature is a single horizontal line.

Professor Janet Dwyer, Director of the CCRI

New Staff, and Awards

CC Natural England

New Team Members

Dr Mauro Vigani joined the CCRI team as a **Senior Research Fellow**. An applied economist, Mauro brings considerable experience to the CCRI in survey design and primary data collection, as well as research experience on the political economy of food standards, the economics of agricultural biotechnologies and agricultural labour. Mauro is currently working on the SUFISA project, as well as supporting other projects in the CCRI.

In October, the CCRI welcomed two new PhD students,

- **Ed Jones**, is working on a PhD part funded by the Environment Agency on 'Assessing the impact of farming practices on soil functions: achieving benefits for soil, water quality and flow and the farm business' in the Carrent catchment in the north of the Gloucestershire.
- **Sophie Mitchell**, who is working on a PhD considering ways in which agricultural productivity and sustainability are viewed.

Awards

Our researchers continue to produce papers of international standing and were awarded the best article of the year by the **Journal of Agricultural Education and Extension (JAEE)** for **two years running**. The papers, "Learning in the Permaculture Community of Practice in England: An Analysis of the Relationship between Core Practices and Boundary Processes" (2014) and '**Interactions between Niche and Regime: An Analysis of Learning and Innovation Networks for Sustainable Agriculture across Europe**' (2015) were penned by Julie Ingram, Damian Maye, James Kirwan, Nigel Curry and Katarina Kubinakova. Both papers were based on research carried out on an EU funded project SOLINSA (Support of Learning and Innovation Networks for Sustainable Agriculture).

Another CCRI paper was shortlisted for a best paper award by Sociologia Ruralis. This paper, authored by Nigel Curry and James Kirwan was entitled "The role of tacit knowledge in developing networks for sustainable agriculture".

Artist in Residence

Artist in Residence

Antony Lyons’ term as the CCRI ‘Artist in Residence’, supported by a Leverhulme grant, came to an end in 2015. The residency project was entitled ‘Sabrina Dreaming (Severn Estuary Tidelands)’ and sought to expand and deepen the ways in which water landscapes are encountered and understood – scientifically, artistically and socially. We thank Antony for bringing his fascinating research into the CCRI and hope that we will be able to work with him again in the future.

Projects

This year has seen the CCRI continue to build its successful portfolio of research projects, with new H2020 projects starting and earlier projects coming to a successful conclusion.

H2020 Success, VALERIE

H2020 Successes

2015 got off to a great start with the news that the CCRI had been successful in consortia bids for two EU H2020 research projects:

[PEGASUS](#) (Public Ecosystem Goods And Services from land management: Unlocking the Synergies)

The PEGASUS Project is a three year project designed to explore some key questions about **the best means of achieving the appropriate level of environmental and social benefits from activities in rural areas, particularly agriculture and forestry**. It

is rooted in national and more local case studies in ten European countries from Estonia to Italy but also concerns the EU as a whole and its related policies. Action research and stakeholder engagement as well as conventional academic methods are central to the approach. The end results should be relevant to the next generation of European rural policies, such as those within the CAP and in forestry. The project is led by IEEP, within CCRI the project is being led by Janet Dwyer, Paul Courtney and Chris Short with assistance from Katarina Kubinukova, Melissa Affleck and Dan Keech

[SUFISA](#) (Sustainable Finance for Sustainable Agriculture and fisheries).

SUFISA involves a consortium of 13 partners, including the CCRI. The CCRI is responsible for running a producer survey across 22 regions of the EU, each of which will involve up to 300 producers. This will result in a large database that will be subjected to a comparative cross-regional econometric and descriptive analysis. James Kirwan, Damian Maye and Mauro Vigani are working on this project.

Valerie - smart search tool

The project [VALERIE](#), which is concerned with boosting the outreach of research to practice in agriculture and forestry showcased the **first version of a smart search tool “ask.valerie”** at a meeting in Finland in June which the CCRI research team of Julie Ingram, Jane Mills and and Peter Gaskell attended.

ask-Valerie.eu is an online assistant expert being developed **with stakeholders in 10 case studies across Europe** that will help practitioners in agriculture or forestry.

Exmoor Hill Farming Network & SmartSOIL

Exmoor Hill Farming Network

In 2015, the CCRI completed a research study for the **Exmoor Hill Farming Network** to pinpoint the current state of Exmoor farming and analyse how it may change in the future. **One of the key findings was that subsidies had not kept pace with the growing list of environmental responsibilities placed on farmers.** The CCRI's report, led by Janet Dywer with Pete Gaskell, Jane Mills, John Powell and Nick Lewis was commended to the House of Commons in June during a debate brought to the house by Ian Liddell-Grainger, Conservative MP for Bridgwater and West Somerset.

You can see a presentation about this project and its findings [here](#).

Innovative Farmers

During 2015 a CCRI team evaluated the **Duchy Organics Future Farming Programme**, which **brought organic farmers together with researchers in 'Field Labs' to develop practical answers to their farming problems.** The Soil Association in collaboration

with other farming organisations has now extended this programme as '**Innovative Farmers**'. Julie Ingram, Jane Mills and Matt Reed will be evaluating this programme over the next 3 years.

SmartSOIL - Decision Support Tool

The SmartSOIL project concluded in November. **The final outputs included SmartSOIL decision support toolbox, which aims to help advisers, farmers and policy-makers identify cost effective management options to optimise crop yields and store soil carbon for particular farming systems, soils and climates.** The final conference held in Brussels, in November showcasing the results was attended by representatives of the European Commission, European Parliament, farmer unions and advisory services, NGOs, Member States and regional authorities, Julie Ingram presented the findings from CCRI's work with stakeholders across six European countries.

SUPURBFOOD, Animal Disease & GLAMUR PROJECTS

Global Answers for Urban Agriculture

The EU **Supurbfood** project concluded in June with a discussion and presentation at a global meeting of city leaders in Bonn.

The project identified ways in which urban food production, the recycling of nutrients and urban sustainable land use could be accelerated by combining policy initiatives and supporting entrepreneurs. Examples from across Europe and the global south illustrating the benefits of urban food in helping to achieve sustainability goals. The CCRI team of Matt Reed, Dan Keech, James Kirwan and Damian Maye. contributed to **publicizing the meeting**, as well as attending it.

Animal Disease

The CCRI has been involved in a number of animal health projects in recent years and this work continued in 2015. In May of this year the final report for the 5-year study examining farmer confidence in badger vaccination to control bovine TB was submitted to Defra. This project was led by Damian Maye at the CCRI and involved researchers from Cardiff University, the Royal Agricultural University (RAU), The Food and Environment Research Agency (FERA) and the Animal Plant Health Agency

(APHA). A number of papers from this project were published in 2015 and others are in preparation. The CCRI also contributed to two other Defra-funded animal health projects in 2015. The first, led by APHA, examined the factors that influence the expansion of the area affected by endemic bovine TB. The CCRI team, led by Damian Maye, contributed to the social science component, including a large telephone survey with farmers. The second project, led by the RAU, examined farmer practices to control exotic livestock diseases as part of the exotic disease compensation review.

Food Chain Performance Reports

The CCRI, working closely with Swiss colleagues at FiBL, published two reports earlier this year from the FP7 project **GLAMUR**. The first examined the distinctive performances of local and of global cheese chains in the UK, as represented by creamery cheddar, farmhouse cheddar and Single Gloucester cheeses. The second compared supply chain performance in cheese chains between the UK and Switzerland. Both reports are available on the **GLAMUR** website.

Active Together, Severn Vale GIS project & Rural Women's Day

Happiness and Public Policy

Social Return on Investment (SROI) is a framework for measuring a concept of value that is much broader than simply financial. **The CCRI has been involved in several projects and papers which examine the notion of a 'happiness' index to influence government policy.**

Paul Courtney and Katarina Kubinakova are currently working with Colin Baker and Diane Crone of the University of Gloucestershire to undertake an SROI assessment in the **Active Together** evaluation, a new grant scheme from Gloucestershire County Council that seeks to encourage more sport and physical activity across the county.

Paul, together with Rachel Summerscales of Hulme Community Garden Centre, has also been developing a monitoring and evaluation framework for Hulme Community Garden Centre in central Manchester in a project that invokes development of a theory of Change and forecasts Social return on investment (SROI).

Mapping the Severn Vale

Rob Berry is currently running a 5-year mapping project funded by the Campaign to Protect Rural England (CPRE), who are funding the construction of a comprehensive geographical information system (GIS) of the Severn Vale

International Rural Women's Day

Janet Dwyer was invited to research and present **a paper on CAP financing and the role of rural women on the occasion of International Rural Women's Day**, at the European Parliament. Her paper identified an apparent gender gap in the accessibility of RDP funds to farmers, arising probably because women farmers tend to manage smaller holdings and be older and less well-educated than their male counterparts in many countries. She also highlighted the value of targeting specific initiatives in rural development towards rural women.

Watersheds & the WILD Project

The Stroud Valleys

The CCRI also collaborated with Stroud District Council to promote the natural flood management work that is being undertaken in the valleys around Stroud to tackle floods, improve water quality and enhance wildlife. This type of soft engineering is seen as a viable and effective alternative to spending hundreds of thousands of pounds on hard engineering solutions.

The main output from this collaboration is a [film](#) about the project and its work with local communities was produced by the CCRI's former Artist in Residence, Antony Lyons and features Chris Short alongside the Stroud project lead Chris Uttley

The Wild Project

Throughout 2015 Chris Short has worked with the Farming and Wildlife Advisory Group South West (FWAG SW), the Cotswold Water Park Trust (CWPT) and Gloucestershire Rural Community Council to develop the Cotswold Water Park [WILD Project](#) (Water Framework Directive (WFD) with Integrated Local Delivery).

The project successfully meets the goals of the new Catchment Based Approach to water management, treating the catchment as a whole and bringing together farmers and landowners, partner organisations, NGOs and local government bodies.

In order to share learning from the project, a national conference was held in September. Chris's presentation can be viewed [here](#). A case study from the WILD project was included in a new community guide published by ACRE entitled 'A Community Guide to your water environment'. The guide, which was produced with support from Defra and the Catchment Based Approach, can be downloaded from the ACRE website. [Download guide](#).

Presentations & Media Work

A round up of the CCRI team's work in presenting, discussing and sharing their work. CCRI researchers were at the forefront of several international conferences during 2015, a selection of which are noted below.

Milan EXPO & The International Year of Soils

MILAN Expo

The CCRI was well represented at the Milan EXPO event in October, the major annual world event on food & agriculture. Damian Maye and James Kirwan took part in a workshop, “Feeding the Planet, Energy for Life”, which drew directly from the research experience of the GLAMUR project. Julie Ingram was invited to a workshop which launched a discussion on how we see the future of European agricultural research and innovation until 2020 and, beyond, for the following decade.

The International Year of Soils

Jane Mills and Julie Ingram were at the **3rd Global Soil Week 2015 in Berlin in April** where they helped to run a 4 hour dialogue session entitled “Soil and land information: How to support decision-making?” They facilitated a participatory world café session to present and receive feedback on an ecosystems services framework for soils developed within the RECARE project. Jane Mills represented the ongoing EU funded project RECARE at the European network on Soil Awareness (ENSA) conference at the Milan EXPO. The aim of RECARE is to help prevent and remediate against soil degradation in Europe.

Jane Mills and Matt Reed also attended a 5-day project meeting with around 50 other project partners in Padova, Italy, in March, which was hosted by the University of Padova. They presented on project progress and participated in a training session on Bayesian Belief Networks.

In March, Julie Ingram attended a meeting of the **EU Standing Committee on Agricultural Research, Collaborative Working Group on Agricultural Knowledge and Innovation Systems** in Antwerp where she reported on the progress of the VALERIE project. The VALERIE project also formed the basis of a paper that Julie presented at the 22nd European Seminar on Extension and Education (ESEE) in Wageningen in The Netherlands. The paper, ‘Co-innovation – new approaches to translating research outputs for innovation in agriculture’, was co-written with Peter Gaskell and Pieter de Wolf.

Economics, Policy & Landscapes

Agricultural Economics & Policy

In August, **Mauro Vigani** made two presentations at the 29th International Conference of Agricultural Economists (ICAE) conference in Milan, titled “Agriculture in an Interconnected World”.

In addition, Mauro was also on the organising committee for the conference, which is probably the most important for agricultural economists.

Janet Dwyer was a key speaker at an International Scientific Conference in Slovakia on 3-4 December 2015, where she tackled the subject of new approaches to revitalize the rural economy and rural communities in her presentation. The conference was sponsored by the OECD and featured speakers from the US and Canada as well as the EU.

Landscapes in UK & Germany

This year Dan Keech continued his collaboration with Owain Jones, professor of environmental humanities of Bath Spa University (and former CCRI colleague) by organising two sessions at the RGS-IBG international conference, held this summer in Exeter. The sessions, which were co-convened with Dr Linda Price at Queen's University Belfast, explored the emotional, affective and gendered consequences of loss / recovery of nature, home and place in rural settings.

With a small grant from the Bavarian Research Alliance, Dan Keech has been working with Otto Friedrich University (OFU) in Bamberg on a piece of comparative research examining socio-cultural and governance issues linked to food, sustainability and identity in the two cities of Bath and Bamberg. This research has its roots in the Supurbfood project.

Urban Commons

Matt Reed was in Bologna in November at an IASC Conference on Urban Commons, where he presented a **paper**, penned by himself together with Dan Keech and John Powell, on urban food and commons in the city. **Arguing that participation in food production in the city is expanding the spaces of democratic discussion and expectations.**

Food Systems, Vaccinations & FOODMETRES

Food System Transitions

In September Damian Maye and James Kirwan were involved at the XXVI European Society for Rural Sociology (ESRS) Congress in Aberdeen. Damian co-convened a working group that was concerned with examining the 'Impacts and Implications of Alternative Food Practices in a Post-Neoliberal Transition'.

James presented a paper which drew on the findings of the EU GLAMUR project. The **paper** argued for **the need to acknowledge and access the multiple, contested meanings that are attributed to both food and food supply chains.**

Damian Maye was at the 5-day Anglo-American-Canadian rural geography conference in Wales in July, where he presented a paper on 'Food transitions, a multidimensional assessment of global and local food chains'.

Badger Vaccinations

Damian Maye also presented a **paper** at the ESRS conference which emerged from work done as part of a **5-year Defra-funded project**, examining farmers' levels of confidence in vaccinating badgers against bovine TB, which concluded in 2015. **The paper**

argued that confidence in vaccination was linked to a range of factors, including trust in government and farmer understandings of nature and the badger population.

FOODMETRES

Damian Maye gave the opening speech at the FOOMETRES Conference on 24 September in Brussels. Damian is a member of the Advisory Committee for the EU project FOODMETRES - Food Planning and Innovation for Sustainable Metropolitan Regions - which aims to assess the environmental and socio-economic impacts of food chains with regard to the spatial, logistical and resource dimensions of growing food in metropolitan (urban) regions. FOODMETRES is closely associated to food planning and governance themes which the CCRI is examining in two other EU projects, GLAMUR and Supurbfood.

The Foundation for Common Land

Chris Short is the Chair of the **Foundation for Common Land**, an NGO whose 'vision is of thriving commoning communities across Great Britain and beyond making real contributions to economic,

cultural and environmental wellbeing'. Together we have been working with the European Forum for Nature Conservation and Pastoralism to develop a better understanding of the state of common land in Wales

Urban Agriculture & Sustainable Cities

Urban Agriculture

Matt Reed and Dan Keech have been involved in investigating the role of cities in the future of food production, particularly in addressing challenges such as food security in a post-supermarket food supply chain. They studied a case-study in the Bristol area as part of the **Supurbfood** project, and have attended events and published papers associated with their research.

Matt and Dan presented a paper at an international conference called 'Re-imagining Rurality', held at the University of Westminster in February. Entitled '**Gardening cyberspace – hybrid spaces and social media in the creation of food citizenship in the Bristol city-region, UK**', the paper included work gleaned from extensive 'mining' of social media which link grassroots food networks in the city of Bristol. Their findings suggested that growing food is a forceful way to re-imagine rural values within the city.

Sustainable Bristol & Bath

In September, Dan gave a presentation at a meeting of the **Bath and North East Somerset Local Food Partnership**, the multi-stakeholder network which oversees the implementation of the council's Local Food Strategy. Dan also chaired a Sustainable Cities conference workshop held in Bristol earlier in the year, which focused on how people wishing to pursue some kind of practical interventions in favour of sustainable city food can learn from experiences from abroad.

Matt regularly writes a **blog** on food, community and politics. During the year he has been a guest of the **Sustainable Food Trust for a tour of the Duchy Home Farm and Highgrove Gardens and a guest of FareShare SouthWest at a Waste Food Banquet** as part of the Bristol Food Connections Festival.

Media Work

In November, an **article** on the **EU GLAMUR project** was **published on the Horizon 2020 website**. The project is developing a flexible method to assess different food supply systems. Designed for use by governments and businesses, the method analyses the economic, environmental, social, health and ethical aspects of systems. The CCRI research team, one of 15-pan European partners, comprises James Kirwan, Damian Maye, Dan Keech and Dilshaad Bundhoo.

In October, an **article** regarding the **SmartSOIL toolbox**, written by Julie Ingram, was published in **Agra Europe**. Janet Dwyer also wrote an article for **Agra Europe**, which considered the question “Are member states being unadventurous in their P2 spending choices for 2015-2020?” This was published in March.

Matt Reed and Dan Keech penned a 4-page **article** for the **May edition of the Urban Agriculture Magazine**, produced by the global network, RUAF Foundation (Resource centres on Urban Agriculture and Food security). The article was based on their research for the EU project, Supurbfood, and in particular

focused on their research in Bristol exploring how grass-roots networks have attempted to influence food policy in the city.

Paul Courtney wrote a **feature article** for the **Western Daily Press** on the potential of using tools such as Social Return on Investment (SROI) to measure the concept of ‘happiness’.

On the back of the 2015 Policy Conference, **Matt Reed** was **interviewed by BBC 4’s Farming Today programme** regarding urban farming.

In May, **an interview with Janet Dwyer** was also broadcast on **BBC Farming Today** regarding the launch of new Uplands Alliance. Janet talked about the need for better understanding between policy makers, farmers and others managing the land, and environmental and other people concerned about the future for the uplands.

Shaping Rural Policy

A core part of the mission of the CCRI is to inform decision makers with the latest research and insights derived from it. This year the team have travelled widely to inform decision makers where ever they gathered.

Evidence & Visions

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Evidence to the Welsh Assembly

Janet Dwyer and Rob Berry gave evidence on 2 July to the Environment and Sustainability Committee of the National Assembly for Wales, which is scrutinising the Environment (Wales) Bill. Janet and Rob's evidence related to natural resources and was subsequently noted in the Stage 1 Committee Report published in October.

Local Space: Open Minds

In April, Chris Short was a key speaker at 'LOCAL SPACES : OPEN MINDS Changing attitudes' a conference organised by the **Chilterns Conservation Board/Chilterns Commons Project**.

Chris's paper reflected on the changing attitudes towards commons and explored what can be usefully done with commons no longer in agricultural management to ensure they are relevant and sustainable in the 21st century.

The Next 25 Years

Chris also attended a Defra workshop hosted by Rory Stewart MP in London in November, which **explored how, through**

partnership, the recently proposed 25 year plan for nature can be developed and delivered.

During 2015 Chris Short has chaired two **Defra supported Task and Finish groups** considering the incorporation of common land in the Basic Payments Scheme under pillar 1 of the CAP and the new Countryside Stewardship agri-environment scheme. As a result of this he has been asked to assist Natural England in preparing an Operational Standard that relates specifically to common land, based on the recently adopted Outcomes Approach. This should be ready for implementation in 2016.

The Uplands & Heritage Alliances

CC Natural England

The Uplands Alliance

A new organisation called the **Uplands Alliance** was launched in May to help protect Britain's uplands. Janet Dwyer is a member of the steering group and will be taking forward new work on sustainable farm business models, as part of her contribution to the Alliance.

The Value of Urban Agriculture

The work of the **CCRI** was highlighted in Westminster Hall in June during a debate over Urban Food Growing (Planning). A CCRI study was mentioned which found that for every £1 of investment in community food projects, there was a sevenfold social return on that investment to the community.

The Heritage Alliance

Dr Peter Gaskell took part in a debate on Heritage and Government in London in July. Organised by **the Heritage Alliance**, this debate explored the changing role the state has played and could play in protecting and promoting our heritage, an outstanding asset for the UK at home and abroad.

The Rural Services Network

Janet Dwyer and Matt Reed gave presentations at the **RSN 2015 Rural Conference – 'Aspiration to Action... The Rural Manifesto'**, held in September at the University of Gloucestershire. The conference focused on key themes affecting rural councils and communities, including housing, health, crime, economy, finance and devolution.

In January, **the CCRI hosted the Outdoor Recreation Network's annual research seminar**, which looked at the theme of values. Janet Dwyer led the event with Brian MacAulay of the Canal and River Trust.

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