The Social Contribution of Land-based Industries to Rural Communities

Final Report

Prepared for the Commission for Rural Communities

by the

Countryside and Community Research Unit, University of Gloucestershire

March 2007

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Executive Summary

Background

This study explores the social interaction between land-based industries (LBIs) and rural communities. More specifically, it is concerned with the social impacts of land-based industries upon rural communities and, in parallel, the expectations that rural communities have of land-based industries, and vice versa.

The rationale for the research stems from the profound changes that have occurred in recent decades with regard both to England's land-based industries and to the nature of its rural communities. While agriculture remains the dominant activity in terms of land management, there is evidence that this is also in decline and that the amount of land managed by other land-based industries is growing. In parallel, it is often perceived that the role of farmers and other landowners in rural local governance is now largely diminished. Likewise, it is assumed that the rural population now has much weaker ties to the land as most are host to a diverse range of inhabitants including commuters, retired people and service sector workers.

Partly in consequence, rural policy has tended in recent years to relate separately either to land-based activities, such as agriculture, forestry, conservation and recreation, or to socio-economic concerns such as affordable housing, social deprivation and local governance. However, it is increasingly recognised that greater synergy between these two elements of rural policy is required to address the complexity of issues affecting contemporary rural England.

Research methods

The research employed an ethnographic approach, involving in-depth qualitative research in five case study communities in different parts of upland and lowland England. Study areas were selected to ensure variations in terms of unemployment, deprivation, age structure, land use and sparsity. These five case study communities were:

- Clun (Shropshire)
- Harting (West Sussex)
- East Hatley and Hatley St George (Cambridgeshire)
- Horton and Rudyard (Staffordshire)
- Rookhope and Eastgate (County Durham)

The ethnographic approach allowed an in-depth exploration of the perceptions and concerns of a wide range of residents and land-based stakeholders in these communities. Guided by a fieldwork checklist - developed by the research team and informed by a selective literature review - two researchers spent ten days in each community between May and September 2006. Following the principles of an ethnographic approach, researchers aimed to become immersed in the respective communities, participating in various community activities and engaging relevant people in conversation at all times of day. The suite of methods included semi-structured interviews, one-to-one and group interviews, participant observation, informal conversations and analysis of text and visual information.

Research findings

Findings reveal that the nature and scale of interactions between land-based industries and rural communities vary considerably from place to place, reflecting a host of factors including the nature of local land-based industries, local social structures and norms, and the influence of key individuals. Caution therefore needs to be exercised in making generalisations about the various contributions of LBIs to rural communities in England.

Farming and forestry have in recent years had a generally declining impact on the local labour market. However, land-based industries retain importance as employers in some communities and new employment has been created through farm diversification and the growth of 'consumption activities' such as equine activity and other types of recreation. The nature and scale of such diversification are important in the context of local employment impact. The increased provision of tourism and recreation facilities, the restoration of redundant buildings, the creation of small business units in farm locations and the adding of value to local raw materials have all served to offset, to some degree, the typical decline of land-based employment.

The findings also suggest that relationships between land-based industries and rural communities may be reinvigorated to the extent that wider forces of demand and supply (associated with sustainable consumption and environment agendas) encourage more local selling and buying of agricultural produce. Nowhere are such sales a dominant element of the local economy, but many examples were found of modest sales of farm produce, often linked to a growing tourism industry and to the general level of vibrancy in the community.

While there has been a decline in the influence of several land owners and managers as community leaders, this decline has been rather less – and certainly more geographically variable - than first thought. The reasons for such declining involvement include a sheer decline in the numbers of owners and managers of land-based industries living locally, the reduced time available to such people as more and more labour is shed, and the growing role played by newcomers with little or no direct connection with the land. The latter can sometimes be compounded by a strong preservationist ethic – a state of affairs that appears to have alienated many hitherto politically active farmers. That said, the research encountered many examples of farmers and other land-based personnel making substantial contributions to social, cultural and educational activity in and around their parish, generally in an informal capacity.

Focusing on the expectations that local residents place on the land-based industries, many relate to countryside access and a concern that traditional privileges be respected. Other expectations include a wish that the residents' peace, quiet and freedom from excessive farm traffic, smells and noise be respected, coupled with a dominant anti-development ethic. Such views tend to be more strongly held or expressed by relative newcomers with only limited knowledge of modern land-based industries. Those in local businesses (for example running B&Bs, pubs and tourism facilities) expect the land-based industries to continue to manage the area's landscape and associated wildlife in a way that is sympathetic to the needs of tourism, itself a source of mutual dependence by land-managers and rural communities.

Overall, it appears that any 'fault-line' between land-based industries and their local communities is often less real or significant than are divisions *within* those

'communities' – most notably those between newcomers and established residents long exposed to the needs and activities of the land-based industries.

Policy issues

In order to help identify policy issues associated with the research findings, a dissemination event was held involving stakeholders from a range of local, regional and national organisations. The variations revealed by the study served to highlight the potential difficulties of implementing national policies that would meet the needs of unique communities. Thus the geographical level at which they should be addressed requires further consideration and debate by policy makers. Nevertheless, the policy suggestions provide a useful addition to the debate on the social contribution of land-based industries to rural communities. In particular, the following would strengthen links and address some of the issues found in this research:

- The need for devolution of decision-making powers to the local (but not necessarily parish) level.
- The advantage of LEADER style 'community chests', providing small pump-priming grants to develop projects, involving land-managers and the community.
- The need for education in rural communities about land-based industries and their future development.
- The potential benefits of economic and policy support to encourage local buying and selling of local produce.

Developing Indicators of social interaction

Indicators of social interaction between land-based industries and rural communities have potential value for tracking long-term trends and for examining spatial variations in land-based-community interaction and vibrancy. Given that the characteristics, patterns and reasons for the nature of social interactions are often embedded in the local social, historical and cultural contexts, identification of meaningful indicators of social interactions is problematic. Further, given the importance of contextual factors in shaping interactions, the application of any defined indicators will also be limited as it will be difficult to generalise from one area to another.

Nevertheless, five potentially useful indicators are identified which a) chime with the evidence arising from the ethnographic work; b) have some relevance to all five communities examined in this study; and c) are judged to be realistic in terms of either data availability or the practical application of such data if it were made available. These are:

- Extent of rural diversification
- Local sales and purchasing of land-based products
- Number of farmers / land-based representatives on parish councils
- Number of land-based-related complaints
- Change of use/ occupancy of farm holdings (and buildings)

1. Introduction

The context and rationale of this research derive from the profound changes that have occurred in recent decades with regard both to England's land-based industries and to the nature of its rural communities. Agriculture is no longer a principal employer in rural areas and the majority of rural residents are no longer employed in agriculture, other land-based industries or in upstream and downstream activities linked to the primary sector. While agriculture remains the dominant activity in terms of land management, there is evidence that this is also in decline and that the amount of land managed by other land-based industries is growing. Furthermore, the dominance of farmers and other landowners in local rural governance (See Newby et al. 1978) has been reported as declining or perceived as a thing of the past.

In general terms, the population of rural England now has much weaker ties to the land – a number of rural settlements are now host to a mixture of commuters, retired people, workers in manufacturing and, more notably, service sectors, and their families. Partly in consequence, rural policy has tended, until recently, to relate separately either to land-based activities, such as agriculture, forestry, conservation and recreation, or to socio-economic concerns such as affordable housing, social deprivation and local governance.

These two groups – those whose livelihood derives mainly from land-based industries and those for whom that is not the case - appear less and less to interact and share common concerns. Slee (2005) asserts that, for most rural residents, the countryside that surrounds them tends to be seen more as a consumer commodity than a place of production of food and raw materials. And various developments, such as BSE and FMD and certain aspects of CAP reform, not to mention legislation with regard to field sports, have served to engender a 'beleaguered' mood amongst many engaged in the land-based industries.

To address these issues, this research explores the interaction between the land-based industries and rural communities. More specifically, it is concerned with the socio-economic impacts of land-based industries upon rural communities and, in turn, the impacts that rural communities have on land-based industries. In parallel, the research is concerned with the expectations that rural communities have of land-based industries, and the expectations that people engaged in land-based industries have with regard to various aspects of the local community. These social impacts can find expression through various channels, including the employment of labour, expenditure on local services, participation in local community activity and aspects of the management of land, including the production of public goods.

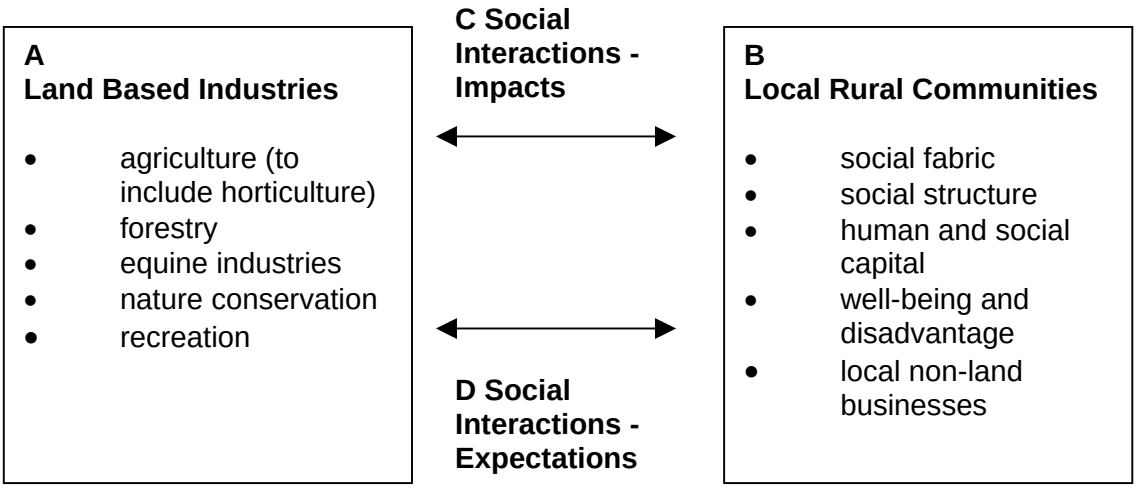
Similarly, the nature of these social interactions might relate to the participation of landowners and managers in community development and local governance, reasonable access to land and sympathetic environmental management. The research will explore the extent to which these relationships vary:

- from place to place, and within places, in rural England,
- by type of land-based industry - for example its sector, with variations also within sectors;
- by land occupancy;
- by type of rural community (e.g. commuter, retirement, upland), and within communities, and also
- over time.

Throughout this report the word 'community' is used to encompass the relevant case study areas or localities, which comprised one or more rural settlements and the surrounding areas of varied land-use within a designated Parish. Given the ethnographic approach employed in the study, which involved researchers spending time observing and participating in community activities, the term 'community' is preferred to 'parish', 'area' or locality' when describing the research findings.

1.1 Study aims and conceptual framework

The aims of the study are to explore the level and nature of social interaction between various land-based industries and rural communities, produce relevant policy implications and, if possible, highlight elements of good practice. More specifically, it is concerned with the social impacts of land-based industries upon rural communities and, in parallel, the expectations that rural communities have of land-based industries, and vice versa. This is detailed in the following model below:



At the heart of the research was an elucidation of the *social interaction* between land-based industries and local rural communities, denoted by the respective arrows representing different types of social interaction[1]. To elaborate the model:

A Land-based industries

Land-based industries (LBI) were defined for this study as including: agriculture (and horticulture), forestry, equine industries, nature conservation and recreation. It is clear that the LBI definition includes different types of industry. Agriculture, and to a lesser extent forestry, are production-based industries, whereas recreation and equine businesses have stronger ties with issues of consumption. Lastly, nature conservation is concerned with protection and enhancement.

[1] To maintain the rigour of the conceptual framework, and any analysis within that framework, it should be emphasised that whereas *impacts* can affect people, activities, places and things, only people can experience *expectations*. Thus it is only people in local, rural communities who have expectations concerning land-based industries and, similarly, it is only people engaged in land-based industries who have expectations concerning local, rural communities. This distinction was recognised explicitly throughout the research.

B Local rural communities[2]

The research brief refers to 'social fabric', which we take to embrace such phenomena as demographic and social structure, social relationships, human and social capital, well-being, prosperity and disadvantage. We also include non-land-based small businesses as a component of rural communities. Nevertheless, the research aimed to explore interactions between individuals and groups in a community context, encompassing elements of identity, belonging and social interaction and taking those working for LBIs to be part of the wider community.

C & D Social interactions - Impacts and Expectations

These refer to the impacts of land-based industries upon local rural communities and vice versa. Examples include the employment by land-based industries of residents living in local rural communities; land owner/ manager involvement in the social and political life of the community; and the presence of land-use constraints on the people of the local community (e.g. regarding access and the availability of land for development).

There are also expectations[3] of land-based industries by local rural communities and vice versa. Such expectations might, for example, relate to the countryside management practices of land-based industries; rights of access by the community to land owned or used by land-based industries; the spur to the local economy provided by land-based industries – for example, through facilitating rural tourism; and also the participation of people engaged in land-based industries in local community activities and governance. Conversely, land managers might expect local communities to understand land-management practices and to be tolerant of farm traffic and other inconveniences.

Conceptual Framework

The presence of strong elements of production, protection, consumption and community issues made the development of a conceptual framework far from straightforward. An existing one that spanned the rural land use and community development aspects could not be found and so the decision was taken to adapt relevant work by Holmes (2006) who suggests a 'triangular' approach to rural land use change based around *production*, *protection* and *consumption*. The main adaptations were to add the dimension of community and to combine the issues of protection and consumption. Thus production would include the traditional rural land uses of agriculture and forestry; protection would relate to designations for landscape, nature conservation and heritage; and consumption would include the non-production land uses of access, recreation and tourism. Community would relate to issues of social cohesion and the social fabric. This additional element to the overall approach was taken into account in selecting case study locations and, where appropriate, in later analyses.

To help clarify the issues within this framework, and in turn develop research questions relating to interactions, impacts and expectations, an email survey of key

[2] The word 'local' rules out non-spatial interest communities such as travellers or ramblers.

[3] The word expectation is taken here to mean what is hoped for, rather than what is anticipated. It should be emphasised that whereas *impacts* can affect people, activities, places and things, only people can experience *expectations*. Thus it is only people in local, rural communities who have expectations concerning land-based industries and, similarly, it is only people engaged in land-based industries who have expectations concerning local, rural communities.

informants was undertaken during the initial stages of the research. The principal aim of the survey was to help generate a checklist of issues to explore in the in-depth case studies; it also aimed to highlight relevant literature (particularly 'grey' literature that the research team may otherwise miss) and to generate interest and engagement in the study to help meet the needs of end-users. A summary of the survey results, and their relevance to the study, is contained in Annexe 1.

1.2 Project phases

To achieve its aims, the project had a number of objectives, delivered through five phases. In brief, the objectives, as revised and agreed in the project inception meeting, were as follows:

Phase 1 - Preparation

- Descriptive overview of the nature of England's land-based industries and rural communities.
- Survey of key informants to seek interest and engagement and to gather brief qualitative and factual information.
- Literature review of any earlier work pertaining specifically to that impact and those expectations.
- Further clarification of the scope, concepts and research questions / hypotheses that will underpin the remainder of the research.
- Preliminary work on indicators of impact that might be desirable and practical.
- Sampling criteria and suggested case study areas.
- Detailed plan of methodology and timetable for Phase 2.

Phase 2 – One in-depth ethnographic case study

- Design of project check-list and other protocols for Phase 2 case study.
- Preparation for Phase 2 fieldwork.
- Ethnographic fieldwork in one case study area.
- Presentation of headline findings and implications for methodology to be applied in Phase 3.
- Final development of methodology and preparation for Phase 3.

Phase 3 - Four in-depth ethnographic case studies

- Ethnographic fieldwork in four case study areas.
- Analysis and write up of case study findings.

Phase 4 – Development of indicators

- Define 'desired indicators' that chime with the evidence of interaction and expectations emerging from phases 1 - 3.
- Identify what proxy indicators might be available from a wide variety of sources and assess their merits and limitations.
- Devise a practical and cost-effective programme of data assembly / interpretation, linked to existing or likely data gathering exercises, that might be recommended.

Phase 5 – Conclusions and recommendations

- Dissemination event and workshop to include the key informants surveyed during Phase 1.
- Drafting a Final Report, summarising and appraising the research undertaken, drawing conclusions and highlighting policy issues.

This report encompasses work relating to all five phases of the research, beginning, in chapter 2, with a targeted review of the literature concerned with the social

interactions between land-based industries and rural communities. Chapter 3 outlines the methods employed in the research, including the ethnographic fieldwork and process for selecting case study areas, while detailed comparative research findings across the five study areas are presented in Chapter 4. Chapter 5 goes on to identify some broader policy issues arising from the research, including the potential for developing indicators of social interaction from the qualitative findings.

This report should be read in conjunction with its accompanying Annexe, which contains the detailed findings from each of the five case study areas, along with further information relating to the research and its methods. These detailed findings are extremely rich in terms of both context and narrative, and therefore give a real flavour of the interactions and dynamics present in the five communities. Readers of this report are therefore encouraged to engage with the in-depth ethnographic material located in the annexe report.

2. Literature review

2.1 Introduction

This selective literature review covers articles and reports produced in the last 10 years i.e. since the mid-1990s, but with emphasis on the most recent documents. It concentrates on the interactions (impacts and expectations) between rural communities and land-users in England. It is not possible to consider all the literature concerned with the much broader topics of rural communities and land use in England, although these topics will be touched upon in the next section, which deals with the background of social and economic change in rural England and forms a backdrop to the research.

Following sections will look at the impacts of land use on communities and expectations and attitudes from communities of land users and from land users of communities. There is very little literature concerning the impacts of communities on land-based industries. The conclusion then relates the preceding sections to this research project.

2.2 Changing rural communities and land usage

There is a large amount of literature concerning the social changes that are taking place within rural areas of England. To summarise, in a report for Defra, the Rural Evidence Research Centre (RERC) (2004) finds that:

> *'The rural areas of England have undergone considerable demographic, social and economic change over the last three to four decades. These changes have led to a much more socially and economically differentiated countryside, much less dependent on agriculture and related activities for employment and generally more prosperous than ever before. Despite this increased general prosperity, however, some parts of rural England still contain areas and settlements experiencing long-standing economic under-performance, social deprivation and lack of services'* (RERC, 2004, p.8).

The State of the Countryside Report (Commission for Rural Communities (CRC), 2005a) reinforces this message:

> *' … rural England has undergone rapid and profound changes in its society, economy and environment over recent decades. These changes have perhaps seemed more acute because of the expectation of constancy and stability, because of a belief by many in the countryside as the 'one fixed point in a world of change'* (CRC, 2005, p.122).

The social changes identified by that report form a backdrop to the interactions between communities and land-users and hence to this research. The changes identified by the report are summarised below:

- An increase in population masking an exchange of population between rural and urban areas, with younger people tending to move out of rural areas while older, more prosperous people move in;
- Rising rural house prices leading to an affordability gap;
- Variations related to scarcity and settlement size;
- Rising inequality within rural communities;
- Conflict over the use of land becoming increasingly significant.

The CRC's study on Rural Disadvantage (2005b), based on Shucksmith (2003), lists 5 principal groups experiencing rural poverty:

- Elderly people
- Children
- Low-paid and seasonally employed manual workers
- People without paid employment, such as carers, disabled people and the unemployed
- Self-employed people in low-income sectors.

In addition, Citizens' Advice Bureau (2005) describes the problems faced by migrant workers in rural areas.

Hill *et al's* (2002) study of the contribution of natural heritage to rural development emphasises the secondary impacts that the conservation and management of natural heritage could have on rural economies, but it does not establish the extent of social importance beyond an initial analysis of business networking. In assessing the contribution of a broad range of inherited resources to differential economic performance, Courtney *et al* (2004) reveal that, while community cohesion is being increasingly eroded through demographic and economic restructuring, in some areas local ties and networks within the farming sector remain strong. However, the extent of the social integration of the farming sector into rural communities is not established.

From an economic perspective, Department for Environment, Food and Rural Affairs (Defra) (2005) identifies a correlation between poor productivity and social exclusion:

> *'Whilst the majority of rural areas are experiencing relatively high levels of economic prosperity and low levels of social exclusion, the picture is not homogeneous. It is possible to identify areas that have consistently lower rates of productivity than others … the evidence shows that poor economic performance tends to be associated with higher levels of social exclusion' (Defra, 2005, p.2).*

There is a considerable amount of literature on the importance of social capital to rural areas based on the work of Putnam (1993) (see for example Moseley, 2003; Selman, 2001; Williams, 2002, 2003, Lee et al, 2005), an importance that has been recognised by government (Department of Environment, Transport and the Regions, 2000; Department for Environment, Food and Rural Affairs, 2004). There has been some survey research, with the 2003 Home Office Citizenship Survey showing an increase in informal volunteering since 2001, although the proportion of people involved in civic participation and formal volunteering shows no significant change (Munton and Zurawan, 2003). However, the relationship between social capital and the involvement of land managers in rural communities is complex and has been little researched.

The ways in which rural communities are governed are also changing. Goodwin (undated) reviews the change from rural government to rural governance, which '*has been bound up with, and is part of, a host of other economic, social and cultural changes in the countryside'* (p.3). He points out that the assumption of single-interest communities in rural areas is often false and that factors such as large distances and poor public transport can make it harder to achieve community participation.

Land usage in rural areas has also been adapting to changed circumstances. As CRC (2005a) points out, *'farming is the predominant use of the land of England'* (p.100). However, farming is changing, not least in response to changes in the Common Agricultural Policy (CAP), and farmers are diversifying into additional activities. Pretty (2002) claims that modern industrial agriculture has led to a separation of people and nature, and of farmers and communities. However, he also explains how innovations such as community supported agriculture and box schemes can increase connectivity between farmers and local communities. In addition, the conservation value of farmland is becoming more significant. At the same time, forestry is also changing, as more emphasis is put on conservation and recreational uses of forest land rather than on timber production (CRC, 2005a; Fagan et al, undated; Slee et al, 2004).

The diversification of agriculture and forestry has opened up new opportunities for recreational use of land. In particular, some areas of the countryside are increasingly being used to provide stabling, grazing and activity space for horses. Although little has been written about the extent and effects of equine activity in the countryside, it does appear to be a significant land user. British Horse Industry Confederation (2005) summarises the current position of the horse industry and lays out plans for the future.

Other users of rural land such as the military (Woodward, 1999; 2005) are largely outside the scope of this research and are therefore not considered in any depth.

2.3 Impacts of land uses on rural communities

Land usage can impact on rural communities economically, socially and environmentally and impacts in all three categories can be positive or negative. In fact, as rural communities are not homogeneous entities, particular impacts may be positive for some groups and negative for others.

There have been a number of attempts to quantify the market and non-market impacts of land usage, particularly in the case of forestry and (within that) community forestry (CJC Consulting with Macaulay Land Use Research Institute, 2000; Willis et al, 2003; Slee et al, 2004). Slee et al identify four '*main groups of values'* arising from forestry (p.444). They are:

- Forestry values
- 'Shadow' values
- Non-market values
- Social values

It is worth looking at these four types of value in some detail as they are applicable to other land-uses as well as to forestry. Forestry values are the benefits or disadvantages arising from forestry activity including upstream and downstream economic linkages. Shadow values emerge from the influence of the forests over locational decisions made by businesses and individuals. Whilst it is usually thought that attracting businesses and affluent residents to an area is a benefit, it can also have negative affects, for example, in pricing locals out of the housing market. Non-market values include informal recreation, biodiversity, landscape and other environmental benefits. Social values, which are perhaps most relevant to this study, '*comprise the sum of values to local communities arising from identity and a sense of belonging, social capital building attributable to trees and social entrepreneurship arising from the development of tree related projects'* (Ibid, p.445). With regard to the

relative importance of the four types of value, Slee et al believe that '*it is probable that over large areas of lowland England the non-market, social and shadow values of forest and woodland are much more important than the conventional forestry values for local development'* (Ibid, p.451).

It is widely recognised that woodlands make a considerable contribution to the local environment and also to human well-being and quality of life (Burgess et al, 1988; O'Brien, 2003; Ward Thompson et al, 2005). As O'Brien (2003) says:

> *'Woodlands are appreciated by respondents for a wide range of benefits, the majority of which do not appear to be related to their economic use or necessarily to whether people use them frequently or not'* (p. 50).

Willis et al, (2003) estimate the marginal benefits of woodland in Great Britain, and find the total figure of approximately £1.0 billon to be dominated by *'recreational and biodiversity values, followed by landscape benefits, with carbon sequestration also contributing significantly to the total social and environmental benefits of forests'* (p.3).

The Institute for European Environmental Policy (IEEP) et al, (2004) look at the social, environmental and economic impact of hill farming. They conclude:

> ***'****In national terms, the direct economic benefits of hill farming in terms of agricultural employment and output appear to be in decline in the English LFA, as in agriculture elsewhere. However, regionally and locally, employment and economic activity associated with hill farming can be significant… [However], what is clear is that other economic activity in the LFA, particularly tourism, appears to benefit from the presence of hill farming activity'* (p.76).

With regard to social impacts, the study finds:

> *'Our research found a variety of evidence of the nature and extent of the social impacts of hill farming in relation to the local community, the maintenance of the local infrastructure and the provision of local services. Farming and farmers continue to play a central role in the cultural identity of hill farming areas. But as hill farming has come under increasing economic pressures, farm incomes have fallen and farm labour has reduced, the positive contribution made by hill farmers and their families to the communities in which they live appears to have declined, but not disappeared'* (p.78).

Scottish Agricultural Colleges et al, (2005) researched the social benefits of traditional hill farming in Cumbria and reached similar conclusions. The research identifies: general public preferences for hill farmer attributes; wide interest in a variety of facets of the uplands, and in wildlife in particular; and the role that farmers can play in interpreting the landscape. It concludes that the continuing loss of traditional farmers from the hills will threaten cooperative practices and the ability to manage upland landscapes and deliver public goods (p.2).

Lobley et al, (2005a) also look at the social impacts of agricultural change, particularly on farmers and their families. They discover that:

> *'Despite being socially embedded in their communities (that is living very near to their place of birth and most of their close family and friends) the results of the household survey suggest that farmers are less socially active than non-farmers'* (p.6).

And Reed et al, (2002) identify a withdrawal of farm family members from participation in civic society. However, Lobley et al, (2005a) also find that those farmers who were actively adapting and diversifying were likely to have increasing social contacts, often as a result of the diversified activities.

Lobley et al's (2005b) study of the impact of organic farming on the rural economy found that *'both organic and non-organic farms generate a considerable amount of economic activity in terms of sales, purchases and employment'* (p.78). However, organic farms tended to generate more employment, although many of the extra jobs were for casual labour. Organic horticultural farms were found to be most closely integrated into the local economy.

There have been a number of studies on the impact of the 2001 outbreak of foot and mouth disease. Scott et al's paper (2004) focuses on what the outbreak reveals about *'the position of agriculture in rural economy and society'* (p.1). They conclude:

> *'The key issue highlighted by the FMD outbreak is the inextricable link between agriculture and tourism, and vulnerability that overdependence on them causes, particularly in more peripheral, less agriculturally favoured areas which are symptomatic of the devolved regions of the UK' (p.12).*

Although Scott et al, carried out their research in Wales, it seems likely that their conclusions also apply to at least some areas of England.

Di Iacovo (2003) looks at the relationship between farmers and local communities in Tuscany. He suggests that 'multifunctionality of agriculture may also offer new opportunities to the social aspects of rural life' (p.102). He describes an action research project to involve farms and farmers in providing social services in three areas, involving disabled people, teenagers and young parents, and elderly people respectively.

Agricultural and forestry land can also have environmental uses, which have their own economic and social (as well as environmental) impacts on local communities. Courtney et al (in press) classify environment and natural heritage-related activities as 'core', 'primary' and 'reliant':

> *'…those for which the environment is core to their existence, primary activities engaged in the physical exploitation and management of the natural environment, and activities which are reliant on the environment and natural heritage for their commercial success'* (p.2).

Their research – carried out in Scotland – found that 'reliant' firms were most likely to benefit the local economy by sourcing locally.

Environmental projects can act as catalysts to further the integration of communities and increase social capital. For example, Kwolek and Jackson's (2001) study of a community project in the Upper Nene valley finds that the community group working to improve the environment brought together people from neighbouring parishes and established links with local farmers. On a larger scale, the Protected Landscape Approach attempts to link landscape protection with local communities (Brown et al, 2005). For example, the Blackdown Hills Rural Partnership involves over 75 organisations and *'seeks to safeguard the distinctive landscape, wildlife, historical and architectural character of the AONB whilst fostering the social and economic well being of the communities and the people who live and work there'* (Philips & Partington, 2005, p.124).

Recreational use of land can also overlap with other uses and is often, although not inevitably, associated with tourism. Oliver and Jenkins (2003) find that there is '*no universal agreement about the net benefits of rural tourism'* (p.295). They find the benefits to be dependent upon factors such as visitor numbers and length of stay, proximity of urban centres, local accommodation provision and other local facilities and places of interest. They distinguish between hard and soft tourism, the latter being embedded within the locality and *'likely to generate larger income and employment multipliers per unit of tourist spending'* (p. 298). Christie and Matthews (2003) estimate the economic and social benefits of walking in the English countryside and conclude that *'[t]he total benefits from walking are greatly in excess of the costs of path restoration and maintenance' (p.1).*

In some parts of England, a particular form of land use associated with recreation – the equine industry – is becoming increasingly apparent. There appears to have been very little research into equine activities and associated land-use and impacts. However, the Henley Centre (2004) estimates the size of the equine industry in a number of terms including its economic value and employment, but not in terms of the area of land used. The British Horse Industry Confederation (2005) consider that:

> *'The industry makes a hugely important contribution to the economy and social fabric of many communities. It is particularly important in (but by no means confined to) rural areas'* (p. 10).

Crossman and Walsh (2005) studied the breeding of 'sport horses' and point out that the majority of breeding is done as a hobby, with only 16% of breeders breeding for profit. This imbalance may apply to equine land-users in general and may have implications for the impacts of equine land usage on rural communities.

2.4 Expectations and attitudes

Bell (1994) carried out an anthropological study of a Hampshire village, 'Childerley', spending eight months there during 1987/8. He was particularly concerned to understand how the residents 'think about nature and how they use their ideas about it in their everyday lives' (p.4). He found that local people 'circulated socially within fairly homogeneous sub-communities of wealth and associated cultural differences' (p.28). Bell (1994) found the inhabitants of Childerley to be proud of their rurality:

> *'Childerleyans take pride in their sense of themselves as country people. They use this sense of their difference as a source of identity, motivation and social power – a source they find secure and legitimate'* (p.119).

While Bell did not specifically examine relations between land-managers and other residents, some of his findings are relevant to this study. In particular, he identified two distinct lifestyles which he called 'front door' (formal, distant) and 'back door' (informal involved), which appeared to be related to attitudes to the land and the natural world. The 'front-door' group tended to value open landscapes that accentuated their separateness and privacy and were also connected with status, whereas 'back-door' residents were more interested in the foreground and the wildlife in their own gardens. Some of, but not the entire, 'back door' group worked on the land, whereas the 'front door' people tended to be wealthy and mainly (but not entirely) incomers. The existence of these two lifestyles emphasises the importance of examining both formal and informal interactions between land-based industries and rural communities.

With regard to attitudes to the perceived importance of land-use issues to the inhabitants of rural areas, the Commission for Rural Communities 'Rural Insights' survey (Mortimer, 2007) found that, while farming is not identified by many as a priority for local action, 25% of respondents identified 'agriculture/farming/farm diversification/fishing' as a priority for national action which would have a positive impact on rural England.

There has been a significant amount of research on people's attitudes to woodlands as a resource for recreation, although not on attitudes to the land users (for example Burgess et al, 1988; Macnaghten et al, 1998; O'Brien, 2003; 2004; 2005; Ward Thompson et al, 2005). In fact, in the case of woodland it can often be difficult to pinpoint a local 'land user'. Attitudes to woodlands are found to be complex and locally specific, involving feelings such as pleasure, nostalgia and fear. As O'Brien (2003) sums up:

> *'When publics talked about woodlands and trees it was almost never in isolation but as part of the wider landscape and also as part of their wider everyday life; so for trees and woodlands, for example, discussions related to concerns over development, education and safety. These linkages to wider issues need to be explored in more detail and to be better understood' (p. 50).*

According to Moore-Colyer and Scott (2005), *'the public today care passionately about their local landscapes and resent the current scale and pace of change, homogenizing development and destroying sense of place'* (p.501). Their research in Wales revealed public support for the functionality of landscape:

> *'Functionality in the landscape was also evident with the strong support for modern farming, where the public positively assessed the landscape as a place for food production' (p.510).*

Murdoch et al, (2003), look at relations in three very different rural areas, Buckinghamshire, Devon and Northumberland, which they call the 'preserved countryside', the 'contested countryside' and the 'paternalistic countryside' respectively. In Buckinghamshire, they found the countryside to be dominated by 'local preservationist networks' often in conflict with 'well-resourced national to local networks' over development. By contrast, in Northumberland, landowners are dominant but *'although the landlords aim to act in keeping with long-standing traditions, a key feature of paternalism, the assumption of political leadership, is now absent from the countryside in Northumberland'* (p.131).

In Devon, they describe a process of change whereby farmers, although not such a dominant force in local politics as they had once been, are still 'disproportionately represented at the various levels of local government' (p.101). They find that an influx (in the 1980s) of environmentally conscious incomers 'helped catalyse a major shift in public attitudes to agriculture and the countryside' (p.100), with farmers under pressure to change their farming practices. In this county, the authors identify two networks with different views of the countryside.

> *'The divisions that lie between the environmental and developmental networks thus rest upon different appreciations of the core values of the farmed countryside and the major threats it faces' (Murdoch et al, 2003, p.101).*

Gray (1999) studied the way in which farmers and shepherds in the Scottish borders related to the hills in which they lived and worked. Although he does not focus on relations between land-users and other residents, he finds an assumption that

townspeople would not feel at home in the country in the same way that they (country people) did not feel at home in the town. 'This opposition between town or city and country … affect[ed] *'the way people related to each other in forming a borders identity'* (p.454).

In their study of C*omplementarities and Conflicts between Farming and Incomers to the Countryside in England and Wales*, Milbourne et al, (2000) discover a mixture of attitudes. They find that the majority of incomers have regular, but sometimes superficial, contact with farmers, with greater levels of contact resulting in more sympathetic attitudes. Almost three-quarters of residents purchase food from local firms. However, there is opposition to intensive farming practices and support for organic farming.

Local conflicts are not generally related to farming, but those that are can be divided into four categories relating to:

- Lack of understanding of farming
- Access to land
- Smells, noise and by-products
- The position of farmers and farming in society

Local purchasing is found to be an important point of contact between farmers and locals, and people's professed reasons for local purchasing shed light on their attitudes:

> *'…the reasons for people's interest in local products do not revolve solely around issues of food safety and environmental interests. A significant proportion of people articulated their sympathy for farmers in difficult economic circumstances and stressed their desire to help them'* (Ibid, p. 3).

The research shows local purchasing in support of local farmers, especially in remote areas:

> *'We found … considerable evidence of an ideology of localism based on sympathy for farmers, an ideology equally at home amongst outside incomers as more established residents'* (Winter, 2003: p. 29).

Weatherell et al's 2003 study of local purchasing also finds that attitudes to farmers are generally positive or neutral, with more positive attitudes in rural areas.

However, farmers do not seem to be aware of this public support. Lobley et al's Rural Stress Review (2004) finds that farmers feel undervalued in their local communities, although '*evidence suggests that newcomers to rural areas are often not as hostile to agriculture and farmers as farmers think they are'* (p.2).

Attitudes to equine land-use may be less positive. There has been little research on this, apart from the emotive, and probably atypical, issue of hunting with hounds. Milbourne (2003) studied villagers' attitudes to hunting in four hunting areas in England and Wales. He finds '*widespread but passive knowledge of hunting'* (p. 164), with only a minority of residents actively involved. He finds general support for hunting. However, '*strong local public support for hunting does not preclude the possibilities for internal tensions and conflicts surrounding the practice within these rural areas'* (p.168). Bell (1994), in his anthropological study of 'Childerley', found mixed attitudes towards hunting and shooting.

Recreational land usage can also lead to conflicting expectations and attitudes. Smith and Krannich (1998) studied attitudes to tourism in small towns in the United States, and found three categories of community:

- Tourism-hungry
- Tourism-realised
- Tourism-saturated

Tourism-hungry communities are eager for the benefits of tourism, but within tourism-saturated communities views are dominated by the negative effects of tourism such as increased traffic and rising house prices. It seems likely that this is also true of Britain.

MacNaghten (2003) tells of the role of the planning process in a local conflict, in which he himself was involved, concerning a proposed stock car track which was opposed by local people.

> *'It is … beyond question that the formal planning process has been divisive, has polarized village life, and has militated against any future possibility of constructing a cohesive and inclusive vision for future countryside living'* (p.99).

Public attitudes to the use of land for environmental protection can also be mixed. Bonaiuto et al, (2002) look at attitudes to the setting aside of land for environmental protection in Italy, with reference to two national parks. In both cases, they found initial strong local opposition to the creation of the parks. They interpret this as being a reaction to the imposition of the parks by outsiders – the national government – based on the 'regional identity' and 'place attachment' of local people.

The importance of the attitudes and involvement of local communities in the conservation of unimproved limestone grassland in the Cotswolds Area of Outstanding Natural Beauty (AONB) is emphasized by Cotswolds Conservation Board (2005). It points out that:

> *'Many sites, usually Commons, have strong links with local communities but those communities do not always feel involved with the management and conservation of the site' (Cotswold Conservation Board, 2005, p. 12).*

The document also points out that the CROW Act may increase recreational pressure on land that is of particular environmental importance. It suggests the involvement of Parish Councils and the use of Parish Maps to encourage local people to identify with and to become involved in conservation, and the raising of awareness *'through talks events and publications to motivate and encourage direct action by local communities in the protection of the limestone grassland habitat' (Ibid, p.13).*

2.5 Conclusions

This selective literature review has focused on the interactions (impacts and expectations) between rural communities and land-users in England. Although there is a large volume of literature concerning rural change, research on rural land use is concentrated on particular uses, especially on agriculture and forestry. It is also necessary to emphasise that there is considerable overlap between uses. For example, the same piece of land may be used for agriculture, recreation and conservation and the uses may be mutually dependent. In some cases, particularly

when dealing with recreational and/or conservation usage, it can be difficult to identify a local land-user, as the same piece of land may be used in different ways by different people.

Impacts of land users on local communities have also been scantily covered, and where they have they do not always readily relate to the five dimensions of community outlined in the research tender. There is even less literature on the impact of local people on land-users, apart from studies of campaigns against specific land uses such as wind farms (Woods, 2003). Research on public attitudes to and expectations of land users tends to be concentrated on farmers and farming, although there is also considerable research on attitudes to land uses such as woodland, where the user may be the community itself.

Clearly, the literature suggests a wide range of *impacts* and of *expectations* that warrant research. Some general conclusions emerge which deserve some consideration in this study.

- Impacts can be both **actual and perceived**. An attempt must be made to establish both - with the perceptions of both the land managers and the residents being of potential interest.

- There are only faint hints in the literature that we have consulted about the role of **'mediators' or intermediaries** in shaping both the impacts and the expectations. But this may be an interesting line of enquiry. How do 'the planners' (in a broad sense), parish and other local councils, local consultation forums and partnerships, the local media, local civic leaders – and others - serve to shape the various impacts and expectations?

- There is considerable **variation in the degree to which the various sectors of land-based industry have been scrutinised** with regard to their local impact and local expectations. Agriculture and forestry have been much researched; conservation and recreation rather less so; and the equine industries hardly at all.

- It seems that much of the local social impact of these various industries appears to result as a **consequence of economic impact** – especially via the labour market and the spin-off locally of associated commercial initiatives. We would be unwise therefore to put 'economic' and 'social' into separate boxes and to neglect the former. At the same time, to spend too much time trying first to establish the nature of the various economic impacts is to risk a serious diversion of effort given the unequivocal social / community focus of this project.

- Finally, **social heterogeneity.** We must not anticipate that common shared views exist on these various matters, regarding either impact or expectations. We must hypothesise variation between our study areas, between the communities in those areas and between individual people and interest groups within those communities. How far that variance exists in practice will be an important conclusion to the research.

3. Research methods

3.1 Case study area selection process

This section details the final selection of case study areas. The first step was to identify those districts defined as 'rural', selecting all those classified as 'Rural 80', 'Rural 50' and 'significantly rural'. This resulted in 178 districts.

A shortlist of districts was then identified using proxy variables for 1) Community, 2) Production and 3) Protection and Consumption:

1) Community: The first part used data from the census. Two variables to indicate social cohesiveness were selected, namely the level of in-migration and commuting. All of the 178 districts were then classified into four categories for both of these 2 variables. Those in the 1 (low) category for both variables were placed in the 'low in-migration and commuting' category. Those in the 4 (high) category for both variables were placed in the 'high in-migration and commuting' category.

2) Production: As with community, variables based on official statistics were used, one from the Census and the other from the June Agricultural Census. The first looked at the change in agricultural land holding area between 1995 and 2003 and the second at the number of people employed in agriculture, forestry and hunting. As with the community, the 178 districts were placed into four categories from high (areas of high change in land use and employment) to low (areas of small land use change and low agricultural employment).

3) Protection and Consumption: Again two variables were selected. For consumption, the Census category for Hotels and Catering was selected and for protection, the presence of a landscape designation (National Park, AONB or Heritage Coast) was the key variable. In the latter case, the allocation into four categories was more subjective, but using data from the MAGIC website it was possible to determine that 1 (low) meant only a minor presence of designations up to 4 (high) where designation was dominant.

The initial screening produced a total of 36 districts across 6 cells according to the discussed criteria; the five districts that were selected are shown in bold in Annexe 2.

Case study locality selection

The following criteria were used to help select a diverse range of case study localities within the 5 chosen districts (South Shropshire, Wear Valley, Chichester, South Cambridgeshire and Staffordshire Moorlands). For each criterion, a variation in each was desirable:

- Land occupancy
- Equine presence
- Levels of afforestation
- Community size/pattern
- Sparsity (preferably 2 in the 'sparse' category)

These criteria enabled a specific list to be drawn up (See Annexe 3). A number of sources were used to provide information to inform the selection of localities; including web-based sources such as the MAGIC website, National Trust, Local Authorities, British Horse Society, Local Parish websites and Natural England

(Nature on the Web and Countryside Agency Open Access maps). Other sources included Ordnance Survey Maps, the Agricultural Census, Population Census and local Parish Plans, as well as local knowledge of the research team.

Phase 3 case studies

The first case study district selected was South Shropshire; within this area, a 'sparse' area was needed that was also within an AONB. The parish of **Clun** met these criteria as well as having significant afforestation.

The other 'sparse' area also within an AONB is Eastgate and Rookhope within the **Wear Valley** (County Durham). This is an upland area with Eastgate on the Main A road and Rookhope higher up the valley.

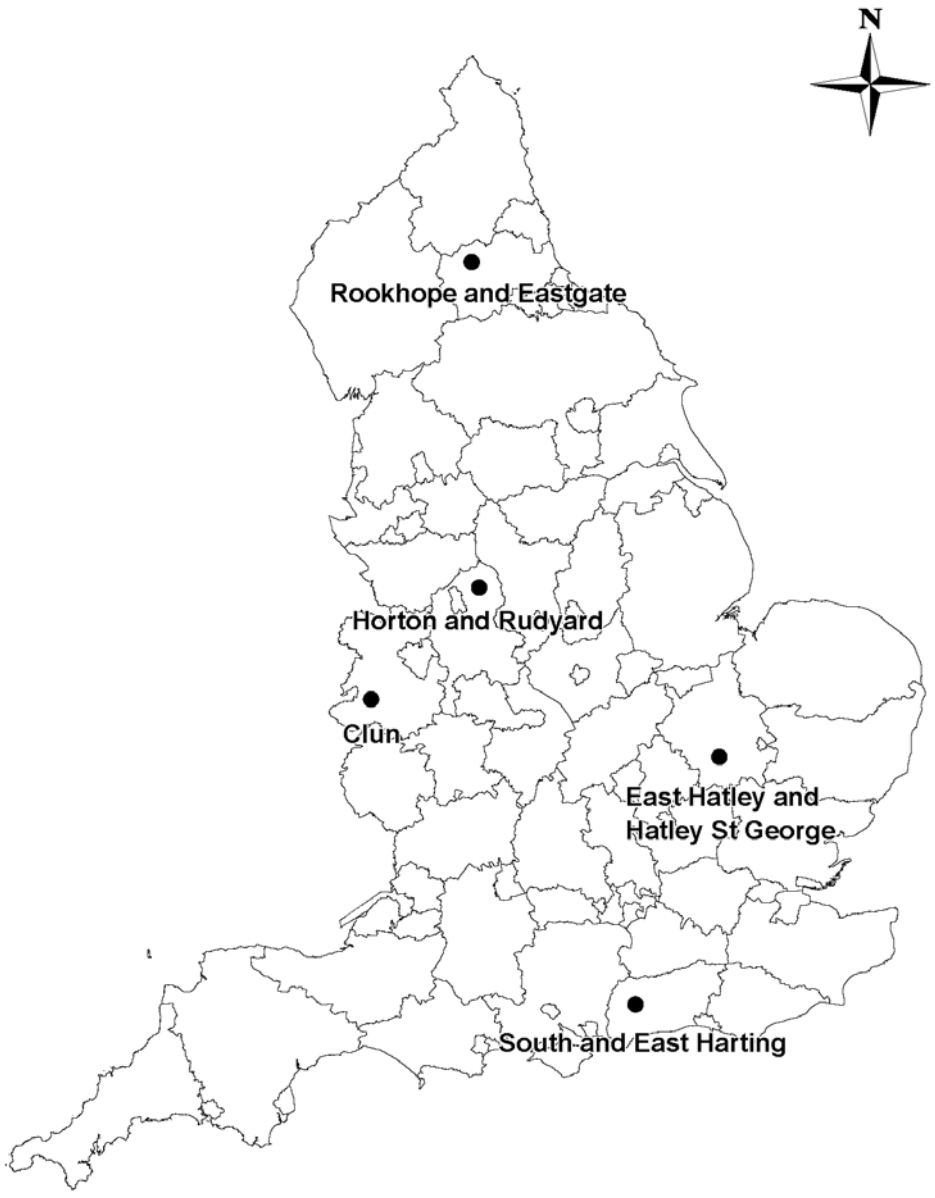
The **Chichester** district provides a mixture of highly productive agricultural land, existing AONB designation (and possible National Park) and close proximity to London. The community of South Harting was chosen as it sits on the South Downs Way with various National Trust properties.

The **South Cambridgeshire** district covers productive agricultural land without any designation, but with a heavy influence from the Eastern Counties' conurbations of Bedford and Cambridge. Here we selected a case study which included the small communities of East Hatley and Hatley St George.

The **Staffordshire Moorlands** is not an area of high agricultural productivity, but it provides an area of change in terms of land use and agricultural employment. The community chosen is Rudyard and the surrounding area. There is a high level of recreation in the area centred around the reservoir and some areas seem quite affluent in comparison to the main centre of Leek. There are a large number of small farming communities.

The location of all five case study communities in England is shown in Figure 3.1.

Figure 3.1 Location of the five case study communities in England



3.2 Introduction to ethnographic research

The tender brief specified that the principal approach employed in the study should be an ethnographic one. Hughes et al, (2000) define ethnography as the qualitative description of human social phenomena, based on fieldwork. Ethnographic research is a holistic method founded on the idea that a system's properties cannot necessarily be accurately understood independently of each other.

In order to collect data that unravels the complexities of human social phenomena and the systems associated with them, a range of research techniques falls under the umbrella of 'ethnographic research'. These include semi-structured interviews, one-to-one and group interviews, participant observation, informal conversations and analysis of text and visual information (for example through examining local newspapers etc) during a period of fieldwork. The core principle is that researchers become immersed in the communities under study, which implies that they stay within the study area, use local sources for their meals, such as local shops, pubs and restaurants and remain 'on-duty' throughout their time in the field.

3.3 Research methods

The methodology described in this section was tested and refined during Phase 2 in the parish of Clun and Chapel Lawn. Using an ethnographic approach and guided by a fieldwork checklist developed by the research team (See Annexe 4), two researchers spent ten days in the area during May 2006. The Clun fieldwork reinforced the importance of remaining flexible and allowing the researchers to adapt to the specific community in which they were working. Some important practical lessons were also learnt which were used to inform fieldwork in the other four case study areas. In particular, over-reliance on 'snowballing' to locate interviewees was found to be a potential problem as it is unlikely to lead to a cross section of the community. The case study also highlighted the importance of focusing on 'interaction' between land-based industries and rural communities, and not being sidetracked into the general dynamics of the community and land-based industries further than is necessary to establish context.

Incorporating the lessons learned in Clun, fieldwork was carried out in a further four case study areas during July and September 2006, with the two researchers each spending a total of twenty days in two study areas. The following three sub-sections provide further details about data collection and analysis in the five areas.

Scoping and Preparation

The base map of the respective parish was first examined and all relevant land designations, places of interest, pubs, churches, equine and recreation opportunities were annotated. Websites were searched to find suitable accommodation. In order to maximise the opportunity for making local contacts, researchers stayed mainly within local village communities; this provided greater opportunity to engage with more people and activities.

Information regarding community activities, contextual information and key informants was identified through websites (see Annexe 5 for the Clun example). In addition, contacts within organisations outside, but having an influence over, the parish were noted. In instances where electronic material was not available, efforts were made to obtain relevant information from written and other sources. Arrangements were made for local newspapers relating to the previous week to be

purchased and back copies of other relevant newsletters were requested. A box file was kept in which to store any relevant material gathered before and during the fieldwork.

The first communication with the community was generally a telephone conversation with the Chair of the Parish Council[4]. This allowed the nature and extent of the research to be explained and gave opportunity for researchers to be provided with further contacts and useful information.

While the fieldwork was not intended to be structured, it was thought necessary to make some appointments in advance; on average, a dozen appointments were made with key contacts prior to fieldwork commencing. A short project briefing explaining the background to the research and its aims and objectives (See Annexe 6) was sent to these contacts. A list of activities deemed useful to attend was also drawn up and, where necessary, the relevant individual was contacted and permission sought to participate.

As agreed with the project Steering Group, use of an interview schedule was not deemed appropriate given that it may compromise the ethnographic approach. Instead, a checklist of issues (See Annexe 4), which had arisen from the literature review and the email survey, was produced to help guide fieldwork. The researchers discussed the checklist in detail prior to going into the field. Particular attention was paid to how these issues related to the relevant interactions, impacts and expectations raised by the email survey and literature review. In using the ethnographic approach, flexibility was paramount; it was nevertheless helpful to have identified potential issues and to be able to make occasional reference to this broad checklist.

During the Fieldwork

On arrival, researchers walked extensively around the largest community in the parish, acquainting themselves with the layout, examining notice boards, noting features of interest and obtaining relevant leaflets and newsletters. Information already gathered was verified and anything additional was noted. Within the 10 days of fieldwork, a large proportion of the area of the community was covered, either by car or on foot, and some digital photographs were taken.

[4] In terms of informing people about the research, this is a delicate issue and one that needed to be given careful consideration. On the one hand, if too many people are informed about the research this may impact on the actual activities as the presence of what Silverman (2001) calls a 'foreign body' impacts on the data gathered. However, if too few people are informed and the researcher is asked what she is doing in the area, people may become suspicious. In order to reduce the risk of this, some key individuals in each area were informed of the research: the owner of the accommodation used during the research; the Chair of the Parish Council and the Church of England incumbent. The use of what Silverman (2001) calls 'situational ethics' is noted here; this is the process by which the researcher assesses a situation they find themselves in where relevant data may be gathered, but only if certain aspects of their interest in the data are withheld. As a bare minimum, the researchers were expected to reveal that they were 'doing some research into the expectations of rural communities on the land-based industries' or 'the impacts of the land-based industries on rural communities'. They did not offer explanations that were contrary to the information given to three individuals above. However, permission was always requested before any conversations were recorded.

Researchers participated in various village activities (see Annexe 5 for examples from Clun), the majority of which appeared to be pertinent. In less relevant cases, time was not wasted because it enabled more contacts to be made and researchers' faces became more familiar to local inhabitants. Opportunities were maximised to engage relevant people in conversation and numerous informal conversations took place at all times of the day and evening. Diaries and a profile of key informants and were kept for future reference.

Interviews were conducted with a specific but broad range of actors drawn from local civic and parish organisations, land-based industries and non-land businesses. Throughout the fieldwork, many further contacts were suggested to the researchers and a number of these were followed up (depending upon their relevance to the project and on the time available). Although this 'snowballing' technique was effective, care was taken that researchers were not constantly guided to the 'usual suspects'; it was necessary to step outside this circle and methods were sought to achieve this.

Many of the interviews were recorded to ensure that no information was missed and to allow useful quotes to be captured. Recordings were listened to in conjunction with writing up of notes, although no conversations were fully transcribed. Where recording took place, permission was always sought from the interviewee and confidentiality was assured.

Analytical methods

The recording of interviews enabled many quotes to be extracted and, although the tapes were not transcribed in detail, it gave researchers the opportunity to analyse the way in which they had conducted the interview, as well as the material itself. In some cases, researchers found time to write up interview and other notes whilst in the field.

On return from fieldwork, both researchers entered their notes under a set of preliminary headings relating to 'community', 'production' and 'protection/consumption' based interactions. A second draft was then produced which presented the findings under themes and sub-themes specific to that study area. This process helped to ensure that the research remained true to the conceptual framework and consistent across the five areas, while capitalising on the patterns and processes unique to each area afforded by the ethnographic approach.

4. Comparative research findings

Full and detailed findings from the in-depth ethnographic work in the five case study communities are given in Annexe 7. These self-contained sections contain detailed accounts of the research findings, presented according to the main themes specific to the community in question. While the material contained in the annexe provides the detailed narrative, description and explanation which befits the ethnographic approach employed in the study, this section aims to provide a comparative analysis of the research findings, looking across the five communities and drawing out the salient comparisons and conclusions regarding the main themes that have underlain the research. This is achieved in three main ways:

- by summarising some of the characteristic features of the different communities such as the varying nature of their land-based industries (LBIs), their facilities and other resources;

- by examining the impact of LBIs on community life in terms of local employment, evidence of local buying and selling, and involvement in the social and political activities of the communities; and

- by distilling the mutual expectations of LBIs and local residents, and exploring levels of integration and alienation in the different communities.

4.1 Characteristics of the case study communities

It should first be recalled that the five case study communities were selected according to a number of criteria which helped differentiate various types of community, economy and land use (see Section 3.1). In the first instance, a shortlist of rural districts was identified using proxy variables for 'community', 'production' and 'protection and consumption'. Case study communities were then selected from the short-listed districts according to the following criteria:

- Land occupancy
- Significant equine presence
- Significant afforestation
- Community size and pattern
- Sparsity

A full description of the case study community selection process is given in Section 3.

Table 4.1 summarises the essential socio-economic characteristics of the five communities studied (where necessary referring to specific settlements within those parishes where fieldwork was concentrated). Table 4.2 then presents a summary of demographic data for the five communities, more detail for which is given in the respective case study sections located in Annexe 7.

To elaborate, while both Hatley (Cambridgeshire) and Harting (West Sussex) represent quite wealthy communities with high rates of in-migration and commuting, Horton (Staffordshire) and especially Rookhope/Eastgate (Northumberland) have lower rates of both. Likewise, Hatley and Harting still retain economically strong farming activities, in contrast to the moorlands of Horton and former mining and quarrying activities of Rookhope and Eastgate. The fifth community, Clun (Shropshire), holds a middle position in terms of in-migration and commuting, as well as landscape designations and rural land uses. It has an active forestry sector (public

and private), low intensity farming, a good deal of recreation provision and one equine business.

Table 4.1 Some key characteristics of the five case study communities

Parish*	Social characteristics	Facilities and services	Dominant Land Based Industries
Clun (Shropshire)	Essentially a very small town. Mix of indigenous and newcomers. High % of elderly people	Wide range of services as befits a small town including shops, post office, 2 pubs, hotels and B&Bs, castle remains and doctor's surgery.	Active forestry sector. Low intensity farming. Whole area is AONB, Offa's Dyke trail passes close to the parish. Some equine activity
Harting (West Sussex) (includes South Harting)	The main settlement, South Harting, is a socially very active mixed community – a wide social spectrum. High % of elderly people. Very high % of owner occupation.	Good range of village services, and community social / cultural activities.	Farming is important – largely arable with some sheep and beef cattle. A growing equine sector. Much outdoor recreation including South Downs Way. Nature conservation and landscape designations
Hatley (Cambs) (consists of East Hatley and Hatley St George)	East Hatley is a small 'middle class' commuter settlement. Hatley St George is an estate village. Little interaction between the two.	East Hatley – no facilities. Hatley St George has small shop and post office and a playing field. Each has a medieval church.	Arable farming is important and productive. Includes a large private estate. No significant designations for landscape or conservation, apart from one small SSSI.
Horton (Staffs) (three hamlets including Rudyard)	Well established population - very few newcomers (i.e. resident for less than 15 years)	Neither Horton nor Rudyard has a real centre and no pub, shop or post office. There is a small primary school, village hall, church and two chapels.	Recreation and tourism centred on large scenic lake. Dairy and beef farming. Growing equine sector. Close to Peak District NP but no designations.
Stanhope (C. Durham) (includes Rookhope and Eastgate)	Very small settlements in a remote location. Rookhope and Eastgate constitute 'deprived' communities in many respects	Rookhope has various services including shop, post office and community-run pub. Eastgate has more basic provision	Small upland farms – largely sheep and beef cattle. Tourism and grouse shooting. Industrial heritage. Fells are protected conservation sites.

*Containing the particular subsumed settlements and communities relevant to the study.

The only other case study parish with a significant amount of woodland is Harting, although there are ancient woodlands in and around Hatley. Reflecting the movement in of commuters, Harting, Horton and, to a lesser extent, Rookhope have emerging equine (private and commercial) activities. In Hatley, a busy stud has now become a livery. And while Harting, Rookhope/ Eastgate and Clun are all protected by AONB status, there is much less landscape protection in Horton and Hatley, although both have conservation areas and SSSIs.

Located in different parts of rural England, the five rural communities are characterised by a number of other social and demographic differences as indicated in Table 4.2.

Table 4.2 Some demographic data regarding the case study parishes

Community*	Population	% pop over 75	% 2nd homes	% Unemployed	% employed in agric***
Clun	1065	10.6	7.1	2.5	18.0
Harting	1407	10.6	3.4	1.7	5.5
Hatley	205	4.4	3.9	2.1	4.0
Horton (including Rudyard)	778	8.1	5.7	1.7	11.4
Rookhope/Eastgate	425**	9.0	6.7	4.5	7.2
Rural England	**9.5m**[2]	**8.4**[2]	**1.9**[1]	**2.7**[1]	**3.3**[1]

*data for whole parish except as indicated
**Figure for entire parish of Stanhope is 4519
***Includes agriculture, hunting and forestry
Source: [1]CRC; [2]RERC (2005) (2001 figures)

Population size varies from over 1000 in both Clun and Harting to under 500 in Hatley, with the larger communities having higher numbers of retired people aged 75 and over. However, unemployment rates appear to reflect the nature of the rural economy rather than the size of community, with the highest unemployment rates (2.5% and 4.5%) to be found in Clun and Rookhope & Eastgate. Interestingly, these two communities also have the highest rates of second homes. This correlation is reinforced by Harting, which has one of the lowest unemployment rates (1.7%) and lowest proportion of second homes (3.4%).

Not surprisingly, the housing stock reflects the relative prosperity of the different communities. While Hatley St George is essentially an estate village, where only five houses are not owned by Hatley Park estate, both Harting and Horton are characterised by detached houses, listed buildings, converted farm buildings and relatively little new residential building (apart from a conversion to luxury apartments in Rudyard and a proposed new housing development in South Harting). There is a perceived lack of affordable housing in all five communities. The majority of the former council houses in South Harting are now in private ownership, but some are available for rent. In Clun, some low cost housing has recently been constructed and in Harting the new development will contain the statutory 30% affordable homes.

Similar comparisons can be drawn in terms of village facilities. The small market town of Clun, reflecting its importance for tourism, offers a range of facilities including a doctor's surgery, school, post office, B&B establishments, eleven shops, two coffee shops, two pubs and two community halls. At the other extreme, Horton with Rudyard and Gratton, despite having a hotel near Rudyard Lake, has no real centre and no pub, shop or post office. However, there is a primary school and chapel in Rudyard, and a church and village hall in Horton. In Harting, the other sizable community, there is a church, primary school, two halls (British Legion and Community), a general stores and post office, carpet shop, hairdresser and two pubs; in the neighbouring Nyewood, there is also a hall, which is used as a post office twice a week. The smallest parish, in terms of population, is Hatley; the estate village of Hatley St George has a small shop and post office (subsidised by the estate) and a church, whereas East Hatley is now a commuter settlement and has no facilities, other than a recently renovated (but unused) church.

4.2 The local impact of the land-based industries

Given the varying characteristics of the five case study communities, it is not surprising that the impacts of the main land-based industries (LBIs) on the respective communities are also varied. This section focuses on the five main LBIs specified for this research (agriculture, forestry, nature conservation, recreation and equine activities), but with occasional mention of mining and quarrying and also of shooting.

Impacts are examined in terms of three possible interactions. Given the ethnographic approach of the research, the evidence presented is not numerical but an account of the variations that our investigations highlighted. The three interactions are:

- employment by the LBIs;
- the local purchasing of LBI products; and
- the involvement of LBI owners and managers in the social and political life of the community.

1) The employment of local labour

As regards **farming** (including horticulture), the effects of agricultural restructuring, and the trend towards fewer and larger farm holdings in particular, have manifested themselves in a rather large reduction in the direct employment of local labour, although there has been an increasing reliance on contract labour. In many cases, employed labour has been removed and farms have become increasingly dependent on family labour and larger capital inputs. Thus, farming in Harting is dominated by three or four large and mainly arable farms, and in the Rookhope Valley the number of farms has also been significantly reduced. A similar pattern characterises the move from dairying to arable and grazing in Horton, and in the Less Favoured area of Clun there has been a reduction in direct employment by low intensity farming. However, while East Hatley is now essentially a dormitory village with little agricultural employment, the population of Horton and Rudyard is still quite closely linked to farming for employment, although very family oriented and, given the amount of grazing land for sale, not in a healthy economic state.

Estate employment warrants a separate mention, as the one real exception to the overall trend is the link between farming and the community at Hatley St George, a settlement dominated by the Hatley Park estate. A significant number of people from the village (seven) are employed on the estate, which is in clear contrast to a lack of agricultural employment in the sister village of East Hatley. There is also an estate (Uppark Estate) in the south of Harting parish owned by the National Trust, but unlike Hatley Park it has less impact in terms of employment of local people.

The case of Rookhope & Eastgate is also distinct in that those communities have suffered from major job losses in mining, quarrying and cement works. Traditional links to grouse shooting do, however, remain although due to the seasonal nature of the work, together with the shooting rights being owned by an shooting syndicate, the interaction does not go beyond employment and is considered aloof by locals.

Also in line with national trends, there is evidence of **farm diversification** within the case study communities and this has helped to generate some, albeit varying, levels of local employment. In Harting, there is organic meat production, some light industrial units and a ‘Pick Your Own’ (PYO) farm just to the north of the parish, all of which involve the employment of both permanent and casual labour. In Horton, Clun

and Rookhope, diversification relates more to tourism and recreation enterprises, involving other sections of the local economy as well as farms, ensuring that it is *rural* diversification rather than farm diversification *per se*. In Rookhope and Eastgate, for example, there are three well-established static caravan parks on farmland, and the employment of gamekeepers and others involved in grouse shooting might count as farm diversification. However, the coast-to-coast cycle path that passes through the village has given rise to a number of tourism and recreation enterprises that are not associated with farming.

However, the dominant type of land-use change overall relates to **equine activities**, both private and commercial. While equine businesses are noted in Clun, Harting and Hatley St George (there is a horse livery on Hatley Park estate), a significant trend in most communities has been the selling off of smallholdings to incomers who keep horses for their own recreational purposes. It would appear that sole ownership of horses generates little direct employment, but there would be a positive benefit from associated requirements, such as farriers, horse feed and bedding, veterinary and other equine equipment. Clearly in liveries and other equine businesses the direct employment is significant. It is noted that the activity tends to offer a separate social sub-group for interested people, which was evident in Horton where those with horses mix among themselves in much the same way that farmers do at the livestock market. However, this seems not to have happened in Rookhope where those involved in recreational equine activities appear to mix in quite well and whose renovated holiday cottages have provided some employment.

Other LBIs that generate some local employment include the large sand quarry, private gardens and light industrial units in the parish of Harting, the recreational activities associated with Rudyard Lake (Horton), the Offa's Dyke and South Downs Way National Trails (the latter being also a bridleway) and the Shropshire Way in Clun, tourism and forestry activities also in Clun and the Killhope mining museum near Rookhope. However, the woodlands in Clun and Harting are generally managed by Forest Enterprise officers who do not live in the local communities and employ few, if any, local people. Similarly, nature conservation leads to relatively little direct employment of local people, though it often draws upon local volunteers. However, many local farmers and other landowners have joined agri-environment schemes and thus contribute to employment.

2) The local purchasing of LBI products

Another way of analysing the impacts of LBIs relates to the purchase of their products in the local communities. Again, the results demonstrate considerable variation between the five communities, from relatively little local buying and selling in Rookhope (some eggs and honey), Horton (farmer supplying a butcher in another parish, and two horse owners attempting to source supplies locally) and Hatley (some produce from neighbouring villages in the estate shop) to more active commercial linkage in Clun and especially in Harting. Interestingly, the local vicar of Rookhope wants to introduce a farmers' cooperative to sell Weardale lamb and beef, using the AONB as a form of branding, and has some support among the remaining farmers.

While such variations may reflect the wealth and character of the different communities, the situation is more complex than that. Clun, the second most deprived of the five parishes, has been 'reinventing itself through employment in tourism, services and small-scale industry'. This is leading to an increasing attempt to source and sell locally (e.g. meat, eggs, honey, cakes) by local butchers, pubs and B&B establishments. In Harting, the least deprived of the case study areas, the local

economy is buoyant and characterised by considerable local buying/selling. This includes a successful pick-your-own (PYO) business just outside the northern boundary of the parish, a local organic meat producer, another selling local lamb directly to consumers, local selling by a micro-brewery at Nyewood and the monthly Harting Market, where surplus local produce (of LBIs and individuals) is sold at what is very much a social event. Harting Store also has important economic linkages with most of the above enterprises. These observations would therefore suggest that there has been producer-driven local purchasing in areas trying to develop local tourism and consumer-driven local purchasing in more affluent areas.

The prevalence of local marketing also reflects the type of farming. Local marketing of meat products occurred in Clun, Horton and Hartley, but in Rookhope and Eastgate it had ceased when a local abattoir had to stop slaughtering for sale. More recently, a farmer in Eastgate had considered selling his meat locally, but was put off by the paperwork and hygiene restrictions. In areas of intensive arable agriculture, such as Hatley, there is less scope for local buying and selling. Conversely, in areas where agricultural production is more varied there is likely to be more potential for local marketing. In so far as local marketing increases social interaction, it may be that social interaction is less likely in areas of intensive arable farming.

3) The Involvement of LBI owners and managers in the social and political life of the community

In relation to the involvement of LBI owners and managers in the political and social life of the case study communities, the general trend is towards a declining involvement in local governance, most notably the parish council. Yet again, variations are detectable. There is little involvement of LBI personnel in the parish council in Harting (two LBI-related members recently resigned because of the need now for a declaration of interests) and in the parish of Stanhope, where only two of the 14 councillors are farmers and where the settlements of Rookhope and Eastgate each have just one representative. In Harting, a Parish Design Statement was prepared by a committee of twelve, of which only two had LBI connections, and these were clearly tenuous. However, despite the decline this does not necessarily mean that LBI owners and managers are under-represented, rather that there are less of them as a proportion of the total population.

Moreover, farmers and other LBI personnel are often involved in other elements of local governance, both formal and informal. For example, a number are active on the wider South Downs Joint Committee which impacts on Harting. In Hatley, the involvement of LBI personnel on the parish council is also declining (three of the five councillors are from East Hatley and they have no farming connections), but the owner of Hatley Park estate and one of his workers are still members. Here, there is an increasing attempt by newcomers to control local activities and governance. Indeed, East Hatley has a 'villages committee' (seven residents) that does not involve either retired farmers or former social housing residents, possibly because they are not interested in the activities organised.

In the other two communities, Clun and Horton, LBIs continue to be well integrated into formal parish activities. Two farmers and a forester are on the Clun parish council, just as six of the nine councillors in Horton and five of the nine members of the Horton village hall committee have LBI connections. Yet significantly, LBIs are not so well represented on the Horton Action Group and the Rudyard Lake Trust, the latter's trustees comprising mainly people from outside the parish due to the recreational attraction of the open water. In all of the five cases studies, there were examples of LBI owners and managers helping informally in the social life of the

community, often because they had the relevant equipment and knowledge. This is appreciated and acknowledged by the non-LBI members of the communities.

Where there were disputes or complaints about representation on local bodies, whether they be formal bodies such as parish councils or more informally the running of local activities, they tended to concern the relative roles of incomers and locals, rather than that of land managers and non-land managers. In general, the local-incomer split seemed more significant to local people than any split between land managers and the rest of the community.

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4.3 Mutual expectations, integration and alienation

The case study research was also interested in the mutual expectations of the LBIs and local residents. This section therefore considers social relationships in the various local communities, with an emphasis upon commitment, integration and potential conflicts.

To appreciate differences in these regards, it is useful first to summarise the social make-up and 'sense of community' in the different communities. Here one can draw comparisons between the vibrant nature and social integration of Harting, Clun and Hatley St George; the generally stable condition of Horton and Rudyard (where LBIs still make a significant contribution to the community); the declining influence of LBIs and the high deprivation and isolation in Rookhope and Eastgate; and the sense of alienation in East Hatley.

The parish of **Hatley** in Cambridgeshire, comprising Hatley St George and East Hatley in close proximity, demonstrates these extremes very well. Hatley St George is a harmonious estate village, with a village green and cricket club but no members from the neighbouring village of East Hatley. It has a good mix of different people, including the transient private rented sector living in Hatley Park estate housing. In contrast, East Hatley, apart from a handful of retired farmers and the occupants of four social housing bungalows who feel alienated from the community, is now essentially a middle class commuter settlement with a number of detached houses but no real meeting places or sense of community. There is clear tension between the two villages, based on differing attitudes to the countryside, with residents of East Hatley attempting to control the parish council and villages committee, as well as complaining about the estate's control of the village green.

However, while there is no real direct involvement in environmental matters by residents, there is relatively little conflict within each community – other than some alienation between land managers and the local community in **East Hatley** relating particularly to farm traffic and crop spraying. It would certainly seem that some of the middle class incomers in East Hatley are not 'in tune' with countryside matters and are now trying to impose their attitudes on community life. A good example is provided by the conflict generated by the recent refurbishment of St Dennis' church, which had been derelict for a long time and was designated a nature reserve with bats and other wildlife. Those (mostly incomers) wishing to keep it as a nature reserve, after losing the argument, then wanted to keep the grass in the churchyard long for conservation reasons, which displeased some other (mostly local) residents.

As in Hatley St George, the relationship between LBIs and the local community in both South Harting and Clun with respect to access, tourism development and community cohesion, is generally a very positive one. **South Harting** comprises a wide range of people, from wealthy city gents and retired military/professional people to the self-employed and indigenous population, many of whom live in the former

council houses. It is a very active and sociable community, with a lunch club (monthly), friendly society, horticultural society, Harting market (once a month) and annual street fete. Despite class differences, there is a good deal of social interaction in this parish and, although LBIs do not take a lead in community activities, they are involved in many events and in the social life of the community. For example, some LBIs are happy to offer voluntary leisure/education activities to the school and at other events such as the organisation of a barbecue at the fete. The church remains a focus of interest and socialisation for farmers in South Harting, and newcomers are well integrated into community life. No real conflicts are apparent; for example, over the conversion of buildings to light industry and other diversification activities, and the National Trust permits access to woodland and offers licences for hang gliding. As in many rural communities, there are occasional moans about farmers, crop spraying and the state of bridleways, just as some LBIs expressed concerns over dogs, vocal pressure groups and the lack of understanding of land management by the public. However, these do not appear to lead to any serious alienation.

Likewise, in the vibrant and inclusive community of **Clun**, there is a generally harmonious relationship between LBIs and the community. Farmers are still involved in the retained fire service and in the local school, the young farmers club meets in one of Clun's pubs, and the chair of Clun Show is a farmer. There is a particularly good relationship between LBIs and residents concerning access and recreation in the parish's large wooded areas and there is also recognition of their mutual dependence with regard to the development of tourism and the service industry in Clun. Some traditional cultural activities are maintained (e.g. the Clun Show) and others have developed, for example a Green Man festival which is popular with tourists (but not with many locals) despite not being historically significant. The indigenous population has, with one or two exceptions, been accepting of incomers because they renovate old buildings and help to run clubs and societies. Interestingly, it is some of these incomers, rather than the local people, that are now resistant to further change in the community. Whilst there was some feeling amongst farmers that the community, particularly incomers, did not understand and appreciate farmers and farming, the community members interviewed, including incomers, generally professed respect and sympathy for farmers.

Rising house prices, second homes and the feeling of alienation by some of the older farmers were expressed as concerns during the fieldwork in Clun, together with issues relating to off-road bike riders and deer poachers. Nevertheless, there seems to be a good attachment to the community by all; the landscape, wildlife, facilities and sense of safety and community are valued, just as there is recognition that the continued success of tourism is dependent on sympathetic land management.

The two remaining communities, **Horton** and **Rookhope & Eastgate**, clearly contrast in many ways but are both undergoing substantial change. Rudyard (in the parish of Horton) consists mainly of long-term residents who are still closely linked to LBIs for employment, many of them going back generations with a majority having lived there for over 15 years. The lack of a village centre limits social interaction and there has been in-migration of people into vacated smallholdings and lakeside properties; these have created their own social sub-group, based around a common interest in horses or boating activities. Farmers devote time and energy to parish committees and events and are welcoming of incomers, even if the latter do not particularly want to mix with farmers and local residents. There are no real conflicts between farmers, smallholders and people with equine interests, especially as some of the latter have leased land back to the farmers. However, despite the relative harmony many 'for sale' signs were noted during the fieldwork as farmers continue to sell off their land; this suggests that the contribution of LBIs to the social fabric of the

community will continue to change and that the future of farming in this area is particularly uncertain.

Both **Rookhope** and **Eastgate** are quite remote communities within the parish of Stanhope and this remoteness helps to reinforce the relationship between locals and incomers. However, in addition to their size differences, the two communities also differ in terms of community cohesion and integration. **Eastgate** is a sociable village and farmers still meet in the local pub; they are central to the community and, along with others, help to organise a number of social events. In contrast, the classic industrial settlement of **Rookhope** is struggling and appears to be in decline. While there is obvious pride in Rookhope's industrial heritage and some deeply rooted interconnections between land and community, the village retains some areas of private land and has a number of second homes and new residents. Although house prices are quite low, they are rising and there is a lack of affordable houses for local people. Despite monthly coffee mornings, an active bowling club and the re-opening of Rookhope Inn (largely through the efforts of incomers), there is some conflict and resentment between locals and incomers.

However, the greatest levels of resentment and mistrust in both communities concern the District Council proposals for some tourism development (an 'eco-village') on the site of the cement works in Eastgate. There is considerable resistance to this among the local people,. Concern is also apparent with regard to open access to the fells (given fears for safety on account of the old mine shafts) and there appears to be little interest and discussion among residents about conservation, despite the village's location within an AONB, although recently introduced walks and interpretation leaflets may change this.

4.4 A sector-by-sector perspective

Before drawing some final conclusions, it is useful to complement the comparisons between the five communities (i.e. place by place) with a brief comparison of the main LBIs which have featured in this study (i.e. sector by sector). This is limited to a distillation of the most salient findings for each of the five LBI sectors examined.

Agriculture and Horticulture

- A generally declining source of employment for local people, but increasing diversification may impact on local economies.
- Generally reduced levels of farmer involvement in local political and cultural life, but variations exist and this was not as profound as expected. (In any case, local representation is likely to reflect the social and demographic make-up of contemporary rural England).
- Informal, ad hoc contributions to community life by farmers were noted.
- Some evidence of the (re)integration of farming into the local economy, for example through direct marketing.
- In some places, smallholdings are being bought by hobby farmers / equine enthusiasts with excess land rented back to farmers.
- Some sources of conflict (mainly relating to farming practices and public access) between farmers and rural communities, but fairly superficial and not necessarily indicative of LBI-community relations.

Forestry

- Again, generally a picture of declining local employment.
- A number of forest managers were found to be located outside the areas, which has implications for integration with, and understanding of, local communities.

- But often the managers are keen to control forests and woodland in a way that is wildlife friendly and conducive to local access. This promotes active engagement, and empathy, with the local community.
- There tends to be considerable local interest in how forest / woodland is managed, which suggests good potential for social forestry initiatives.
- Some woodland activities, such as shooting, may be under-represented, due to the time of year at which the fieldwork took place.

Recreation

- There are many examples of the increased recreational and tourism use of rural land with positive economic consequences.
- Tourism is an increasingly important diversification activity underpinning the land-based sector and rural communities; thus, a mutual dependence on tourism represents an important link between the land-based economy and rural communities.
- However, in some areas there is a mistrust of tourism, and its promotion by outside interests, as a source of quality jobs and tourism can be a source of conflict within communities.
- Open access appears to have had only a limited social and economic impact locally.
- In some areas dog walking is of increased significance, with dog walkers becoming often more assertive of their rights.
- ROW issues can cause conflict (albeit fairly superficial) between land managers and local residents.

Nature Conservation

- Management activity tends to involve local people in a voluntary capacity, although they are likely to be from a neighbouring town rather than from within the parish.
- Some but not all land-managers perceive a (potential) conflict between increased public access and wildlife needs.
- Many local residents see a significant conflict between modern farming methods and the needs of nature conservation.
- Despite the increased value of the countryside in terms of nature conservation, this appears to have little local economic interaction (although there is likely to be some additionality through tourism and agri-environment schemes).

Equine industries

- These activities are growing in the countryside, but in a largely ad-hoc fashion.
- Often managed on a 'DIY basis', they seem to generate relatively little direct local employment, except through liveries and other equine businesses.
- However, it is likely that indirect employment is generated in restoring properties and through the servicing of the equine activity, an activity that often complements industries associated with the land-based sector such as feed merchants.
- The integration into the local community of those involved seems to vary within the case studies. In some areas, a separate equine network develops.

4.5 Some general conclusions

The selection of the five case study communities according to their different combinations of LBIs (which in turn have variable involvement in production, protection and consumption activity) and to different rates of in-migration and commuting, led to the examination of contrasting rural communities in different parts of upland and lowland England. The selection procedures also ensured variations in

terms of unemployment, deprivation and age structure across the five case study areas. And, while the selection of the research method - a quasi-ethnographic approach using wholly qualitative techniques - allowed an in-depth appreciation of the perceptions and concerns of a wide range of residents and LBI stakeholders in these five communities, it has not permitted any serious quantification of the phenomena in question.

These two factors – the deliberate selection of a small number of highly differentiated communities for detailed study and a method that placed priority on understanding perceptions and the underlying processes at work - mean that care must be taken in any attempt to generalise widely from the evidence presented here. Nevertheless, **three overarching conclusions** appear valid: First, farming and forestry have in recent years had a generally declining impact on the local labour market. (But, to an extent that we have not attempted to quantify, this decline may well have been offset by a growth of jobs linked to conservation, equine activity and, especially, to tourism and recreation). Second, in terms of their significance in a local governance context, LBI personnel have generally exhibited declining importance, although this partly reflects their overall significance in the demographic structure of contemporary rural communities. Third, the picture varies considerably from place to place, reflecting a host of factors including the nature of the local LBIs, local social structures and norms, and the influence of key individuals.

Moving on to the key channels of impact under scrutiny, as far as **local employment** is concerned, the research has shown that, while jobs in farming, mining and forestry are clearly declining, LBIs retain importance as employers in some communities and new employment has been created through farm diversification and the growth of 'consumption activities' such as equine activity and other types of recreation. The nature and scale of such diversification are important in the context of local employment impact. The increased provision of tourism and recreation facilities, the restoration of redundant buildings, the creation of small business units in farm locations and the adding of value to local raw materials have all served to offset, to some degree, the typical decline of land-based employment. However, the research has not been able to demonstrate whether the net employment effect of these developments is positive or negative in the case study communities.

With regard to the **local sale of produce** by the various LBIs, a variable picture again emerges. Nowhere are such sales a dominant element of the local economy, but many examples were found of modest sales of farm produce, often linked – as in Clun and South Harting - to a growing tourism industry and to the general level of vibrancy in the community; some places more than others are developing a preference for quality local produce. The type of land-based production also affects the likelihood of local marketing, with some types of produce being easier to market locally than others. There was very little purchasing of local raw materials by land managers (especially farmers), usually because the inputs required were not available locally,

Turning to the changing **role of LBI owners and managers in village life**, representation on the parish council does seem to remain important in the fairly stable, but dispersed, parish of Horton where the majority of inhabitants have some LBI connection, but it is declining in parishes where there is a wider mix of inhabitants (e.g. Clun, Harting) and/or increasing conflict (e.g. East Hatley, Rookhope). Nowhere is there the kind of overwhelming dominance of local politics by LBIs that there has reportedly been in the past. The reasons for such declining involvement are various; they include a sheer decline in the numbers of owners and managers of LBIs living locally, the reduced time available to such people as more

and more labour is shed, and the growing role played by newcomers with little or no direct connection with the land and a strong preservationist ethic – a state of affairs that appears to have alienated many hitherto politically active farmers.

That said, we encountered many examples of farmers and other LBI personnel making substantial contributions to social, cultural and educational activity in and around their parish, generally in an informal capacity. But, while many 'do their bit' in a generous way, few, it seems, are prepared to take a lead in organising community events, as may well have been the case in the past.

In terms of **mutual expectations**, and the related issues of either integration or alienation of LBIs and local residents, it appears that the more integrated and vibrant communities experience less conflict and alienation. Thus, despite the expected complaints about crop spraying, noisy farm machinery and the state of bridleways, there is a high degree of social integration and cohesion in Harting, Clun, Eastgate and the special case of the estate village of Hatley St George. However, in less integrated communities like East Hatley and, to a lesser extent, Horton and Rookhope, many LBI managers do feel some alienation, even if the reasons for this are different. Thus in Rookhope conflict, distrust and a resentment of external influences reflect the decline of a formerly vibrant community based on mining and quarrying, and is often most keenly felt by older people with hitherto close links to the land whether through farming or mining. In East Hatley, it relates more to the in-migration of wealthy, middle class people who are not willing to accept the old ways of the estate village of Hatley St George and its former dominance of parish activities.

Focusing specifically on the apparent **expectations that local residents place on the LBIs** operating in their vicinity, several points may be made:

- Many expectations relate to countryside access and a concern that traditional privileges in that regard be respected (for example regarding access on foot, with or without dogs, in traditionally favoured locations).
- Other expectations concern a wish that the residents' peace, quiet and freedom from excessive farm traffic, smells and noise be respected, coupled with a dominant anti-development ethic (which is often shared by the LBI managers). Such views tend to be more strongly held or expressed by relative newcomers with only limited knowledge of modern LBIs.
- Those in local businesses (for example, running B&Bs, pubs and tourism facilities) expect the LBIs to continue to manage the area's landscape and associated wildlife in a way that is sympathetic to the needs of tourism, itself a source of mutual dependence by land-managers and rural communities.
- Finally, we have found little evidence of local residents regretting the declining involvement of LBI personnel in local governance – but there is a suggestion that local people do expect local land managers to be helpful in the delivery of local social, cultural and educational activities.

Overall, we suggest that any 'fault-line' between LBIs and their local communities is often less real or significant than are divisions within those 'communities' – most notably those between newcomers and established residents long exposed to the needs and activities of the LBIs. As one respondent put it, "misunderstandings between locals and newcomers are perhaps more significant than relationships between the community and the land-based sectors". Further, while there has been a decline in the influence of several LBIs as employers and community leaders, this decline has been rather less – and certainly more geographically variable - than first thought. And there are suggestions that LBI - local community relationships may be

reinvigorated to the extent that wider forces of demand and supply encourage more local selling and buying of agricultural produce.

Despite some clear patterns and processes that have emerged from the study, caution needs to be exercised in making generalisations about the various contributions of LBIs to rural communities in England. They have a varied impact, depending on the unique circumstances of each local rural community, and it would certainly seem that social integration is better achieved, and alienation minimised, in some communities rather than others. Although levels of community vibrancy and wealth obviously contribute to this situation, the true reasons run deeper and can reflect historical legacies as well as the personalities of certain key individuals.

Considering the changing impact of LBIs on their local communities more broadly, we can identify four factors discussed in this report that would benefit from **further study**. First, the nature and local variability of increasing farm and other rural diversification may well determine the picture of local impact over future years. This could also be extended to cover the change in land use that rural areas are experiencing and the need to understand how the increasing elements of LBIs will impact on the management of the countryside. Second, as one aspect of the 'consumption countryside,' the socio-economic impacts of equine activity can introduce a new social network resulting in fragmented links with local communities and other LBIs. Third, the drivers of local production and consumption need to be better understood; findings from this study would suggest that there has been producer-driven local purchasing in areas trying to develop local tourism and consumer-driven local purchasing in more affluent areas, but this requires quantification and empirical testing. Finally, the increased role of environmental protection across LBIs, its underpinning of the consumption aspects of the rural economy and its relation to local sense of identity need to be more fully understood.

5. Policy issues

In order to help identify policy issues associated with the research findings presented in this report, a dissemination event was held on January 16th 2007 involving a number of stakeholders who took part in the email survey during Phase 1 of the study.

Following a presentation of the research findings, the research team went on to link these to two policy agendas, namely:

- Localism– relating broadly to the 'double devolution agenda' whereby powers and responsibilities are pushed down from national to local and very local (i.e. parish and community group) levels. Important questions in this regard are:

    - In matters relating to LBI-community interactions, is there a need to encourage very local decision making and the transfer of some powers to local people?
    - And how do we stimulate inclusive dialogue in local communities? People appear only to come together when there is a major local issue to discuss, but how can a more inclusive culture of co-operation be fostered?

- The importance of local economic linkages and networks; relating broadly to the 'reconnecting producers and consumers' agenda. Within this growing agenda, which is concerned with promoting the development of local supply chain linkages and income retention within local economies, we need to question:

    - Whether we should be making local economies more self-sufficient and conducive to growth, and if so how?
    - And how can we ensure that social impacts of this are positive?

In a subsequent discussion, stakeholders identified a number of issues relevant to policy development in this area, and below we attempt to crystallise these as an agenda for discussion within CRC, and beyond. These issues and associated suggestions which policy advisers can consider fall into four main areas: Dialogue and Interaction; Participation; Education and Information; and Local Economies and Employment.

A Dialogue and Interaction

The issues:

1. Misunderstandings often arise between people, groups and projects due a lack of mutual awareness. Conflicts between LBIs and rural communities often arise due to such misunderstanding.
2. A lot of misunderstandings are due to a lack of communication. Can policy be developed to improve communication and dialogue between groups at the local level?
3. What are the pre-conditions for effective interaction; is there anything that can be done to foster or reinforce this pre-condition?
4. In community development terms, the prospect of something useful happening from the product of one's efforts can often stimulate greater local effort; LEADER type initiatives are a good example and there may be examples of good practice worth drawing on.

5. It is important to recognise, and foster, the relationship between formal and informal elements in the community; small rural communities often have dominant characters and very few potential group representatives.
6. There is often a general wish for a 'good' community life, but people have a diverse range of goals and needs which require communication, prioritisation and management. Local contexts and personalities of key individuals make the application of generic policies difficult.
7. There need to be mechanisms for hearing the opinions of those who do not have sufficient time to participate in community life. Farmers and other land managers often fall into this category.
8. There was concern in some of the case studies about major environmental issues such as climate change and energy consumption and some contributions suggested that there might be scope for encouraging very locally-based discussion about such matters.
9. Specific LBI-related issues should not be treated as separate; dialogue between groups on integrated issues is crucial. Such dialogue should help foster mutual understanding of LBI and rural communities, but also an understanding and appreciation of the future of LBIs and the benefit they provide to the community and its economy.
10. Local shops and post offices, like pubs, churches and schools, can be very important with respect to social interactions in a community. This needs to be more widely recognised.

Policy suggestions

1. Develop material that will encourage and enrich very local seminars on issues such as energy consumption, bio-fuels and responding to climate change in rural communities. Issues such as bio-fuels are becoming an increasingly important policy (and media) agenda, but they may be a source of considerable conflict, as well as opportunity, in rural communities.
2. Promote the formation of very local working groups with a 'community chest' providing small pump-priming grants to develop projects which bring LBIs and local residents together. Community development is often a by-product of attempts to make specific things happen in the community.
3. Widen the debate on rural service provision to encompass issues of social integration and interaction. This could be incorporated into a new wave of Parish Plans.
4. Extract potential elements of good practice relevant to community-LBI links from successful LEADER programmes and projects, as well as other schemes such as the land-based and project-based schemes operated by Defra. (Such good practice could be part of the 'material' referred to in suggestion 1 above).

B Participation

The issues

1. The increasing numbers of wealthy incomers need to be encouraged to participate and invest in the local community; their skills are crucial.
2. There is also a need to better use the skills, knowledge and incomes of land owners and managers in the community process.
3. One or two dynamic people are needed to act as catalysts and many communities need input from land-based personnel.
4. Local Access Forums can be useful as a medium for facilitating discussion between land managers and users as they can produce visible outputs. But

they need a good chair as well as being seen to achieve something. Further, the Local Authority geographical scale may be too large for some where interaction is needed at the local or very local level.

5. Policy makers need indicators of social interaction between land-based industries and rural communities to help monitor long-term trends and to examine and monitor spatial variations in land-based-community interaction and vibrancy.

Policy suggestions

1. Foster the setting up of, for example, Village Trusts, or Community Land Trusts, where people can invest in their local communities (e.g. for facilities, social housing initiatives, amenity land), and participate in local activities. Such initiatives will have to come essentially from within communities rather than being funded by central/regional government.
2. Issue guidance to ensure that Parish Plans are extended to embrace wider rural areas, and their environmental issues and actors, and do not just focus on local villages. Community plans need to extend both geographically and in terms of the issues they aim to encompass. They also need to be built upon informed input on wider rural/environmental issues.
3. Promote a very local level link to Local Access Fora through both representation and interest.
4. Develop indicators which may be of use in monitoring the degree of LBI-community interaction in given localities across different spatial scales. (See Annexe 8 for an initial attempt at this, including a discussion of possible indicators and secondary data sources).

C Education and Information

The issues

1. There is a need for more education and awareness about food and farming issues, as well as agri-environment programmes and LBIs more generally, in rural communities.
2. The studied communities generally showed a high level of interest in forestry and other local communities may appreciate a greater level of information regarding forestry practices and woodland management – perhaps through local newsletters etc. This could extend to embrace other LBIs, including farming.
3. Rural dwellers need to be better informed about their local area, and its produce, particularly as the local food agenda develops.

Policy suggestions

1. Promote and encourage participation among local communities and visitors in the Year of Food and Farming Education through national, regional, local and very local advertising. Ensure that this initiative fully encompasses all of the opportunities provided by LBIs.
2. Encourage the wider use of parish magazines as a vehicle for advertising local produce and land management by LBIs, and information likely to be of interest to local communities.

D Local Economies and Employment

The issues

1. The extent to which local rural economies can be fostered is highly contextual and in many areas likely to be finite; rural economies cannot change their geography and their location near, or far from, urban areas and other large settlements.
2. Supermarket deliveries may make it difficult to foster local buying and selling.
3. LBIs have an important role to play in developing and maintaining the local skills base. They often draw upon traditional rural skills, e.g. walling, hedge-laying as well as construction and renovation skills and materials.
4. A balance needs to be struck between the need for more self-contained or 'localised' economies and communities, and that for individual businesses which operate in a globalised economy. Businesses need to be able to grow and that sometimes requires their relocation to more accessible or economically dynamic areas or the re-development of the existing site; both of these can be complex and sensitive issues of negotiation within the planning system.

Policy suggestions

1. Incorporate into the advice given to people setting up businesses in rural areas specific guidance on how to 'localise' business activities.
2. Encourage/facilitate businesses to advertise goods and services in parish magazines to increase local sales.
3. Set up local working groups to examine ways in which local communities can support and encourage the local economy.

The above issues and associated policy suggestions reflect the complexity of issues encompassed by the research findings. They also pay heed to the need for locally derived and integrated policies which respect the differences between local areas and the unique contexts that surround them. Indeed, the variation revealed by the research indicates the potential difficulties of implementing national policies that would meet the needs of very different communities. In this way, the geographical level at which they should be addressed requires further consideration by policy makers. Nevertheless, although by no means conclusive, these suggestions on how policy may be taken forward provide a useful addition to the debate on the social contribution of land-based industries to rural communities.

In concluding, we would like to highlight the following:

- The need for devolution to the local (but not necessarily parish) level.
- The advantage of LEADER style 'community chests' and similar 'pots of money' being made available to land-managers and the community. These may also help integrate more distant managers such as foresters and wildlife trusts.
- The need for education about land-based industries, and their future development, as well as support and advice for land managers prepared to offer site visits.
- The potential benefits of economic and policy support to encourage local buying and selling. For example, this could be a consideration in the vexed area of whether or not to encourage/permit superstore developments in rural areas.

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