



Department
for Environment
Food & Rural Affairs

Sixty-eighth Annual Report to Parliament on Local Authority Smallholdings in England

1 April 2017 – 31 March 2018

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Agriculture Act 1970**



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Introduction

As required under the 1970 Agriculture Act¹ (1970 Act) this report provides statistical details to Parliament on the land let as smallholdings by Local Authorities across England for the financial year 1 April 2017 to 31 March 2018.

Local authority smallholdings are often known as council farms, or county farms. These council farms are generally capable, when farmed under reasonably skilled management, of providing full-time employment for not more than two people, including the occupier. They provide opportunities for people to be farmers on their own account and are an important route into farming for new entrants.

Alongside providing new entrants with a foothold on the farming ladder, council farms deliver wider public benefits such as educational visits, agri-environmental measures, and local food in addition to providing a revenue stream for Local Authorities. Many of the benefits that council farms can deliver are demonstrated in the case study profiling Norfolk County Councils Farm Estate on page 24 of this report.

Local Authorities are encouraged to take a holistic asset management approach to their council farm estates to ensure maximum economic, environmental and social benefits are delivered. A useful framework for Local Authorities to follow is set out in the 'Rural Estate Asset Management Planning Good Practice Guidance'² prepared by the Association of Chief Estates Surveyors and the Tenancy Reform Industry Group.

The information in this report is compiled from an annual survey by the Chartered Institute for Public Finance and Accountancy (CIPFA) which includes data from 43 Local Authorities that let land as smallholdings and responded to the CIPFA survey. This report includes statistical information on the area and number of small holdings held by Local Authorities, and details on tenancies and the financial position of the smallholding authorities.

We would like to thank CIPFA as well as all the local authorities who have kindly provided the statistical information presented in this report and Norfolk County Council for providing the case study information.

¹ The 1970 Agriculture Act defines smallholdings authorities as county councils however many unitary authorities also let land as smallholdings. Hence it was decided in 2015 that it was important to include data from these authorities where possible to extend the coverage and value of this report.

² http://www.aces.org.uk/images/editor/TRIG_REPORT-FINAL-WEBpdf.pdf

Statistical information on smallholdings provided by Smallholdings Authorities

All of the 43 smallholdings authorities approached (21 unitary authorities and 22 county councils) submitted data and let land as smallholdings. However, in some cases, these submitted data sets were incomplete. The data presented in this report include only that provided by the reporting smallholdings authorities; no estimates have been made for incomplete data.

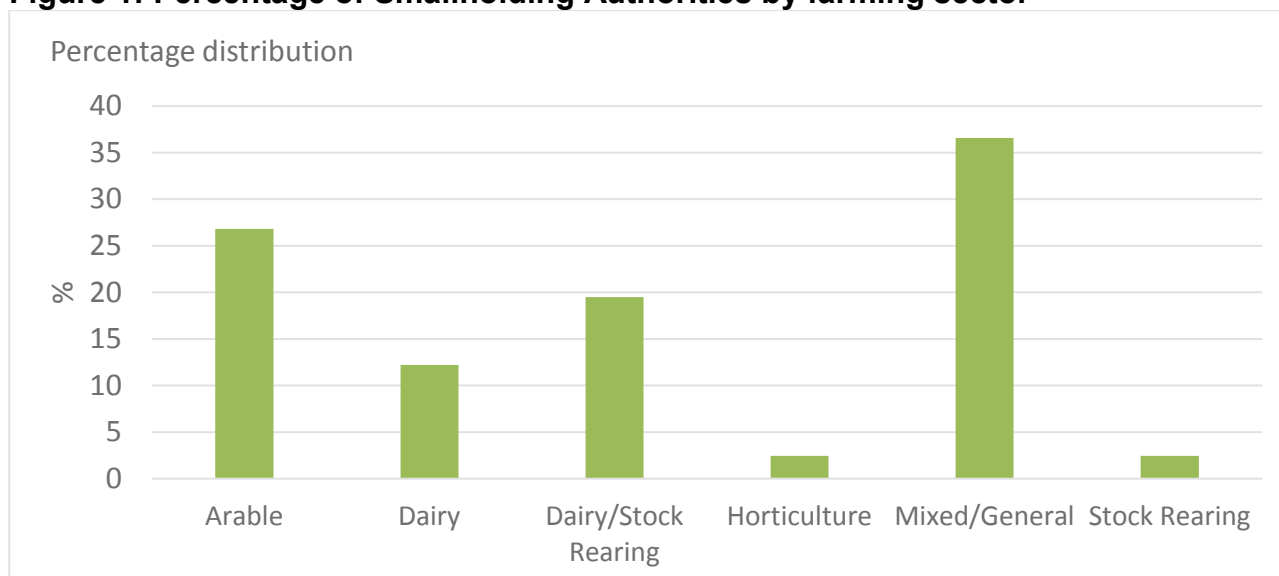
Total area of smallholding land

As at 31 March 2018, the total area of land held by the 43 reporting smallholdings authorities in England was 89,020 hectares (for the whole estate), of which 83,600 hectares were let as smallholdings (for 40 reporting authorities). **Table 1** provides figures for the area of smallholdings held by smallholdings authorities. The land area reported as let for smallholdings remains similar to the last financial year. However, it should be noted that the 40 reporting authorities are not an identical sample to last year and therefore, the change in land area over the year cannot be concluded from this. The acquisition and disposals data indicates a decrease in the area of land held by smallholdings authorities of 2.8% (see Acquisitions and disposals section) which may be a better indicator of land area change during the year.

Farming sector of smallholding authority

Each smallholdings authority classifies themselves to a farming sector based on the predominant farming activity (by area) carried out within that Authority. The distribution (as at 31 March 2018) is shown in Figure 1. The most common sectors were Arable and Mixed/General farming and the least common was Stock Rearing.

Figure 1: Percentage of Smallholding Authorities by farming sector (a) (b)



(a) Only for those 41 smallholdings authorities that provided a farm business sector.

(b) Each smallholdings authority is classified to one farming sector based on the predominant farming activity (by area) carried out within that authority. The farming sector definitions were established and agreed as a result of consultations between the data provider (CIPFA) and the smallholdings authorities themselves.

Numbers of smallholding lets

The 40 smallholdings authorities that provided data reported that they owned and let 2,444 smallholdings as at 31 March 2018. **Table 2** provides a breakdown by each smallholdings authority.

Rent due for smallholdings

For those 38 smallholdings authorities that provided data, a total of around £23 million in rent was due for smallholdings as at 31 March 2018. **Table 3** provides figures for the rent due by each smallholdings authority. **Table 4** shows average rent/hectare values by farm business sector³ for those smallholdings authority farms where full data was available. Higher rent per hectare values were achieved for those authorities that classified themselves as Dairy and Dairy/Stock Rearing (around £310 per hectare) with lower values for those that were classified as Mixed/General Authorities (£224 per hectare). Of the total area of land let as smallholdings, the average rent per hectare was £284 per hectare.⁴

Acquisitions and disposals

Table 5 provides figures for land acquired and disposed of by each smallholdings authority in 2017/2018: a total of 188 hectares were acquired by 3 smallholdings authorities and a total of 2,773 hectares were sold or otherwise disposed of by 24 smallholdings authorities. The acquisition and disposals data indicates a decrease in the area of land held by smallholdings authorities of 2.8%.

Number of smallholding tenants

For the 42 smallholding authorities that provided data, there were 1,959 tenants as of the 31 March 2018. During 2017/2018, 76 tenancies were granted⁵ and 176 tenancies were terminated⁵. A total of 37 tenancies were granted to new tenants⁶, there were 8 internal promotions, 2 tenancies ended due to transfer to another estate and 27 tenancies were ended due to the tenant leaving the estate in order to seek other opportunities.

Type of smallholdings tenancy

There were a total of 483 lifetime tenancies⁷, 284 retirement tenancies⁸, 1162 Farm Business Tenancies⁹, as well as 497 secondary lettings^{10,11}. Figures for each of the

³ For those Smallholdings Authorities that submitted sector information and had complete Rent and Area information; 36 of the Smallholding Authorities provided this information.

⁴ For those 36 smallholdings authorities that provided complete rent and area data.

⁵ Note that this data was available for 42 smallholding authorities.

⁶ Lettings to first time entrants to the individual estate, i.e. those who have not previously occupied a smallholdings authority farm.

⁷ Lettings made prior to the Agricultural Holdings Act 1986.

⁸ Lettings for tenants that may be required to vacate holdings when they reach the age of 65 or prevailing retirement age, i.e. lettings made under the provisions of the Agricultural Holdings Act 1986, but before the Agricultural Tenancies Act 1995.

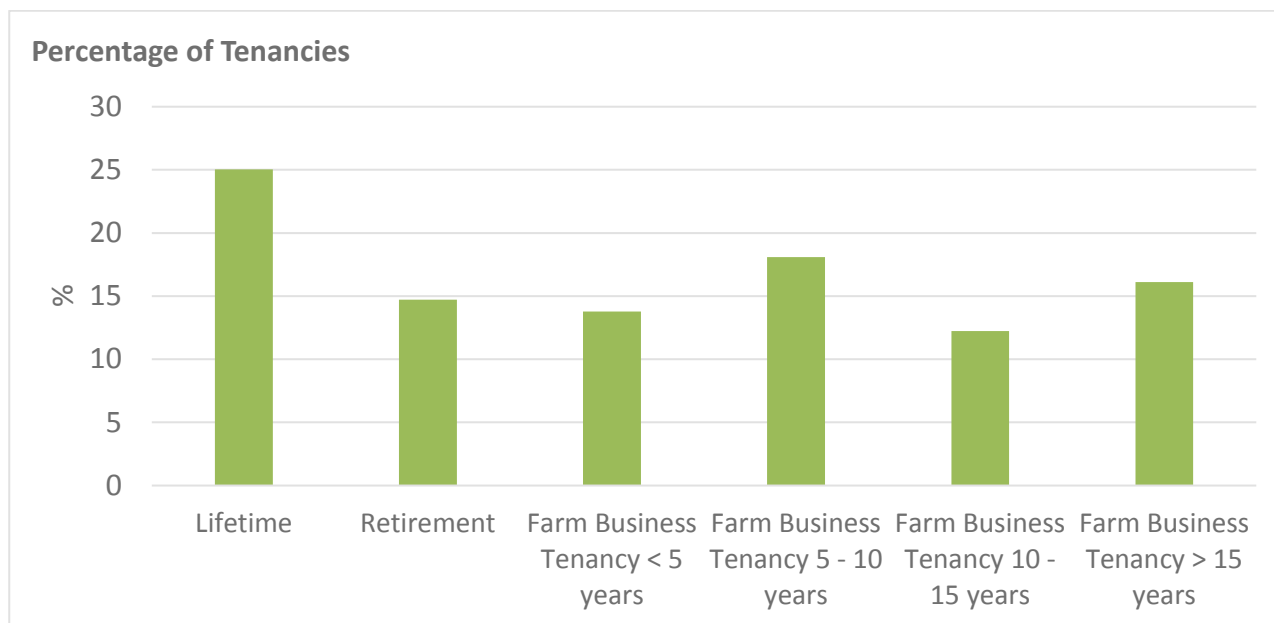
⁹ All principal lettings entered into under the provisions of the Agricultural Tenancies Act 1995, relating to the original term of the current letting.

¹⁰ Secondary lettings are those holdings that are managed as an integral part of the principal holding and let additionally on a Farm Business Tenancy to a tenant of the principal holding. Note that this data was available from only 36 smallholdings authorities.

¹¹ These particular totals are underestimated due to an absence of total tenancy breakdown information for 2 of the smallholding authorities.

authorities are provided in **Tables 6, 7 and 8**. Farm Business Tenancies represent 60% of the agreements however these can vary in duration. Figure 2 demonstrates the type of tenancy agreements in place. Lifetime tenancies were the most common (25%); 14% were Farm Business Tenancies that run for less than 5 years and 28% were Farm Business Tenancies that run for more than 10 years.

Figure 2: Type of smallholdings tenancy (a) (b)



(a) Equipped and bare land farms only.

(b) For 41 out of the 43 Smallholdings Authorities that provided tenancy information.

Financial position of authorities

The total revenue from land held by smallholdings authorities in England in the year ending 31 March 2018 showed a total operational income of £27,285,800 against a total operational expenditure of £10,705,200, giving an operational surplus of £16,580,600. Total non-operational income was £499,800, against a total non-operational expenditure of £723,600, giving a non-operational deficit of £223,800. The revenue account net surplus was therefore £16,356,800. **Table 9** summarises the total revenue account for land held by smallholdings authorities for the year ended 31 March 2018.

Table 1: Area of smallholdings land held by Smallholdings Authorities as at 31 March 2018

Smallholdings Authority	Equipped farm let area Hectares	Bare land farm let area Hectares	Agricultural licence let area Hectares	Smallholdings let area^(a) Hectares
Bedford	130	30	70	230
Brighton & Hove	3,190	830	60	4,080
Buckinghamshire	1,150	190	120	1,460
Cambridgeshire	11,250	1,940	0	13,190
Central Bedfordshire	2,020	220	**	2,240
Cheshire East	1,850	0	70	1,920
Cheshire West and Chester	1,120	0	50	1,170
Cornwall	4,140	110	0	4,250
Cumbria	70	70	30	170
Devon	3,620	40	0	3,660
Dorset	2,210	120	130	2,470
Durham	**	**	**	**
East Riding of Yorkshire	1,830	290	330	2,460
Essex	70	10	0	80
Gloucestershire	2,710	320	10	3,040
Hampshire	3,370	1,110	180	4,660
Hartlepool	0	0	80	80
Herefordshire	190	20	0	210
Hertfordshire	1,420	180	330	1,940
Hillingdon	500	70	130	690
Leicestershire	2,290	60	370	2,730
Lincolnshire	6,160	1,440	0	7,600
Medway	0	20	30	50
Milton Keynes	200	20	0	220
Norfolk	5,030	1,460	100	6,590
North Lincolnshire	40	30	0	70
North Somerset	100	90	0	190
North Yorkshire	**	**	**	**
Nottinghamshire	**	**	**	**
Oxfordshire	40	310	1	351
Shropshire	400	0	120	520
Somerset	990	370	30	1,390
South Gloucestershire	330	60	0	380
Staffordshire	2,940	350	50	3,340
Suffolk	3,480	580	910	4,960
Surrey	650	130	20	800

Table 1: Area of smallholdings land held by Smallholdings Authorities as at 31 March 2018

Smallholdings Authority	Equipped farm let area Hectares	Bare land farm let area Hectares	Agricultural licence let area Hectares	Smallholdings let area^(a) Hectares
Swindon	620	0	60	670
Warwickshire	1,870	130	**	2,000
West Berkshire	120	0	0	120
West Sussex	150	170	30	350
Wiltshire	1,630	300	130	2,060
Worcestershire	680	330	150	1,160
York	0	60	0	60
Total	68,560	11,480	3,560	83,600

(a) Smallholdings let area = equipped farm area + bare land farm area + agricultural letting area (describing e.g. grazing licences, lettings under a year, etc.)

Key

** data not available

Table 2: Number of smallholding lets held by Smallholdings Authorities as at 31 March 2018

Smallholdings Authority	Number of equipped farm lets	Number of bare land farm lets	Number of agricultural licence lets	Number of smallholdings lets^(a)
Bedford	6	4	4	14
Brighton & Hove	15	19	7	41
Buckinghamshire	25	18	9	52
Cambridgeshire	135	45	0	180
Central Bedfordshire	38	19	**	57
Cheshire East	59	0	7	66
Cheshire West and Chester	33	0	7	40
Cornwall	91	7	0	98
Cumbria	1	7	12	20
Devon	68	6	0	74
Dorset	45	7	9	61
Durham	**	**	**	**
East Riding of Yorkshire	53	61	30	144
Essex	2	2	0	4
Gloucestershire	69	25	8	102
Hampshire	41	27	19	87
Hartlepool	0	0	2	2
Herefordshire	6	1	0	7
Hertfordshire	45	12	18	75
Hillingdon	9	6	25	40
Leicestershire	67	3	34	104
Lincolnshire	108	105	0	213
Medway	0	1	2	3
Milton Keynes	5	3	0	8
Norfolk	101	85	25	211
North Lincolnshire	1	7	0	8
North Somerset	4	9	0	13
North Yorkshire	**	**	**	**
Nottinghamshire	**	**	**	**
Oxfordshire	3	25	2	30
Shropshire	18	0	8	26
Somerset	29	12	8	49
South Gloucestershire	6	8	0	14
Staffordshire	82	19	12	113
Suffolk	69	27	47	143
Surrey	34	12	11	57
Swindon	13	0	5	18

Table 2: Number of smallholding lets held by Smallholdings Authorities as at 31 March 2018

Smallholdings Authority	Number of equipped farm lets	Number of bare land farm lets	Number of agricultural licence lets	Number of smallholdings lets^(a)
Warwickshire	52	22	**	74
West Berkshire	2	0	0	2
West Sussex	12	17	3	32
Wiltshire	34	19	30	83
Worcestershire	28	40	7	75
York	0	4	0	4
Total	1,409	684	351	2,444

(a) Number of smallholding lets = number of equipped farm lets + number of bare land farm lets + number of agricultural lets (e.g. grazing licences, lettings under a year, etc.)

Key

** data not available

Table 3: Rent due for smallholdings by Smallholdings Authorities as at 31 March 2018

Smallholdings Authority	Rent due for equipped farms (£)	Rent due for bare land farms (£)	Rent due for agricultural licences (£)	Rent due for land let as smallholdings^(a) (£)
Bedford	36,500	2,700	10,500	49,700
Brighton & Hove	490,100	160,300	16,800	667,200
Buckinghamshire	557,800	35,300	55,200	648,300
Cambridgeshire	3,526,800	508,500	0	4,035,400
Central Bedfordshire	**	**	**	**
Cheshire East	599,300	0	17,300	616,700
Cheshire West and Chester	374,400	0	18,200	392,500
Cornwall	1,253,700	34,500	0	1,288,100
Cumbria	6,000	8,500	4,600	19,100
Devon	1,040,800	8,000	0	1,048,800
Dorset	665,200	27,000	32,400	724,600
Durham	**	**	74,800	74,800
East Riding of Yorkshire	346,200	100,400	75,000	521,600
Essex	32,500	3,800	0	36,300
Gloucestershire	811,300	61,200	3,200	875,700
Hampshire	467,300	68,600	24,800	560,800
Hartlepool	0	0	31,700	31,700
Herefordshire	46,200	3,400	0	49,600
Hertfordshire	495,400	45,600	81,700	622,700
Hillingdon	**	**	**	**
Leicestershire	796,900	11,800	87,900	896,600
Lincolnshire	1,896,000	454,200	0	2,350,200
Medway	0	3,000	7,000	10,000
Milton Keynes	58,900	1,900	0	60,800
Norfolk	1,490,000	412,600	32,000	1,934,600
North Lincolnshire	8,000	5,400	0	13,400
North Somerset	36,800	18,900	0	55,700
North Yorkshire	**	**	**	**
Nottinghamshire	**	**	**	**
Oxfordshire	**	**	700	700
Shropshire	115,700	0	17,900	133,600
Somerset	**	**	**	**
South Gloucestershire	63,400	10,600	0	74,000
Staffordshire	1,036,600	81,800	17,500	1,135,900
Suffolk	908,400	234,000	282,600	1,425,000
Surrey	293,900	21,800	27,800	343,400
Swindon	201,300	0	5,400	206,700

Table 3: Rent due for smallholdings by Smallholdings Authorities as at 31 March 2018

Smallholdings Authority	Rent due for equipped farms (£)	Rent due for bare land farms (£)	Rent due for agricultural licences (£)	Rent due for land let as smallholdings^(a) (£)
Warwickshire	636,400	29,700	**	666,200
West Berkshire	27,700	0	0	27,700
West Sussex	126,500	51,100	1,400	179,000
Wiltshire	466,600	49,700	14,800	531,200
Worcestershire	200,700	61,400	20,700	282,800
York	0	11,400	0	11,400
Total	19,113,200	2,527,400	961,900	22,602,500

(a) Rent due for land let as smallholdings = rent due for equipped farms + rent due for bare land farms + rent due for agricultural licence farms. Rent due refers to what could be collected if every farm paid (see the "Glossary of terms" section for a definition of "rent from holdings - operational account").

Key

** data not available

Table 4: Rent/hectare values for smallholdings farms, expressed in terms of the Authority's farm business sector, as at 31 March 2018^(a)

Authority Sector	Rent/hectare due for equipped farms £/hectare	Rent/hectare due for bare land farms^(c) £/hectare	Rent/hectare due for agriculture licences £/hectare	Rent/hectare due for land let as smallholdings £/hectare
Arable ^(b)	304	294	294	302
Dairy	322	206	233	311
Dairy/Stock Rearing ^(c)	316	219	247	310
Horticulture ^(d)	836	302	51	514
Mixed/General ^(e)	237	162	228	224
Stock Rearing ^(f)	**	**	700	700
All tenancies	294	241	260	284

- (a) Only for those smallholdings authorities that provided a business sector as well as complete rent and area data (i.e. 36 out of 43 authorities).
- (b) Not including Central Bedfordshire (no rent values quoted) and Nottinghamshire (no rent or land values quoted).
- (c) Not including Hillingdon and Somerset (no rent values quoted)
- (d) West Sussex only.
- (e) Not including Durham (no rent or land values quoted).
- (f) Oxfordshire only; rent and land area values only for agricultural let farms (although land areas are quoted for all three let farm types).

Key

** data not available

Table 5: Total area acquired and disposed of by Smallholdings Authorities between April 2017 and March 2018^(a)

Smallholdings Authority	Land acquired Hectares			Land disposed of Hectares		
	Newly acquired	Formerly leased	Total	Sold/exchanged	Leased land	Total
Bedford	0	0	0	16	0	16
Brighton & Hove	0	0	0	0	0	0
Buckinghamshire	0	0	0	37	0	37
Cambridgeshire	2	0	2	0	0	0
Central Bedfordshire	8	0	8	0	0	0
Cheshire East	0	0	0	58	0	58
Cheshire West and Chester	0	0	0	105	0	105
Cornwall	0	0	0	51	0	51
Cumbria	0	0	0	109	0	109
Devon	0	0	0	8	0	8
Dorset	0	0	0	33	0	33
Durham	0	0	0	0	0	0
East Riding of Yorkshire	0	0	0	1	0	1
Essex	0	0	0	0	0	0
Gloucestershire	0	0	0	82	0	82
Hampshire	0	0	0	0	0	0
Hartlepool	0	0	0	0	0	0
Herefordshire	0	0	0	1,698	0	1,698
Hertfordshire	0	0	0	0	0	0
Hillingdon	0	0	0	0	0	0
Leicestershire	0	0	0	6	0	6
Lincolnshire	0	0	0	12	0	12
Medway	0	0	0	0	0	0
Milton Keynes	0	0	0	88	0	88
Norfolk	178	0	178	37	0	37
North Lincolnshire	0	0	0	14	0	14
North Somerset	0	0	0	6	0	6
North Yorkshire	0	0	0	0	0	0
Nottinghamshire	0	0	0	0	0	0
Oxfordshire	0	0	0	2	0	2
Shropshire	0	0	0	95	0	95
Somerset	0	0	0	237	0	237
South Gloucestershire	0	0	0	0	0	0
Staffordshire	0	0	0	53	0	53
Suffolk	0	0	0	12	0	12
Surrey	0	0	0	0	0	0

Table 5: Total area acquired and disposed of by Smallholdings Authorities between April 2017 and March 2018^(a)

Smallholdings Authority	Land acquired Hectares			Land disposed of Hectares		
	Newly acquired	Formerly leased	Total	Sold/exchanged	Leased land	Total
Swindon	0	0	0	11	0	11
Warwickshire	0	0	0	0	0	0
West Berkshire	0	0	0	0	0	0
West Sussex	0	0	0	0	0	0
Wiltshire	0	0	0	1	0	1
Worcestershire	0	0	0	0	0	0
York	0	0	0	0	0	0
Total	188	0	188	2,773	0	2,773

(a) Total areas, comprising freehold (the number of hectares let as council farms/rural estates and owned by the authority) and leasehold (the number of hectares let as council farms/rural estates but not owned by the authority) areas.

Key

** data not available

Table 6: Number of smallholding tenancies, any change since 2017, as well as any granted for the first time or terminated by Smallholdings Authorities between April 2017 and March 2018^(a)

Smallholdings Authority	Number of tenants in 2018	Change since 2017	Number granted	Number terminated
Bedford	10	-1	0	1
Brighton & Hove	34	1	2	1
Buckinghamshire	43	-4	7	11
Cambridgeshire	180	-1	9	10
Central Bedfordshire	49	0	3	3
Cheshire East	53	-1	3	4
Cheshire West and Chester	29	-4	0	4
Cornwall	98	-1	9	10
Cumbria	8	-4	0	4
Devon	72	-3	3	6
Dorset	51	-1	0	1
Durham	30	0	0	0
East Riding of Yorkshire	85	-3	5	8
Essex	4	0	1	1
Gloucestershire	74	-3	0	3
Hampshire	68	-3	2	5
Hartlepool	0	0	0	0
Herefordshire	5	-34	0	34
Hertfordshire	57	0	0	0
Hillingdon	11	0	0	0
Leicestershire	69	0	2	2
Lincolnshire	213	-10	13	23
Medway	1	0	0	0
Milton Keynes	8	0	0	0
Norfolk	114	-5	2	7
North Lincolnshire	8	-3	0	3
North Somerset	13	0	1	1
North Yorkshire	**	**	**	**
Nottinghamshire	22	0	0	0
Oxfordshire	25	0	2	2
Shropshire	18	-4	1	5
Somerset	39	-5	0	5
South Gloucestershire	12	0	0	0
Staffordshire	88	-3	1	4
Suffolk	96	1	3	2
Surrey	44	0	1	1
Swindon	13	-1	0	1
Warwickshire	67	0	3	3
West Berkshire	2	0	0	0

Table 6: Number of smallholding tenancies, any change since 2017, as well as any granted for the first time or terminated by Smallholdings Authorities between April 2017 and March 2018^(a)

Smallholdings Authority	Number of tenants in 2018	Change since 2017	Number granted	Number terminated
West Sussex	29	0	0	0
Wiltshire	45	-1	2	3
Worcestershire	68	-7	1	8
York	4	0	0	0
Total	1959	-100	76	176

(a) Equipped and bare land farms only.

Key

** data not available

Table 7: Specific details of smallholding tenancies granted and ended by Smallholdings Authorities between April 2017 and March 2018^(a)

Smallholdings Authority	Granted	Internal promotion	Ended	
	New tenants ^(b)		Transfer to other estates	Leave estate for other opportunities
Bedford	0	1	0	0
Brighton & Hove	0	0	0	0
Buckinghamshire	4	**	**	**
Cambridgeshire	7	2	0	0
Central Bedfordshire	**	**	0	0
Cheshire East	1	1	1	0
Cheshire West and Chester	0	0	0	1
Cornwall	5	2	0	0
Cumbria	0	0	0	0
Devon	3	0	0	4
Dorset	0	0	0	1
Durham	**	**	**	**
East Riding of Yorkshire	0	0	0	0
Essex	0	0	0	0
Gloucestershire	0	0	0	0
Hampshire	2	1	0	2
Hartlepool	0	0	0	0
Herefordshire	0	0	0	17
Hertfordshire	0	0	0	0
Hillingdon	0	0	0	0
Leicestershire	1	0	0	0
Lincolnshire	0	0	0	0
Medway	0	0	0	0
Milton Keynes	**	**	**	**
Norfolk	2	0	0	0
North Lincolnshire	**	**	**	**
North Somerset	1	0	0	0
North Yorkshire	**	**	**	**
Nottinghamshire	**	**	**	**
Oxfordshire	2	0	0	0
Shropshire	1	**	**	**
Somerset	0	0	0	0
South Gloucestershire	0	0	0	0
Staffordshire	1	1	0	1
Suffolk	1	0	0	0
Surrey	1	0	0	0
Swindon	0	0	0	0
Warwickshire	3	0	0	0
West Berkshire	**	**	**	**

Table 7: Specific details of smallholding tenancies granted and ended by Smallholdings Authorities between April 2017 and March 2018^(a)

Smallholdings Authority	Granted New tenants^(b)	Internal promotion	Ended	
			Transfer to other estates	Leave estate for other opportunities
West Sussex	0	0	0	0
Wiltshire	2	0	1	1
Worcestershire	0	0	0	0
York	0	0	0	0
Total	37	8	2	27

(a) Equipped and bare land farms only.

(b) Lettings to first time entrants to the individual estate, i.e. those who have not previously occupied a smallholdings authority farm.

Key

** data not available

Table 8: Breakdown of the number of smallholding tenancies held between April 2017 and March 2018^(a)

Smallholding Authority	Lifetime^(b)	Retirement^(c)	Farm Business Tenancies^(d)	Secondary lettings^(e)
Bedford	2	3	5	4
Brighton & Hove	15	0	19	0
Buckinghamshire	18	3	22	4
Cambridgeshire	41	20	119	101
Central Bedfordshire	14	0	35	49
Cheshire East	22	12	19	3
Cheshire West and Chester	14	4	11	1
Cornwall	15	18	65	13
Cumbria	3	0	5	0
Devon	12	9	51	31
Dorset	6	6	39	9
Durham	**	**	**	**
East Riding of Yorkshire	28	21	36	29
Essex	0	0	4	0
Gloucestershire	13	19	42	20
Hampshire	11	11	46	16
Hartlepool	0	0	0	**
Herefordshire	1	1	3	3
Hertfordshire	15	4	38	16
Hillingdon	7	0	4	2
Leicestershire	11	17	41	25
Lincolnshire	73	26	114	0
Medway	0	0	1	0
Milton Keynes	0	0	8	**
Norfolk	16	9	89	72
North Lincolnshire	4	0	4	**
North Somerset	3	0	10	0
North Yorkshire	**	**	**	**
Nottinghamshire	3	3	16	**
Oxfordshire	2	0	23	0
Shropshire	6	4	8	8
Somerset	13	14	12	8
South Gloucestershire	1	3	8	0
Staffordshire	7	10	71	12
Suffolk	33	21	42	40
Surrey	15	0	29	0
Swindon	2	0	11	6
Warwickshire	13	11	43	6
West Berkshire	1	0	1	**
West Sussex	7	3	19	7

Table 8: Breakdown of the number of smallholding tenancies held between April 2017 and March 2018^(a)

Smallholding Authority	Lifetime^(b)	Retirement^(c)	Farm Business Tenancies^(d)	Secondary lettings^(e)
Wiltshire	13	7	25	8
Worcestershire	23	25	20	4
York	0	0	4	0
Total^(f)	483	284	1,162	497

(a) Equipped and bare land farms only.

(b) Lettings made prior to the Agricultural Holdings Act 1986.

(c) Lettings for tenants that may be required to vacate holdings when they reach the age of 65 or prevailing retirement age, i.e. lettings made under the provisions of the Agricultural Holdings Act 1986, but before the Agricultural Tenancies Act 1995.

(d) All principal lettings entered into under the provisions of the Agricultural Tenancies Act 1995, relating to the original term of the current letting.

(e) Secondary lettings are holdings managed as an integral part of the principal holding and let additionally on a Farm Business Tenancy to a tenant of the principal holding.

(f) These total values are underestimated due to an absence of total tenancy breakdown information for 7 smallholdings authorities.

Key

** data not available

Table 9: Total revenue account for land held by Smallholdings Authorities between April 2017 and March 2018

OPERATIONAL ACCOUNT (see glossary for definitions of the terms used)^(a)	
Income	£
Rent from Holdings	24,232,000
Other Rents	1,914,700
Other Income	1,139,100
TOTAL	27,285,800
Expenditure^(b)	
Repairs and Maintenance	5,613,900
Rents, Rates, Annuities and Water Charges	1,010,800
Net Tenant Rights Valuations	388,900
Estate Management	2,900,900
Other Expenditure	790,600
TOTAL	10,705,200
OPERATIONAL ACCOUNT SURPLUS	16,580,600
NON-OPERATIONAL ACCOUNT^(a)	
Indirect Income^(b)	
TOTAL	499,800
Expenditure	
Central Support Costs ^(b)	349,500
Other Expenditure	374,100
TOTAL	723,600
NON-OPERATIONAL ACCOUNT DEFICIT	-223,800
REVENUE ACCOUNT NET SURPLUS	
Operational Account Surplus	16,580,600
Non-Operational Account Deficit	-223,800
Net Surplus^(b)	16,356,800

(a) For some smallholdings authorities, Operational/Non-Operational account information was not supplied.

(b) This information was not supplied by every smallholdings authority.

Case Study: Norfolk County Council farms appoint four enterprising tenants.

This year's case study illustrates the success of Norfolk County Council's Farm estate in providing a crucial ladder into farming. The estate currently extends to around 16,700 acres of farmland across the county of Norfolk and provides a means of entry into farming for people wishing to farm on their own account as well as opportunities for existing farm businesses on the estate to grow and expand.

The Norfolk County Council has set out its commitment to the County Farm Estate by enshrining within the Council's constitution the retention of the Estate and through its management has made it their general aim to:

- Provide a 'gateway' into agriculture for people to farm on their own account promoting the integration of good environmental and farming practices whilst ensuring a financial return to the County Council;
- Judiciously improve it, where appropriate, and support its tenants whilst seeking to grow the operational surplus that it generates to support the other functions of the Council; and,
- Sustain rural communities by supporting the living, working countryside and providing opportunities for greater public access and understanding of agriculture and the countryside.

The farm businesses on Norfolk's estate range from the growing of traditional arable crops such as wheat, barley and potatoes, through to more unusual uses, including the production of essential oils, care farms, pheasant rearing, selling rare breed meat, plant nursery, and horse liveries.

During 2018 Norfolk County Council appointed tenants using a rigorous selection process to four farms, which included its latest acquisition to the County Farms estate; the 440-acre Bank House Farm. Two existing tenants were able to progress to larger farms, creating opportunities behind them as they vacate their current farms, and new entrants have the chance to get established and farm on their own account.

The four successful tenants' experiences are detailed below.

Welney Farm (75 acres) - let to **Brett Robinson**

Brett (25) is a new entrant to the council farm estate and young farmer. He is following in a long family tradition of working on the land and will become the seventh generation in his family to do so. His proposal for this farm is to establish a traditional arable rotation coupled with developing an apple juice business.

Bank House Farm (440 acres) - let to **Emorsgate Seeds Ltd**

Emorsgate Seeds began on the County Farms estate with just five acres in the early 1980s.



Linzi James and Laurie MacIntyre, part of the team at Emorsgate Seeds Ltd

Over the last 30 years the business has steadily grown and their promotion to Bank House Farm will give them the acreage to drastically increase the scale of their business and provide additional employment opportunities. They grow around 150 different species of wild flowers and grasses for seed production which are then dried on site and are sold both to retail and trade customers.

Coxhill Farm (219 acres) - let to **Brian and Carla-May Roberts**

Although Brian (34) comes from a farming family, it wasn't his first calling as he started off as a plumber with a local company before setting up his own plumbing business. However, he made the decision six years ago to change careers and get into farming. He has built up a successful contracting business and Coxhill Farm will offer the family the opportunity to consolidate their existing business and farm on their own account. Alongside the traditional arable rotation they propose, they also wish to establish an aquaponics enterprise growing salad leaves.

Brian and Carla-May say that since starting their contracting business the goal has always been to have a farm. Carla-May adds: "Now our dream has become a reality and our children are as excited as we are to start our new adventure. We are passionate about farming and its future."

Great Crow Farm (311 acres) - let to Michael Jones

Michael (48) is an existing tenant of the County Farms estate and a relative newcomer having successfully applied for a farm on the Estate in 2015.



Michael, Anneke and Harry Jones

Michael's move to Great Crow Farm will allow him to expand his traditional farm business.

Closing summary

This report demonstrates that council farms continue to play an important role in the tenanted agricultural sector across England. Whilst the data set is incomplete it reveals that council farms cover approximately 89,000 hectares of agricultural land providing approximately 2,444 holdings for around 1,959 tenant farmers.

About sixty percent of the lettings are equipped farms (1,409 equipped holdings) and 37 lettings were made to new entrants during 2017/2018. The data indicates that the reporting smallholding authorities generated a revenue account net surplus around £16 million in 2017/2018.

Glossary of terms

Agricultural letting farms - Farms possessing, for example, grazing licences, contract farming agreements, 364 day licences/ agricultural lettings for less than one year, etc.

Bare land farms - Farms comprising land only, including short term lets.

Equipped farms - Farms with a farmhouse, farm buildings or both.

Farm Business Tenancies - These tenancies comprise all principal lettings entered into under the provisions of the Agricultural Tenancies Act 1995 and relating to the original term of the current letting.

Lifetime tenancies - These tenancies are for those lettings made prior to the Agricultural Holdings Act 1986.

Number of secondary lettings to principal tenants - Secondary lettings describe additional land let as part of a Farm Business Tenancy to tenants of principal holdings, i.e. equipped or bare land holdings and managed as an integral part of principal holding.

Number of smallholding lets - This is equal to number of equipped farm lets plus number of bare land farm lets plus number of agricultural lets.

Number of smallholding tenancies - These comprise equipped and bare land farms only. Joint tenancies are counted as a single entity. Where tenants occupy more than one farm they have only been counted once. Hence the total number of tenants may be less than the number of farms.

Rent due for land let as smallholdings (£) - Rent due refers to what would be expected to be collected if all farms/licenses are occupied in 2015-2016 and if every farm paid. This is equal to rent due for equipped farms plus rent due for bare land farms plus rent due for agricultural licence farms. Abatements, allowances, rent forgone and not collected are disregarded for these figures.

Retirement tenancies - These tenancies are for tenants that may be required to vacate holdings when they reach the age of 65 or prevailing retirement age, i.e. lettings made under the provisions of the Agricultural Holdings Act 1986, but before the Agricultural Tenancies Act 1995.

Smallholdings let area (hectares) - This is equal to equipped farm area plus bare land farm area plus agricultural letting area.

Tenancies granted to new entrants - These tenancies are lettings to first time entrants to the individual estate, i.e. those who have not previously occupied a Smallholdings Authority farm.

Total area acquired and disposed of by Smallholdings Authorities (hectares) - This is comprised of freehold (the number of hectares let as council farms/rural estates and owned by the authority) and leasehold (the number of hectares let as council farms/rural estates but not owned by the authority) areas.

Glossary of terms employed within the Operational and Non-Operational accounts

Operational account

Income

Rent from holdings (£) - This is net rent from land being farmed, including grazing licenses, after deductions of allowances, abatements and rent not collected. Only farm rents are included, including secondary lettings.

Other rents (£) - This is rent from cottage tenancies, commercial lettings, staff housing, wasteland, woodland, telecom sites, wind turbines and rent received from non-Farm Business Tenancies.

Other income (£) - This includes royalties, wayleaves, easements, shooting and fishing rights, licences to extract gravel, insurance claims, sales of timber, trees, produce, materials, farm equipment and vehicles, etc., other fees and charges etc. This also includes single farm payments or environmental initiatives paid direct to the estate. This does not include contributions by tenants towards revenue improvements, repairs to equipment, rates, water charges etc.

Expenditure

Repairs and maintenance (£) - This includes revenue expenditure on repairs and maintenance of houses, buildings, drainage and ditching work. This is net of any amounts recovered from tenants but excludes grant-aided schemes of a capital nature. This also includes corporately funded property initiatives, e.g. asbestos, electrical tests and inspections, structural and tree surveys, as well as Legionnaires' disease testing. This also includes the cost of associated manual labour forces, plants and materials.

Rents, rates, annuities and water charges (£) - This includes rents, rates, utility charges (e.g. water, electricity), tithes and perpetual annuities, net of recovery of rates and water charges.

Net tenant right valuations (£) - This includes expenditure paid by the landlord to an outgoing tenant, less income received from an incoming tenant for tenant right valuations and dilapidations. This also includes any milk quota compensation payments charged to revenue. This excludes capital payments for equipment/buildings.

Estate management (£) - This includes professional (e.g. surveyors), administrative and clerical support employee costs, office accommodation charges, including expenditure on repairs and maintenance, transport costs, other sundry expenses, etc. as well as any other ad-hoc specialist advice (e.g. payments to consultants). Employee costs include salaries, national insurance, training, pension, removal and resettlement costs, conference expenses, etc. This also includes the net cost (e.g. client/commissioning costs) of contracting out estate management functions.

Other expenditure (£) - This includes the cost of cleaning materials, fire and farm buildings insurance, furniture and fittings, equipment, tools and materials, transport and moveable plant, vehicles and vehicle running costs, etc.

Non-operational account

Indirect income (£) - This includes revenue grants, interest received and other non-operational income. This also includes publication sales, recovery of fees and charges, etc.

Central support costs (£) - This includes charges received from other departments within the estate not identified within the Estate Management section, e.g. legal/secretariat, financial (including audit), valuation (excluding corporate disposals), personnel and IT service costs.

Other expenditure (£) - This includes subscriptions, external audit fees, stamp duty, external legal and professional fees, etc.