



Department
for Environment
Food & Rural Affairs

Seventieth Annual Report to Parliament on Local Authority Smallholdings in England

1 April 2019 – 31 March 2020

Presented to Parliament pursuant to section 59 of the Agriculture Act 1970

February 2021

We are the Department for Environment, Food and Rural Affairs. We're responsible for improving and protecting the environment, growing the green economy and supporting our world-class food, farming and fishing industries.

We work closely with our 33 agencies and arm's length bodies on our ambition to make our air purer, our water cleaner, our land greener and our food more sustainable. Our mission is to restore and enhance the environment for the next generation, and to leave the environment in a better state than we found it.



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CORRECTION SLIP

Title: 70th Annual Report to Parliament on Local Authority Smallholdings
in England, 1 April 2019 to 31 March 2020

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Correction 1:

Page 8, Financial position of authorities: total operational expenditure

Text currently reads:

£6,625,200

Text should read:

£6,437,800

Correction 2:

Page 8, Financial position of authorities: operational surplus

Text currently reads:

£10,788,300

Text should read:

£10,975,700

Correction 3:

Page 8, Financial position of authorities: Total non-operational income

Text currently reads:

£-192,200

Text should read:

£192,200

Correction 4:

Page 8, Financial position of authorities: non-operational deficit

Text currently reads:

£952,800

Text should read:

£568,400

Correction 5:

Page 8, Financial position of authorities: revenue account net surplus

Text currently reads:

£9,835,600

Text should read:

£10,407,300

Correction 6:

Page 34, Table 9: OPERATIONAL ACCOUNT – Expenditure – Other Expenditure

Text currently reads:

534,400

Text should read:

347,000

Correction 7:

Page 34, Table 9: OPERATIONAL ACCOUNT – Expenditure – TOTAL

Text currently reads:

6,625,200

Text should read:

6,437,800

Correction 8:

Page 34, Table 9: OPERATIONAL ACCOUNT – Expenditure – OPERATIONAL ACCOUNT SURPLUS

Text currently reads:

10,788,300

Text should read:

10,975,700

Correction 9:

Page 35, Table 9: NON-OPERATIONAL ACCOUNT – Indirect Income – TOTAL

Text currently reads:

-192,200

Text should read:

192,200

Correction 10:

Page 35, Table 9: NON-OPERATIONAL ACCOUNT – NON-OPERATIONAL ACCOUNT DEFICIT

Text currently reads:

-952,800

Text should read:

-568,400

Correction 11:

Page 35, Table 9: REVENUE ACCOUNT NET SURPLUS – Operational Account Surplus

Text currently reads:

10,788,300

Text should read:

10,975,700

Correction 12:

Page 35, Table 9: REVENUE ACCOUNT NET SURPLUS – Non-Operational Account Deficit

Text currently reads:

-952,800

Text should read:

-568,400

Correction 13:

Page 35, Table 9: REVENUE ACCOUNT NET SURPLUS – Net Surplus

Text currently reads:

9,835,600

Text should read:

10,407,300

Correction 14:

Page 36, Closing summary: revenue account net surplus

Text currently reads:

£10.7 million

Text should read:

£10.4 million

Date of correction: 21 August 2023

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Introduction

This report is required under the 1970 Agriculture Act (1970 Act). It provides statistical details to Parliament of the land let as smallholdings by local authorities across England, for the financial year 1 April 2019 to 31 March 2020.

Local authority smallholdings, or council farms (or county farms) as they are now more commonly known are administered under Part III of the 1970 Act. Under that legislation smallholdings authorities¹ are required to make it their general aim to provide opportunities for persons with sufficient experience to be a farmer on their own account as well as to have regard to the general interests of agriculture and of good estate management. These council farms are generally capable of providing full-time employment for not more than two people.

Council farms have an important role to play within their communities and in providing new entrants with opportunities to establish and develop farming businesses. These farms bring benefits to the wider public through educational visits, environmental enrichment and local food. The value of the council farm structure in supporting new entrants and progressive tenants as well as delivering wider public benefits is demonstrated in the case studies provided by Cambridgeshire County Council and Cornwall County Council.

Defra wants to encourage local authorities to retain and invest in their farm estates. That is why we are developing a new entrant funding scheme to create lasting opportunities for new entrants to access the land, infrastructure and support they need to establish successful and innovative businesses. We want to encourage applications from local authorities, cooperative and community land organisations, local partnerships, and private and institutional landowners who have innovative ideas and the capability to provide long-term opportunities for talented new entrants. The details of the scheme including the funding criteria are being developed through a consultative co-design process with stakeholders which includes representatives of local authorities with county farm estates. We aim to report more details about the scheme in the summer of 2021 and launch the scheme in 2022.

The information is compiled from an annual survey by the Chartered Institute for Public Finance and Accountancy (CIPFA) which includes data from 40 local authorities that let land as smallholdings and responded to the CIPFA survey. This report includes statistical information on the area and number of smallholdings held by reporting local authorities,

¹ The 1970 Agriculture Act defines smallholdings authorities as county councils for England however there have been many changes to Local Authority structures since the 1970 Act and consequently some unitary authorities and borough and district authorities have continued the responsibilities of former county councils in letting land as smallholdings. Hence it was decided in 2015 that it is important to include data in this report from these authorities as well as county councils where possible to extend the coverage and value of this report in providing more accurate details of land let as smallholdings from councils across England.

and details on tenancies and the financial position of the authorities in relation to their farm estates.

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

Statistical information on smallholdings provided by Authorities Letting Land as Smallholdings

From the 43 authorities approached (21 unitary authorities and 22 county councils) 40 submitted data and details of let land as smallholdings. However, in some cases, these submitted data sets were incomplete. The data presented in this report includes only that provided by the reporting authorities; no estimates have been made for incomplete data.

Total area of smallholding land

As at 31 March 2020, the total area of land held by 40 of the reporting authorities in England was 80,230 hectares (for the whole estate), of which 78,153 hectares were let as smallholdings (for 39 reporting authorities). **Table 1** provides figures for the area of smallholdings held by reporting authorities. The land area reported as let for smallholdings is lower than the last financial year. However, it should be noted that there are fewer reporting authorities this year and therefore, the change in land area over the year cannot be concluded from this. The data on acquisitions and disposals indicates a decrease in the area of land held by reporting authorities of 2.6% (see Acquisitions and disposals sections) which may be a better indicator of land area change during the year.

Farming sectors

Each reporting 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 2020) is shown in Figure 1. The most common sectors were Mixed/General and Arable farming and the least common was Horticulture, which none of the reporting authorities stated as the predominant farming activity.

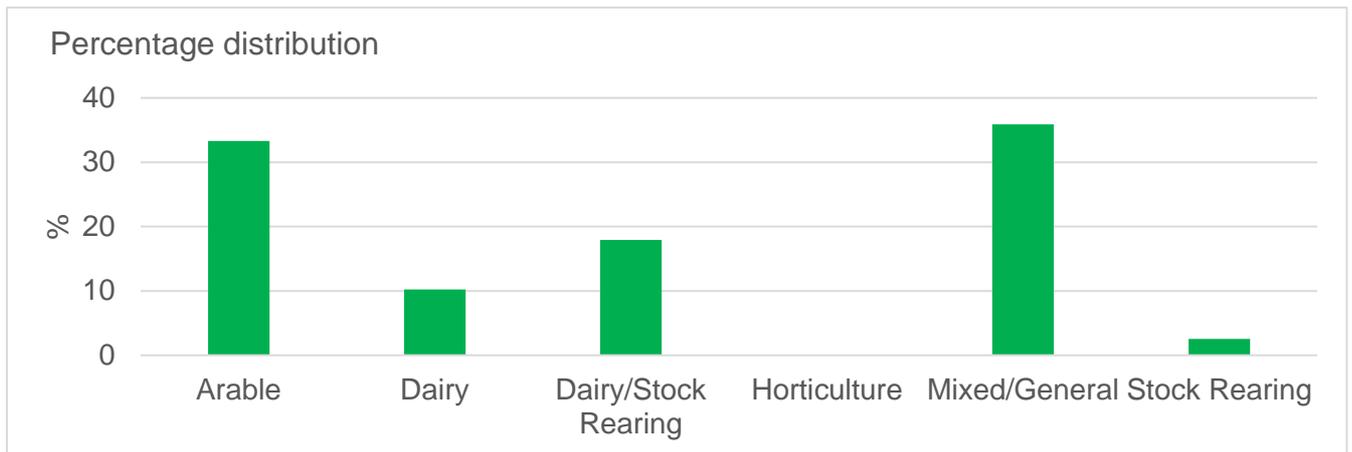


Figure 1: Percentage of Authorities by farming sector ^{(a) (b)}

(a) Only for those 39 authorities that provided a farm business sector.

(b) Each 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 authorities themselves.

Numbers of smallholding lets

The 39 authorities that provided data reported that they owned and let 2,416 smallholdings as at 31 March 2020. **Table 2** provides a breakdown by each authority.

Rent due for smallholdings

For those 33 authorities that provided data, a total of around £23 million in rent was due for smallholdings as at 31 March 2020. **Table 3** provides figures for the rent due by each authority. **Table 4** shows average rent/hectare values by farm business sector² for those local authority farms where full data was available. Of the total area of land let as smallholdings, the average rent per hectare was £309 per hectare³. When this rental value is split into agriculture licences, equipped and bare land farms, we can see that equipped farm on average costs £37 (13.0%) more per hectare than bare land farms.

Acquisitions and disposals

There has been a decrease of 2,006 (2.6%) hectares in area of land held by the 39 reporting authorities that provided data, as of 31 March 2020. **Table 5** provides figures for land acquired and disposed of by each authority in 2019/2020: a total of 112 hectares

² For those authorities that submitted sector information and had complete Rent and Area information; 33 of the authorities provided this information.

³ For those 33 authorities that provided complete rent and area data.

were acquired by two authorities and a total of 2,118 hectares were sold or otherwise disposed of by 22 authorities.

Number of smallholding tenants

For the 39 authorities that provided data, there were 1,752 tenants as at 31 March 2020. **Table 6** provides figures on the number of tenants by each authority in 2019/2020: 104 tenancies were granted and 146 tenancies were terminated. **Table 7** provides a breakdown of tenancies granted and terminated. A total of 32 tenancies were granted to new tenants⁴. These are first time entrants to the individual estate, who have not previously occupied a council farm. There were 7 internal promotions⁵, no tenancies ended due to transfers to another estate⁵ and 4 tenancies were ended due to the tenant leaving the estate in order to seek other opportunities⁴.

Type of smallholdings tenancy

Of the 38 authorities that provided information there were a total of 388 lifetime tenancies⁶, 211 retirement tenancies⁷, 1108 Farm Business Tenancies⁸, as well as 393 secondary lettings⁹. Figures for each of the authorities are provided in **Tables 8**. Farm Business Tenancies represent 65% 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 (23%); 15% were Farm Business Tenancies that run for less than 5 years and 31% were Farm Business Tenancies that run for more than 10 years.

⁴ For those 37 authorities that provided data

⁵ For those 35 authorities that provided data

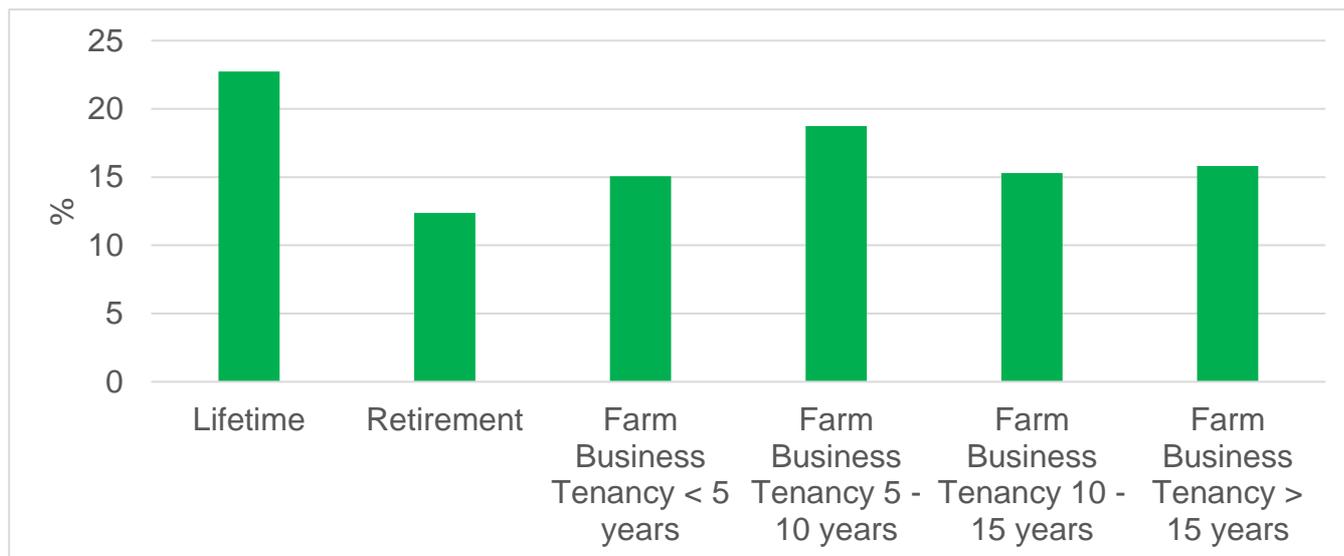
⁶ Lettings made prior to the Agricultural Holdings Act 1986.

⁷ Lettings for tenants that may be required to vacate holdings when they reach the prevailing retirement age, i.e. lettings made under the provisions of the Agricultural Holdings Act 1986, but before the Agricultural Tenancies Act 1995.

⁸ All principal lettings entered into under the provisions of the Agricultural Tenancies Act 1995, relating to the original term of the current letting.

⁹ 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 37 authorities.

Figure 2: Type of smallholdings tenancy ^{(a)(b)}



(a) Equipped and bare land farms only.

(b) For 38 out of the 43 authorities that provided tenancy information.

Financial position of authorities

For the 26 authorities that provided complete financial data. Their total revenue in the year ending 31 March 2020 showed a total operational income of £17,413,500 against a total operational expenditure of £6,625,200, giving an operational surplus of £10,788,300. Total non-operational income was £-192,200, against a total non-operational expenditure of £760,600, giving a non-operational deficit of £952,800. The revenue account net surplus was therefore £9,835,600. **Table 9** summarises the total revenue account for land held by authorities for the year ended 31 March 2020. Please note that the financial position is for the 26 authorities that provided complete financial data and is therefore not comparable to other years.

Case studies

Cambridgeshire's Council Farm Estate

Cambridgeshire's Farms Estate comprises 13,200ha and has around 200 tenants. The estate provides significant financial returns for the council. Generating over £5 million in rent each year. The money raised helps to pay for other council services and to keep council tax low.

Cambridgeshire have had over 100 new entrants to the estate since 2000 for farming and other rural based enterprises. The estate also encourages public access to the countryside and have introduced miles of new permissive bridleways and footpaths, along with 147hectares of woodland as well as improving the landscape and protecting and enhancing the biodiversity and archaeology.

Here are some examples of new entrants farming on the Cambridgeshire farm estate.

Nick Kiddy – Lynchets Farm

Nick Kiddy joined the estate in 2018 and has now completed his first successful harvest (2019 harvest) at Lynchets Farm, growing winter barley, winter wheat, winter beans and spring barley. The farm also has diversified income from a campsite which Nick is keen to improve to increase bookings in future. He found the application process for the council farm provided a good structure with a real focus on business planning. Applicants get useful feedback to help them develop and improve their plans. Nick advises other new entrants to have a strong business plan, to check their figures and check them again. He also places great importance on taking opportunities to meet other tenants on the estate and getting a good handover from the outgoing tenant, he says “try to get on well with the person exiting and work with them. They can tell you much more about how the land lies. Run your ideas past them and check that your ideas suit the holding.”

Sam Johnson, Dawsons Farm

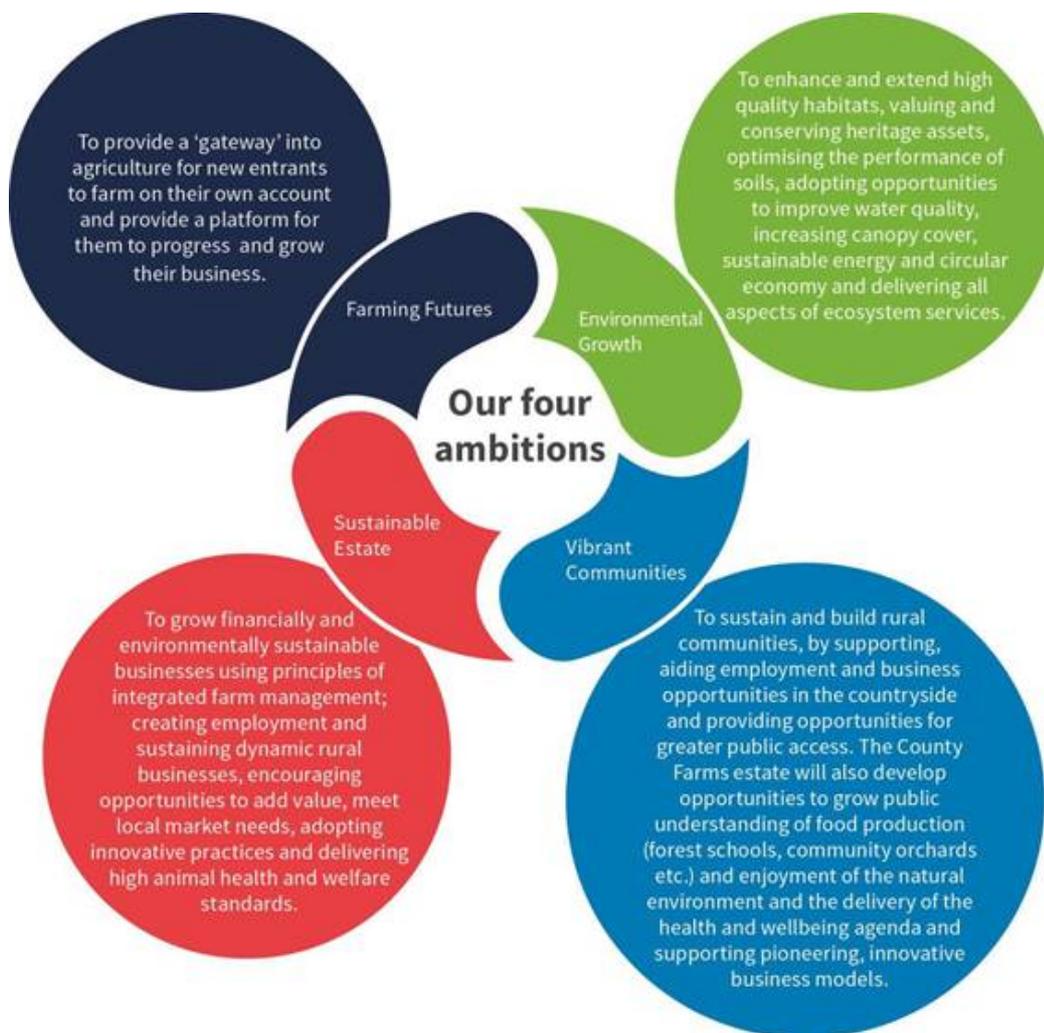
At just 21, Sam Johnson is a young new entrant farmer. His farm was recently featured in a Guardian article as one of the top 10 autumn pick your own farms. His future plans are to make a success of the farm by increasing the variety of crops and advises others looking to join the estate to use some diversification within the farm as he has done with strawberries as well as building up the livestock side.

Cornwall Council Estate

In December 2019, Cornwall Councillors approved a 20 year Strategy for the Council Farms Estate that both reinforces its role as the primary route of entry into agriculture for new entrants but also recognises the potential of the estate to meet zero carbon ambitions.

The Council committed to retaining the estate at or around 10,800 acres but to reduce the number of fully equipped holdings from 91 to 75. The Council will invest £16million into the estate to improve and maintain the infrastructure and support new investment in environmental projects to protect, maintain and enhance the biodiversity of the estate.

The Council Farm Estate Strategy has 4 distinct limbs as set out in the diagram below.



The first evidence of this new approach will be seen at Gorran Haven on the south coast of the County. The 70 acre holding has been reshaped such that the farmhouse will be sold, the farm buildings retained and let to a local young couple who had a toe hold in the industry through a number of bare land lettings, lambing their sheep in a double garage. They will now be able to bring all of their flock to one location, lamb in modern farm buildings and remain living in their property within the local community. These genuine new entrants will also be working with the local community because the Council has agreed to put two small parcels of land towards a community woodland project adjoining a parish playing field and a community growing field alongside the primary a school. The actions planned will meet all four of the limbs of the Strategy and a clear indication that Strategy will deliver the improved outcomes anticipated.

At the other end of the scale, as a consequence of a review of the Estate Strategy in 2004, the Council made a commitment to purchase a dairy farm with infrastructure to support efficient milk production. The farm was purchased in 2004 and appointed a young tenant from the estate who promised to move on from the farm in 15 years. Whilst 2 years behind programme, he and his wife have now purchased their own farm in the county freeing up the county farm for a new tenant from April 2021. The shortlist for this new tenancy includes 3 Council farm tenants looking for progression which means it is highly likely that another holding will become available for reletting possibly to a new entrant at the same time.

These recent changes reinforce that Council farms have the ability to provide real and consistent opportunities for new entrants and progression, to support community engagement in local food and landscape management and within a large estate provide financial returns that can be balanced within the local authority's wider budget obligations.

Table 1: Area of smallholdings land held by local authorities as at 31 March 2020

Local Authority	Equipped farm let area Hectares	Bare land farm let area Hectares	Agricultural licence let area Hectares	Smallholdings let area ^(a) Hectares
Bedford	127	32	66	226
Brighton & Hove	3,188	834	20	4,041
Buckinghamshire	1,148	191	121	1,459
Cambridgeshire	11,178	1,890	0	13,068
Central Bedfordshire	1,493	708	2,201	4,403
Cheshire East	1,816	0	109	1,925
Cheshire West and Chester	699	0	126	825
Cornwall	3,944	85	245	4,274
Cumbria	0	65	32	97
Devon	3,181	133	532	3,846
Dorset	2,065	123	133	2,320
Durham	69	**	**	69
East Riding of Yorkshire	1,653	485	306	2,443
Essex	68	11	0	79
Gloucestershire	2,570	265	6	2,840
Hampshire	**	**	**	**

Hartlepool	0	85	0	85
Herefordshire	91	45	56	193
Hertfordshire	1,063	287	312	1,662
Hillingdon	496	72	125	693
Leicestershire	2,280	63	377	2,720
Lincolnshire	5,444	1,217	0	6,660
Medway	0	24	28	52
Milton Keynes	177	18	0	195
Norfolk	5,070	1,496	80	6,646
North Lincolnshire	36	15	0	51
North Somerset	90	76	0	166
North Yorkshire	**	**	**	**
Nottinghamshire	244	287	0	531
Oxfordshire	16	331	6	352
Shropshire	369	0	107	476
Somerset	817	268	29	1,114
South Gloucestershire	**	**	**	**
Staffordshire	2,796	62	333	3,191
Suffolk	3,389	604	853	4,846
Surrey	646	129	20	795

Swindon	546	54	55	656
Warwickshire	1,838	130	**	1,968
West Berkshire	117	0	0	117
West Sussex	**	**	**	**
Wiltshire	1,595	282	45	1,922
Worcestershire	617	279	191	1,087
York	0	62	0	62
Total^(b)	60,933	10,705	6,515	78,153

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

(b) These total values are underestimated due to an absence of information indicated by **

Key

* less than 0.5 hectares

** data not available

Table 2: Number of smallholdings lets held by local authorities as at 31 March 2020

Local 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	16	19	6	41
Buckinghamshire	25	23	9	57
Cambridgeshire	163	108	0	271
Central Bedfordshire	27	25	52	104
Cheshire East	51	0	11	62
Cheshire West and Chester	25	0	8	33
Cornwall	87	5	16	108
Cumbria	0	6	12	18
Devon	65	9	31	105
Dorset	42	7	9	58
Durham	1	25	**	26
East Riding of Yorkshire	51	61	25	137
Essex	2	2	0	4
Gloucestershire	62	23	8	93
Hampshire	**	**	**	**

Hartlepool	0	2	0	2
Herefordshire	3	2	4	9
Hertfordshire	32	17	15	64
Hillingdon	8	2	18	28
Leicestershire	66	3	33	102
Lincolnshire	88	90	0	178
Medway	0	1	2	3
Milton Keynes	3	3	0	6
Norfolk	99	79	22	200
North Lincolnshire	1	3	0	4
North Somerset	4	9	0	13
North Yorkshire	**	**	**	**
Nottinghamshire	8	15	0	23
Oxfordshire	2	25	7	34
Shropshire	17	0	4	21
Somerset	25	11	8	44
South Gloucestershire	**	**	**	**
Staffordshire	77	5	24	106
Suffolk	66	27	46	139
Surrey	34	12	11	57

Swindon	14	5	6	25
Warwickshire	51	22	**	73
West Berkshire	2	0	0	2
West Sussex	**	**	**	**
Wiltshire	36	16	25	77
Worcestershire	23	37	11	71
York	0	4	0	4
Total^(b)	1,282	707	500	2,416

(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.)

(b) These total values are underestimated due to an absence of information indicated by **

Key

** data not available

Table 3: Rent due for smallholdings by local authorities as at 31 March 2020^(a)

Local Authority	Rent due for equipped farms (£)	Rent due for bare land farms (£)	Rent due for agricultural licences (£)	Rent due for land let as smallholdings ^(b) (£)
Bedford	36,500	2,700	10,500	49,700
Brighton & Hove	518,200	162,300	27,000	707,500
Buckinghamshire	**	**	**	**
Cambridgeshire	3,924,300	606,700	0	4,531,000
Central Bedfordshire	**	**	**	**
Cheshire East	678,200	0	34,000	712,200
Cheshire West and Chester	217,900	0	48,600	266,500
Cornwall	1,246,200	23,100	41,300	1,310,600
Cumbria	0	8,900	5,000	13,800
Devon	1,107,100	28,000	300	1,135,300
Dorset	647,700	27,000	32,400	707,100
Durham	**	**	**	**
East Riding of Yorkshire	375,900	181,200	102,600	659,600
Essex	32,500	2,800	0	35,300
Gloucestershire	754,200	52,500	3,200	809,900
Hampshire	**	**	**	**

Hartlepool	0	31,700	0	31,700
Herefordshire	**	**	**	**
Hertfordshire	375,900	101,100	84,100	561,000
Hillingdon	**	**	**	**
Leicestershire	822,100	14,200	106,900	943,200
Lincolnshire	1,677,100	385,700	0	2,062,800
Medway	0	3,000	7,700	10,700
Milton Keynes	50,300	5,400	0	55,700
Norfolk	1,764,100	435,700	28,700	2,228,500
North Lincolnshire	8,000	2,300	0	10,300
North Somerset	34,100	10,900	0	45,000
North Yorkshire	**	**	**	**
Nottinghamshire	77,900	59,000	0	136,900
Oxfordshire	5,100	47,600	5,800	58,500
Shropshire	116,600	0	16,900	133,500
Somerset	213,800	99,900	11,600	325,200
South Gloucestershire	**	**	**	**
Staffordshire	1,008,100	15,200	93,100	1,116,400
Suffolk	961,600	197,100	267,000	1,425,700
Surrey	**	**	**	**

Swindon	187,800	10,200	5,000	203,000
Warwickshire	739,400	31,600	**	771,000
West Berkshire	33,700	0	0	33,700
West Sussex	**	**	**	**
Wiltshire	442,900	45,400	8,000	496,200
Worcestershire	182,700	55,000	38,800	276,400
York	0	11,300	0	11,300
Total^(c)	18,770,400	3,019,500	994,600	22,784,500

(a) All values rounded to nearest £100

(b) 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").

(c) These total values are underestimated due to an absence of information indicated by **

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 2020^(a)

Authority Sector	Rent/hectare due for equipped farms £/hectare	Rent/hectare due for bare land farms £/hectare	Rent/hectare due for agriculture licences £/hectare	Rent/hectare due for land let as smallholdings £/hectare
Arable^(b)	332	307	305	327
Dairy	336	187	270	324
Dairy/Stock Rearing^(c)	337	225	129	311
Horticulture^(d)	**	**	**	**
Mixed/General	231	258	370	241
Stock Rearing^(e)	325	144	993	166
All tenancies	318	281	248	309

(a) Only for those authorities that provided a business sector as well as complete rent and area data (i.e. 33 out of 43 authorities).

(b) Not including Central Bedfordshire (full rent values not available)

(c) Not including Surrey and Hillingdon (no rent values quoted)

(d) No authorities stated themselves as primarily Horticulture

(e) Oxfordshire only; Agriculture licences mainly comprise of small village centre paddocks utilised for horse or pony grazing and many have been obtained by best offer/tenders.

Key

** data not available

Table 5: Total area acquired and disposed of by local authorities between April 2019 and March 2020^(a)

Local Authority	Land acquired			Land disposed of		
	Newly acquired	Formerly leased	Total	Sold/ exchanged	Leased land	Total
Bedford	0	0	0	0	0	0
Brighton & Hove	0	0	0	0	0	0
Buckinghamshire	0	0	0	0	0	0
Cambridgeshire	0	0	0	14	0	14
Central Bedfordshire	103	**	103	84	**	84
Cheshire East	0	0	0	5	0	5
Cheshire West and Chester	0	0	0	204	0	204
Cornwall	0	0	0	0	0	0
Cumbria	0	0	0	0	0	0
Devon	0	0	0	4	1	5
Dorset	8	0	8	56	0	56
Durham	0	0	0	90	0	90
East Riding of Yorkshire	0	0	0	5	0	5
Essex	0	0	0	0	0	0
Gloucestershire	0	0	0	65	0	65

Hampshire	**	**	**	**	**	**
Hartlepool	0	0	0	0	0	0
Herefordshire	0	0	0	0	0	0
Hertfordshire	0	0	0	294	0	294
Hillingdon	0	0	0	0	0	0
Leicestershire	0	0	0	1	0	1
Lincolnshire	0	0	0	7	905	912
Medway	0	0	0	0	0	0
Milton Keynes	0	0	0	27	0	27
Norfolk	0	0	0	16	0	16
North Lincolnshire	0	0	0	0	0	0
North Somerset	0	0	0	0	0	0
North Yorkshire	**	**	**	**	**	**
Nottinghamshire	0	0	0	0	0	0
Oxfordshire	0	0	0	0	0	0
Shropshire	0	0	0	0	0	0
Somerset	0	0	0	31	0	31
South Gloucestershire	**	**	**	**	**	**
Staffordshire	0	0	0	155	0	155
Suffolk	0	0	0	81	0	81

Surrey	0	0	0	0	0	0
Swindon	0	0	0	17	0	17
Warwickshire	0	0	0	32	0	32
West Berkshire	0	0	0	0	0	0
West Sussex	**	**	**	**	**	**
Wiltshire	0	0	0	15	0	15
Worcestershire	0	0	0	11	0	11
York	0	0	0	0	0	0
Total^(b)	112	0	112	1,212	906	2,118

(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.

(b) These total values are underestimated due to an absence of information indicated by **

Key

** data not available

Table 6: Number of smallholding tenancies, any change since 2019, as well as any granted for the first time or terminated by local authorities between April 2019 and March 2020^(a)

Local Authority	Number of tenants in 2020	Change since 2019	Number granted	Number terminated
Bedford	10	0	0	0
Brighton & Hove	35	0	0	0
Buckinghamshire	48	2	20	18
Cambridgeshire	181	2	5	3
Central Bedfordshire	42	1	4	3
Cheshire East	47	0	0	0
Cheshire West and Chester	20	-1	0	1
Cornwall	92	-1	5	6
Cumbria	6	-1	0	1
Devon	74	2	5	3
Dorset	48	-1	4	5
Durham	**	**	**	**
East Riding of Yorkshire	88	3	10	7
Essex	4	0	0	0
Gloucestershire	67	-2	1	3
Hampshire	**	**	**	**
Hartlepool	2	0	0	0

Herefordshire	5	-1	0	1
Hertfordshire	49	-8	0	8
Hillingdon	10	0	0	0
Leicestershire	66	-1	2	3
Lincolnshire	178	-30	17	47
Medway	1	0	0	0
Milton Keynes	6	0	0	0
Norfolk	108	0	5	5
North Lincolnshire	4	0	0	0
North Somerset	13	0	0	0
North Yorkshire	45	-1	3	4
Nottinghamshire	23	2	2	0
Oxfordshire	27	0	5	5
Shropshire	17	0	0	0
Somerset	34	0	0	0
South Gloucestershire	**	**	**	**
Staffordshire	82	-4	3	7
Suffolk	93	2	4	2
Surrey	44	0	0	0
Swindon	12	-1	0	1

Warwickshire	65	-2	6	8
West Berkshire	2	0	0	0
West Sussex	**	**	**	**
Wiltshire	40	-2	1	3
Worcestershire	60	0	2	2
York	4	0	0	0
Total^(b)	1752	-42	104	146

(a) Equipped and bare land farms only.

(b) These total values are underestimated due to an absence of information indicated by **

Key

** data not available

Table 7: Specific details of smallholding tenancies granted and ended by local authorities between April 2019 and March 2020^(a)

Local Authority	Granted		Ended	
	New tenants ^(b)	Internal promotion	Transfer to other estates	Leave estate for other opportunities
Bedford	0	0	0	0
Brighton & Hove	0	0	0	0
Buckinghamshire	3	**	**	**
Cambridgeshire	4	1	0	0
Central Bedfordshire	0	4	0	0
Cheshire East	0	0	0	0
Cheshire West and Chester	0	0	0	0
Cornwall	4	0	0	0
Cumbria	0	0	0	0
Devon	3	0	0	1
Dorset	0	0	0	1
Durham	**	**	**	0
East Riding of Yorkshire	0	0	0	0
Essex	0	0	0	0
Gloucestershire	1	0	0	0

Hampshire	**	**	**	**
Hartlepool	0	0	0	0
Herefordshire	0	0	0	0
Hertfordshire	0	0	0	0
Hillingdon	0	0	0	0
Leicestershire	2	0	0	0
Lincolnshire	4	0	0	0
Medway	0	0	0	0
Milton Keynes	0	0	0	0
Norfolk	5	0	0	0
North Lincolnshire	0	0	0	0
North Somerset	0	0	0	0
North Yorkshire	**	**	**	**
Nottinghamshire	1	**	**	0
Oxfordshire	1	0	0	0
Shropshire	**	**	**	**
Somerset	0	0	0	0
South Gloucestershire	**	**	**	**
Staffordshire	1	2	0	2
Suffolk	3	0	0	0

Surrey	0	0	0	0
Swindon	0	0	0	0
Warwickshire	0	0	0	0
West Berkshire	0	0	0	0
West Sussex	**	**	**	**
Wiltshire	0	0	0	0
Worcestershire	0	0	0	0
York	0	0	0	0
Total^(C)	32	7	0	4

(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.

(c) These total values are underestimated due to an absence of information indicated by **

Key

** data not available

Table 8: Breakdown of the number of smallholding tenancies held between April 2019 and March 2020^(a)

Local Authority	Lifetime ^(b)	Retirement ^(c)	Farm Business Tenancies ^(d)	Secondary lettings ^(e)
Bedford	2	3	5	3
Brighton & Hove	15	0	20	0
Buckinghamshire	16	3	29	3
Cambridgeshire	34	11	136	81
Central Bedfordshire	9	2	31	10
Cheshire East	18	11	18	2
Cheshire West and Chester	10	4	6	1
Cornwall	13	14	65	14
Cumbria	0	0	6	0
Devon	11	6	57	29
Dorset	6	3	39	10
Durham	**	**	**	**
East Riding of Yorkshire	22	24	42	24
Essex	0	0	4	0
Gloucestershire	12	15	40	17
Hampshire	**	**	**	**
Hartlepool	0	0	2	0

Herefordshire	0	1	4	2
Hertfordshire	9	4	36	15
Hillingdon	7	0	3	0
Leicestershire	9	14	43	25
Lincolnshire	54	21	103	0
Medway	0	0	1	0
Milton Keynes	0	0	6	0
Norfolk	14	9	85	70
North Lincolnshire	1	0	3	0
North Somerset	3	0	10	0
North Yorkshire	**	**	**	**
Nottinghamshire	5	0	18	0
Oxfordshire	1	0	26	0
Shropshire	6	2	9	5
Somerset	11	14	9	7
South Gloucestershire	**	**	**	**
Staffordshire	7	9	66	13
Suffolk	28	15	50	36
Surrey	15	0	29	1
Swindon	2	0	10	7

Warwickshire	12	11	42	6
West Berkshire	1	0	1	0
West Sussex	**	**	**	**
Wiltshire	12	3	25	8
Worcestershire	23	12	25	4
York	0	0	4	**
Total^(f)	388	211	1,108	393

- (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 information indicated by **

Key

** data not available

Table 9: Total revenue account for land held by local authorities between April 2019 and March 2020^(a)

OPERATIONAL ACCOUNT (see glossary for definitions of the terms used)

Income	£
Rent from Holdings	15,837,500
Other Rents	988,800
Other Income	587,200
TOTAL	17,413,500
Expenditure	
Repairs and Maintenance	3,394,500
Rents, Rates, Annuities and Water Charges	594,100
Net Tenant Rights Valuations	199,500
Estate Management	1,902,700
Other Expenditure	534,400
TOTAL	6,625,200
OPERATIONAL ACCOUNT SURPLUS	10,788,300

NON-OPERATIONAL ACCOUNT

Indirect Income

TOTAL	-192,200
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Expenditure

Central Support Costs	226,200
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Other Expenditure	534,400
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TOTAL	760,600
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NON-OPERATIONAL ACCOUNT DEFICIT	-952,800
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REVENUE ACCOUNT NET SURPLUS

Operational Account Surplus	10,788,300
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Non-Operational Account Deficit	-952,800
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Net Surplus^(b)	9,835,600
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(a) Only for those authorities that provided complete financial data (i.e. 26 out of 43 authorities). All values rounded to nearest £100

Closing summary

This report indicates that council farms continue to play an important role in the tenanted agricultural sector across England. Although the data set is incomplete it reveals that council farms cover approximately 78,153 hectares of agricultural land. This land provides approximately 2,416 holdings for around 1,752 tenant farmers.

Approximately 50% of the lettings are equipped farms (1,282 equipped holdings) and 32 lettings were made to new entrants during 2019/2020. The report shows that the 26 reporting authorities who submitted full financial information generated a revenue account net surplus around £10.7 million in 2019/2020.

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 2018-2019 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 local authority farm.

Total area acquired and disposed of by local 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.