

## 2015 Policy Conference

# Countryside Values for the 21<sup>st</sup> Century

**Date:** 22 January, 2015

**Venue:** The Royal Society, 6-9 Carlton House Terrace, London SW1Y 5AG

*The CCRI 2015 Policy Conference will take place on 22 January 2015 at the Royal Society in London.*

*This conference presents a unique opportunity for rural policy and decision makers, stakeholders and researchers to come together to discuss and debate contemporary rural topics based around evidence from CCRI's latest research.*

*Taking a lead from our suite of current research, and in dialogue with leading thinkers and actors, the 2015 conference will provide a platform to explore and celebrate what the contemporary countryside offers with a focus on its key needs and concerns for the future.*

### **Background to the conference:**

The social, economic and environmental changes we have seen in the last 15 years have already challenged established orthodoxies of the twentieth century, in respect of policy goals and how best to pursue them. With 30 years of experience researching rural change and policy, we have noted how topics once confined to the countryside have become topics of wider and more pressing societal concerns, such as farming and food supply, environment and climate management, and sustaining local economies and services.

In some ways we find that rural areas have become social laboratories, testing new governance models to address future challenges including plant and animal disease, climate risk and uncertainty, declining natural and cultural resources, and community cohesion in situations of tangible inequality.

This conference offers the opportunity to reflect on the multiple needs that 21<sup>st</sup> century society seeks to meet from the countryside, including food, energy, materials and medicines as well as recreation, leisure and residence, and to share ideas and experience about how it could and will respond.



The conference will be based around three interwoven themes:

**Countryside values** – in the light of growing economic, environmental and social demands, the conference aims to highlight the importance of fully understanding ‘what the countryside does for us’ and what that means for future management.

**Innovation** – in a world subject to rapid change, strategies must be found to suit individuals, families, businesses and communities. The conference will look at how people are becoming engaged in innovative ways.

**Happiness and equity** – rural areas continue to face profound inequalities in wealth and opportunity, with problems of access to housing and employment that foreshadow those of the wider economy. The conference will consider how policies can best underpin effective local action.

Three spheres of research can shed new light on these inter-connected topics.

1 – **An inclusive food system**: Investigating the ways in which people can be more aware and involved with the food that they eat, and the benefits of participation, but also the policy challenges for food supply, such as achieving sufficient production and minimizing waste.

2– **Well-being, happiness and rural policy**: Much of the current discussion of well-being adopts medical models focused upon physical and mental health. Our work highlights the need for a broader concept, including respect, sharing and community identity. As a new generation of thinkers challenges the focus on growth as a dominant mantra for rural and societal development, we analyse the evidence on what really matters to people.

3 - **Learning and innovation for sustainable farm businesses**: Faced with immediate and long-term environmental challenges, farm businesses, scientists and policy makers are seeking new strategies for success. We explore how innovative and collective learning approaches are being used to facilitate and support this process and discuss the implications for future policy.

#### Practical Information:

**Conference fees:** The cost of attending the conference, including lunch and refreshments, is £145.00. A discounted rate of £75 is available to students, charity and local government employees who book before 12 December 2014.

**How to pay:** You can pay online via the University of Gloucestershire online store. **Full rate** (<http://tinyurl.com/ngeqrsk>). **Discount rate** (<http://tinyurl.com/omuedtm>).

Alternatively you can download a booking form at <http://www.ccri.ac.uk/2015ruralconference> and pay by cheque or request an invoice.

**Venue:** The Royal Society is located on Carlton House Terrace, just off Waterloo Place, between Pall Mall and The Mall. It is 5 minutes walk to Piccadilly Circus underground station and 10 minutes to Charing Cross mainline and underground stations. Go to <https://royalsociety.org/venue-hire/location/> for more information.

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## Programme

- 9.30                    **Registration and Coffee**
- 10.00 – 10.15        **Introduction and Welcome**
- 10.15 – 11.30        **An Inclusive Food System?**
- Re-imagining food system performance  
                          Damian Maye & James Kirwan, CCRI
- Food & cities  
                          Joy Carey, f3
- Food in cities – the new frontier of rural policy  
                          Matt Reed, CCRI
- 10.10                    Questions and discussion
- 11.30 – 12.45        **Well-being, Happiness and Rural Policy**
- Happiness - a goal for rural policy?  
                          Paul Courtney, CCRI
- Growing carrots for health and happiness  
                          Margi Lennartsson, Garden Organic
- Delivering well-being benefits through the RDPE  
                          John Powell, CCRI
- 12.30                    Questions and discussion
- 12.45 – 13.45        **Lunch & Networking**
- 13.45 – 15.00        **Learning and Innovation for Sustainable Farm Businesses**
- Co-innovation – new approaches to translating research outputs for on-  
                          farm innovation  
                          Julie Ingram
- Farm field labs & farm level innovation  
                          Tom MacMillan, Soil Association
- Engaging in sustainable farm management: sharing understanding and  
                          reshaping agendas  
                          Janet Dwyer & Jane Mills, CCRI
- 14.40                    Questions and discussion

15.00 – 15.45      **Discussion: Priorities for Policy and Action**

Chair: Peter Gaskell, CCRI

Andy Dean, Rural Services Network  
*Other panellists TBC.*

15.45 – 16.00      **Closing Comments and Thanks**

Janet Dwyer, CCRI

*followed by*

**Tea and Departure**



*Please note that this programme is subject to change.  
Please check <http://www.ccri.ac.uk/2015ruralconferenceprog> for latest information*



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