Department
for Environment,
Food & Rural Affairs

Seventy-Fifth Annual Report to Parliament on Local Authority Smallholdings in England

1 April 2024 to 31 March 2025

November 2026

Department
for Environment,
Food & Rural Affairs

Seventy-Fifth Annual Report to Parliament on Local Authority Smallholdings in England

1 April 2024 to 31 March 2025

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

November 2026

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 32 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.



© Crown copyright 2026

This publication is licensed under the terms of the Open Government Licence v3.0 except where otherwise stated. To view this licence, visit nationalarchives.gov.uk/doc/open-government-licence/version/3.

Where we have identified any third party copyright information you will need to obtain permission from the copyright holders concerned.

This publication is available at www.gov.uk/official-documents.

Any enquiries regarding this publication should be sent to us at

Farm Tenancy Policy
Defra
2nd Floor
Seacole Building
2 Marsham Street
London
SW1P 4DF

ISBN 978-1-5286-6879-8

E03713378

Printed on paper containing 40% recycled fibre content minimum

Printed in the UK by HH Associates Ltd. on behalf of the Controller of His Majesty's Stationery Office

Table of Contents

Table of Contents 5

Introduction 6

Statistical information on authority smallholdings 6

Total area of smallholding land 7

Farming sectors 7

Number of smallholdings lets 8

Rent due for smallholdings 8

Acquisitions and disposals 8

Number of smallholding tenants 9

Type of smallholdings tenancy 9

Financial position of authorities 10

Case studies 11

Devon County Council 11

Lincolnshire County Council 13

Closing summary 14

Tables 15

Table 11: Revenue account for land held by smallholdings authorities between April 2024 and March 2025 34

Glossary of terms 36

Glossary of terms employed within the operational and non-operational accounts 37

Operational account 37

Non-operational account 38

Introduction

This report is required under section 59 of 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 2024 to 31 March 2025.

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 authorities 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.

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.

The case studies provided by Devon and Lincolnshire County Councils demonstrate the different ways council farms are used and the role they play in providing opportunities for tenants to establish and develop farming businesses.

The data in this report are taken from the most recent annual survey on council farms conducted by Infoshare+ which includes responses from 31 local authorities that let land as smallholdings. This report includes statistical information on the area and number of smallholdings held by reporting local authorities, and details on tenancies and the financial position of the authorities in relation to their farm estates.

Defra thanks, Infoshare+ and all the local authorities who have kindly provided the statistical information presented in this report and Devon and Lincolnshire County Councils for providing the case study information.

Statistical information on authority smallholdings

Of the 43 authorities approached (21 unitary authorities and 22 county councils) 31 submitted details of the smallholdings they let. However, some authorities did not complete the survey in full. As a result, the totals for some sections of the survey (financial information, for example) might be represented by fewer authorities than responded to the survey.

Total area of smallholding land

As of 31 March 2025, the total area of land in England estimated to be let as smallholdings was 52,700 hectares (estimated from the 27 authorities that provided data). **Table 3** provides a breakdown of the estimated area let as smallholdings by reporting authority. The land area reported as let for smallholdings was lower than the last financial year. However, it should be noted that there were 2 fewer authorities reporting area data this year. Furthermore, the area let as smallholdings is only an estimate based on the number and average size of smallholdings per authority. Therefore, the change in land area between surveys will not be accurate. The data on acquisitions and disposals indicate a decrease (1%) in the area of land held by reporting authorities (see Acquisitions and Disposals sections) which may be a better indicator of land area change between surveys.

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 2025) is shown in Figure 1. The most common sector was mixed and general and the least common sector was horticulture, which none of the reporting authorities stated as the predominant farming activity.

Figure 1: Percentage of authorities by predominant farming sector

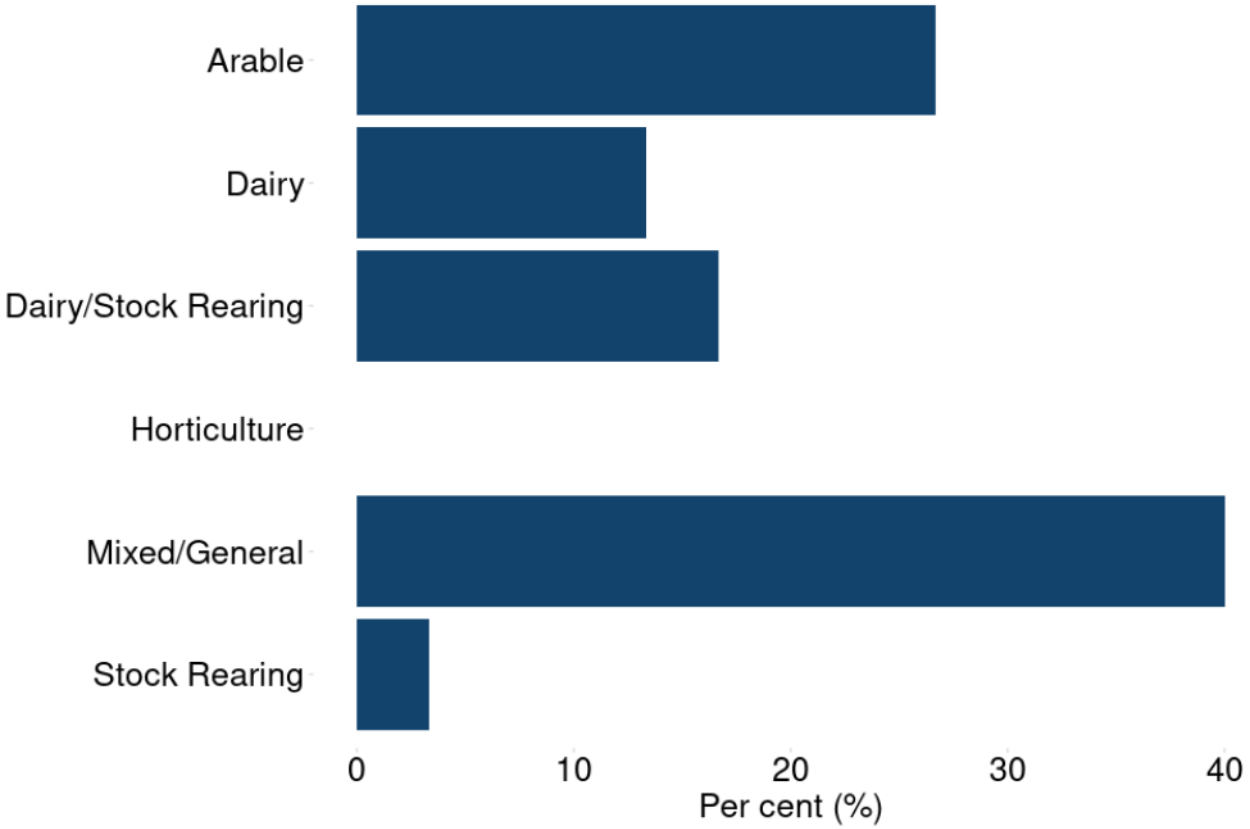


Table 1: Percentage of authorities by predominant farming sector (same data as figure 1).

Farming sector	Percent
Arable	26.7
Dairy	13.3
Dairy and stock rearing	16.7
Horticulture	0
Mixed and general	40
Stock rearing	3.3

Notes about figure 1 and table 1:

1. Each authority is classified into one farming sector based on the predominant farming activity (by area) carried out within that authority. The farming sector definitions were established and agreed because of consultations between the data provider (Infoshare+) and the authorities themselves.

2. Data is for the 30 authorities that provided a farm business sector.

3. Totals may not sum to 100% due to rounding.

Number of smallholdings lets

The 29 authorities that provided data reported that they owned and let 1,778 smallholdings as at 31 March 2025. **Table 4** provides a breakdown by each authority.

Rent due for smallholdings

For the 25 authorities that provided rent data, a total of approximately £16 million in rent was due for smallholdings as at 31 March 2025. **Table 5** provides figures for the rent due by each authority. **Table 6** shows average rent per hectare values by farm business sector for the 24 authorities where sector, rent and area data were all available. Of the total area of land, let as smallholdings, the average rent was £387 per hectare for the 23 authorities where both average rent and area data were available. When this rental value is split into agriculture licenses (equipped and bare land farms) it reveals that an equipped farm on average costs £29 (8.4%) more per hectare when compared to a bare land farm.

Acquisitions and disposals

There has been a decrease of 509 hectares (1%) in the area of land held by the 30 reporting authorities that provided data, as of 31 March 2025. **Table 7** provides figures for land acquired and disposed of by each authority in April 2024 to March 2025: a total of 8 hectares were acquired by 2 authorities, and a total of 517 hectares were sold or otherwise disposed of by 14 authorities.

Number of smallholding tenants

For the 30 authorities that provided data, there were 1,265 tenants as at 31 March 2025. **Table 8** provides figures on the number of tenants by each authority in April 2024 to March 2025: 116 tenancies were granted and 118 tenancies were terminated. **Table 9** provides a breakdown of tenancies granted and terminated. For the 28 authorities that provided data, a total of 35 tenancies (25 equipped farms; 10 bare land farms) were granted to new tenants. These are first time entrants to the individual estate, who have not previously occupied a council farm. In addition, there were 6 internal promotions, 0 tenancies were transferred from another estate, and 2 tenancies were ended due to the tenant leaving the estate to seek other opportunities.

Type of smallholdings tenancy

Of the 29 authorities that provided information there were a total of 203 lifetime tenancies, 127 retirement tenancies, 871 Farm Business Tenancies, as well as 241 secondary lettings. Figures for each of the authorities are provided in **Table 10**. Farm Business Tenancies represent 72% of the agreements, however these can vary in duration.

Figure 2 demonstrates the type of tenancy agreements in place. Lifetime tenancies represent 17% of all tenancy agreements, 21% were Farm Business Tenancies that run for less than 5 years, 21% were Farm Business Tenancies that run between 5 and 10 years, and 30% were Farm Business Tenancies that run for more than 10 years. Retirement tenancies represent 11% of all tenancy agreements.

Figure 2: Percentage of smallholdings by tenancy duration

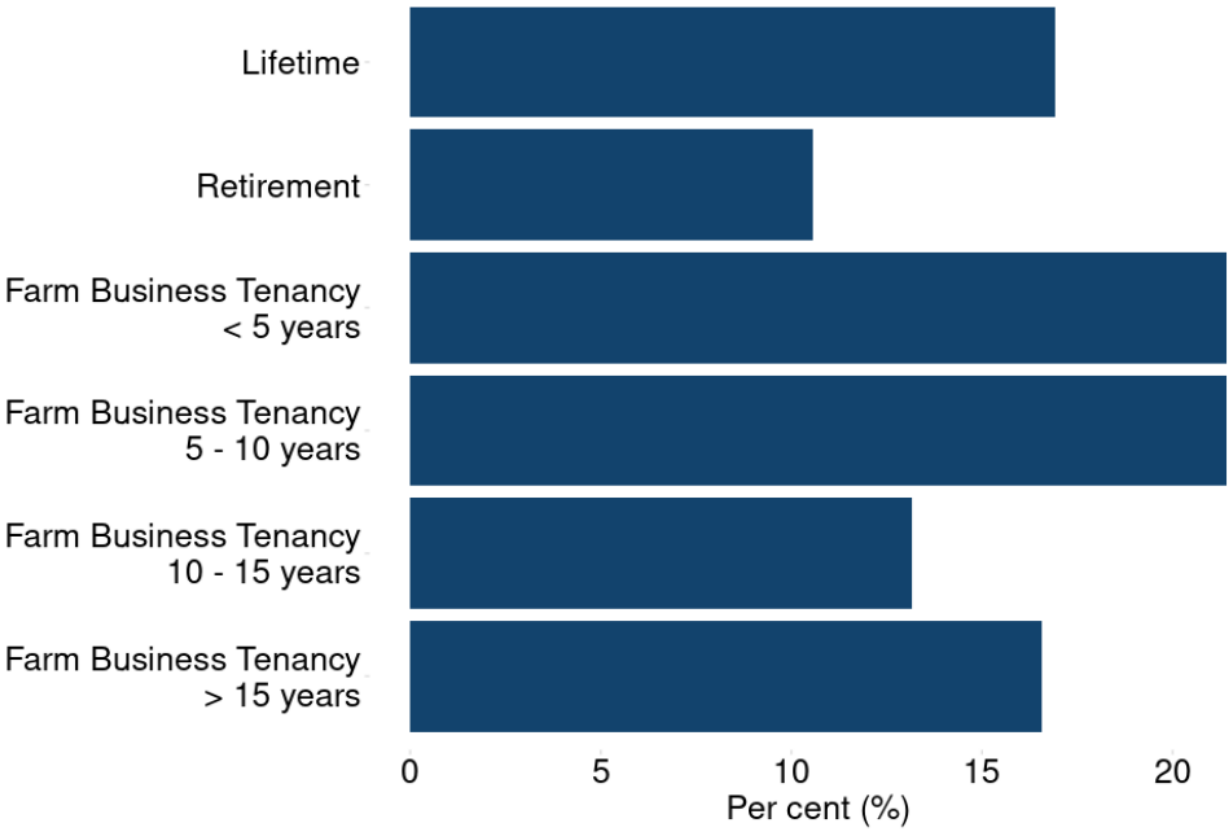


Table 2: Percentage of smallholdings by tenancy duration (same data as figure 2).

Tenancy duration	Percent
Lifetime	16.9
Retirement	10.6
Farm Business Tenancy less than 5 years	21.4
Farm Business Tenancy 5 to 10 years	21.4
Farm Business Tenancy 10 to 15 years	13.2
Farm Business Tenancy more than 15 years	16.6

Notes about figure 2 and table 2:

1. Equipped and bare land farms only.
2. For the 29 authorities that provided tenancy information.
3. Totals may not sum to 100% due to rounding.

Financial position of authorities

Total revenue in the year ending 31 March 2025 for the 19 authorities that provided complete financial data showed a total operational income of £11,980,900 against a total

operational expenditure of £5,624,200, giving an operational surplus of £6,356,700. Total non-operational income was £98,100, against a total non-operational expenditure of £212,300, giving a non-operational deficit of £114,200. The revenue account net surplus was therefore £6,242,500. **Table 11** summarises the total revenue account for land held by authorities for the year ended 31 March 2025. Please note that the financial position is for the 19 authorities that provided a response for all constituent financial variables in their account. Therefore, totals are not comparable to those in other years.

Case studies

Devon County Council

Russell and Becky McKee – Merryfield Farm, Holsworthy



Russ and Becky McKee joined the County Farms Estate in March 2020 as starter farm tenants. 5 years running up to this, they were farming out the back of a Land Rover armed with an electric fence, and at one point they were running on 120 acres of grass keep from 7 different landlords. Russ and Becky are now moving on from the Estate, having been offered a private sector farm at Tedburn St Mary.

“After six years farming Merryfield Farm on the Devon County Farms Estate, we’re preparing for a new chapter that reflects how our business, our values, and our ambitions have evolved over time. We’re incredibly excited to share that we will be moving to Oak Farm, a 170-acre mixed organic farm at Tedburn St Mary.

We, like most starter farm tenants, have been on the lookout for a long-term opportunity for our business to grow and have viewed several Farm Business Tenancies (FBT) that have come up around Devon & Cornwall over the years. However, this opportunity didn't

come about in the usual way. We first met Jem and Dave on a regenerative farm walk a few years ago and realised we had the same interests and farming ethos. Last year they proposed a joint farming venture to us which is part of their succession plan as they approach retirement. This will take the form of a twenty-year FBT once they retire in the next few years.

These starter farms exist to give farmers opportunities to begin, grow, and establish themselves, and we will always be enormously grateful for the role the estate has played in our journey. It gave us the foundation to develop our business, expand our knowledge, build our resilience, and become part of a wider farming community."

Adam and Holly Atkinson – Fairfield Farm, Denbury



Adam and Holly Atkinson are the new tenants at Fairfield Farm, Denbury. Holly comes from a non-farming background and qualified as a veterinarian after studying at Bristol University. Having worked on farms since her teenage years, she developed a strong passion for agriculture alongside veterinary medicine before moving full time into dairy farming. Adam grew up as the son of a dairy farm manager and has spent his life working within the dairy industry, managing and working on farms across the UK and New Zealand. Adam also works for Datamars Livestock as the South West development manager and as an independent dairy farm business consultant.

"As new entrants, milking our own herd is truly a dream come true and the result of many years of hard work, determination and a shared passion for dairy farming. We currently milk 95 Holstein Friesian cows within a predominantly grass-based system and hope to continue building the herd steadily over time.

We are proud to be supplying First Milk and Yeo Valley and are now beginning the journey of converting the farm to organic production to supply Yeo Valley Organics. Sustainability, cow health and focussing on a grass-based system are all central to the future we want to build at Fairfield Farm."

Lincolnshire County Council

Bailey Elliott, New Leake Farm

Bailey Elliott has always had a passion for farming and the outdoors, gaining practical experience on a local sheep farm from the age of 13. She studied Agriculture at Riseholme College before completing a degree in Countryside and Land Management at Harper Adams University.

Following a competitive re-letting process, Bailey was awarded the tenancy of New Leake Farm, a 100 acre starter arable holding, in 2023. As a new entrant to the industry, securing access to land and finance presented significant challenges, making the opportunity provided by the County Farms Estate an important stepping stone in establishing and developing her farming business.

As a qualified agronomist, Bailey has a strong interest in improving soil health and promoting sustainable land management practices across the holding. She is also passionate about maintaining traditional small-scale farming systems.

Ben and Pippa Williams, Mablethorpe Farm



Ben and his wife, Pippa, took on the Lincolnshire County Council smallholding in 2023 and have continued to develop their farming enterprise. Ben worked in garden maintenance and Pippa as a dairy manager before taking on the family farm in 2019. The tenancy has provided an opportunity to further expand their livestock enterprise and support the continued growth of their family business. The holding, located outside Mablethorpe, utilises herbal leys and rotational grazing to support a flock of approximately 1,000 sheep. Their farming business is integrated with their wider diversification activities through Eastfield Farm Plants, Tearoom and Farm Shop, where some of the lamb reared on the holding is sold directly to customers.

Ben and Pippa remain committed to environmental stewardship and continue to invest in the long-term sustainability of the holding.

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 52,700 hectares of agricultural land. This land provides approximately 1,778 holdings for around 1,265 tenant farmers.

Approximately 48% of the lettings are equipped farms (858 equipped holdings) and 35 lettings were made to new entrants from April 2024 to March 2025. The report shows that the 19 reporting authorities who submitted full financial information generated a revenue account net surplus of around £6.2 million in April 2024 to March 2025.

Tables

Table 3: Area of smallholdings land held by smallholdings authorities as at 31 March 2025 (hectares)

Notes:

1. Column totals (TOTAL') are underestimations due to an absence of information (indicated by [x]').
2. Values are estimates of the area of land let as smallholdings by each authority. This is calculated by multiplying the number of lettings by the average size of those lettings in hectares.

Local authority	Equipped farm let area	Bare land farm let area	Agricultural license let area	Total let area
Bedford	[x]	[x]	[x]	[x]
Brighton & Hove	4,000	1,155	0	5,155
Buckinghamshire	[x]	[x]	[x]	[x]
Cambridgeshire	[x]	[x]	[x]	[x]
Central Bedfordshire	[x]	[x]	[x]	[x]
Cheshire East	1,545	0	300	1,845
Cheshire West and Chester	176	0	7	183
Cornwall	3,133	767	[x]	3,900
Cumberland	0	105	78	183
Devon	3,378	136	298	3,812
Dorset	1,863	78	398	2,339
Durham	[x]	[x]	[x]	[x]
East Riding of Yorkshire	1,418	980	33	2,431
Essex	68	1	0	69
Gloucestershire	[x]	[x]	[x]	[x]
Hampshire	[x]	[x]	[x]	[x]

Local authority	Equipped farm let area	Bare land farm let area	Agricultural license let area	Total let area
Hartlepool	0	0	[x]	0
Herefordshire	[x]	[x]	[x]	[x]
Hertfordshire	1,116	307	241	1,664
Hillingdon	[x]	[x]	[x]	[x]
Leicestershire	2,208	60	446	2,714
Lincolnshire	5,589	1,018	0	6,607
Medway	0	24	28	52
Milton Keynes	107	10	[x]	117
Norfolk	5,037	1,481	72	6,590
North Lincolnshire	[x]	[x]	[x]	[x]
North Somerset	97	70	0	167
North Yorkshire	[x]	[x]	[x]	[x]
Nottinghamshire	[x]	[x]	[x]	[x]
Oxfordshire	16	322	6	344
Shropshire	222	13	0	235
Somerset	472	408	29	909
South Gloucestershire	275	0	[x]	275
Staffordshire	2,252	77	271	2,600
Suffolk	3,352	679	672	4,703
Surrey	646	120	20	786
Swindon	[x]	[x]	[x]	[x]
Warwickshire	1,581	312	[x]	1,893
West Berkshire	[x]	[x]	[x]	[x]
West Sussex	88	320	1	409
Westmorland and Furness	[x]	[x]	[x]	[x]
Wiltshire	1,189	345	284	1,818

Local authority	Equipped farm let area	Bare land farm let area	Agricultural license let area	Total let area
Worcestershire	226	341	317	884
TOTAL	40,054	9,129	3,501	52,684

Table 4: Number of smallholding lets held by smallholdings authorities as at 31 March 2025

Notes:

1. Column totals (TOTAL') are underestimations due to an absence of information (indicated by [x]').

Local authority	Equipped farm lets	Bare land farm lets	Agricultural license lets	Total smallholdings lets
Bedford	[x]	[x]	[x]	[x]
Brighton & Hove	14	13	0	27
Buckinghamshire	[x]	[x]	[x]	[x]
Cambridgeshire	[x]	[x]	[x]	[x]
Central Bedfordshire	[x]	[x]	[x]	[x]
Cheshire East	49	0	19	68
Cheshire West and Chester	16	0	1	17
Cornwall	69	45	[x]	114
Cumberland	0	10	42	52
Devon	64	7	19	90
Dorset	35	6	13	54
Durham	1	17	[x]	18
East Riding of Yorkshire	46	76	2	124
Essex	2	1	0	3
Gloucestershire	[x]	[x]	[x]	[x]
Hampshire	[x]	[x]	[x]	[x]
Hartlepool	0	0	2	2
Herefordshire	[x]	[x]	[x]	[x]
Hertfordshire	35	16	14	65
Hillingdon	[x]	[x]	[x]	[x]
Leicestershire	66	3	36	105
Lincolnshire	83	69	0	152
Medway	0	1	2	3
Milton Keynes	3	2	[x]	5
Norfolk	91	68	28	187
North Lincolnshire	[x]	[x]	[x]	[x]
North Somerset	4	6	0	10
North Yorkshire	[x]	[x]	[x]	[x]
Nottinghamshire	[x]	[x]	[x]	[x]
Oxfordshire	2	27	6	35
Shropshire	9	1	0	10
Somerset	17	8	9	34

Local authority	Equipped farm lets	Bare land farm lets	Agricultural license lets	Total smallholdings lets
South Gloucestershire	5	0	[x]	5
Staffordshire	60	6	21	87
Suffolk	60	28	34	122
Surrey	34	11	11	56
Swindon	[x]	[x]	[x]	[x]
Warwickshire	49	34	83	166
West Berkshire	[x]	[x]	[x]	[x]
West Sussex	6	22	2	30
Westmorland and Furness	[x]	[x]	[x]	[x]
Wiltshire	27	12	39	78
Worcestershire	11	31	17	59
TOTAL	858	520	400	1,778

Table 5: Rent due for smallholdings by smallholdings authorities as at 31 March 2025 (in pounds sterling)

Notes:

1. Column totals (TOTAL') are underestimations due to an absence of information (indicated by [x]').
2. All values are rounded to the nearest £100.
3. Rent due refers to what could be collected if every farm paid (see 'Glossary of terms' section for a definition of 'Rent from holdings - operational account').

Local authority	Rent due for equipped farms	Rent due for bare land farms	Rent due for agricultural licenses	Total rent due for land let as smallholdings
Bedford	[x]	[x]	[x]	[x]
Brighton & Hove	[x]	[x]	[x]	[x]
Buckinghamshire	[x]	[x]	[x]	[x]
Cambridgeshire	[x]	[x]	[x]	[x]
Central Bedfordshire	[x]	[x]	[x]	[x]
Cheshire East	672,900	0	97,000	769,900
Cheshire West and Chester	92,000	0	4,500	96,500
Cornwall	1,211,600	303,000	0	1,514,600
Cumberland	0	21,000	20,600	41,600
Devon	[x]	[x]	[x]	[x]
Dorset	616,800	20,500	93,900	731,200
Durham	[x]	[x]	[x]	[x]
East Riding of Yorkshire	371,300	381,300	6,800	759,400
Essex	8,500	0	0	8,500

Local authority	Rent due for equipped farms	Rent due for bare land farms	Rent due for agricultural licenses	Total rent due for land let as smallholdings
Gloucestershire	[x]	[x]	[x]	[x]
Hampshire	[x]	[x]	[x]	[x]
Hartlepool	0	0	30,900	30,900
Herefordshire	[x]	[x]	[x]	[x]
Hertfordshire	498,400	103,600	58,800	660,800
Hillingdon	[x]	[x]	[x]	[x]
Leicestershire	874,300	13,200	129,800	1,017,300
Lincolnshire	1,808,500	345,800	0	2,154,300
Medway	0	3,400	9,400	12,800
Milton Keynes	18,700	300	[x]	19,000
Norfolk	2,038,400	455,300	23,600	2,517,300
North Lincolnshire	0	1,700	[x]	1,700
North Somerset	48,900	10,200	3,900	63,000
North Yorkshire	[x]	[x]	[x]	[x]
Nottinghamshire	[x]	[x]	[x]	[x]
Oxfordshire	5,100	34,300	6,300	45,700
Shropshire	69,900	2,400	0	72,300
Somerset	64,000	323,200	12,500	399,700
South Gloucestershire	57,800	0	[x]	57,800
Staffordshire	1,004,200	19,500	82,100	1,105,800
Suffolk	990,000	210,300	206,100	1,406,400
Surrey	[x]	[x]	[x]	[x]
Swindon	[x]	[x]	[x]	[x]
Warwickshire	885,800	86,000	971,800	1,943,600

Local authority	Rent due for equipped farms	Rent due for bare land farms	Rent due for agricultural licenses	Total rent due for land let as smallholdings
West Berkshire	[x]	[x]	[x]	[x]
West Sussex	136,100	145,200	3,000	284,300
Westmorland and Furness	[x]	[x]	[x]	[x]
Wiltshire	[x]	[x]	[x]	[x]
Worcestershire	71,700	64,500	48,600	184,800
TOTAL	11,544,900	2,544,700	1,809,600	15,899,200

Table 6: Rent per hectare values for smallholding farms, expressed in terms of the authority's farm business sector, as at 31 March 2025 (£1 per hectare)

Notes:

1. For authorities that provided a business sector as well as complete rent and area data (24 out of 43 authorities).

2. No authorities stated themselves as primarily horticulture, so no data is available (indicated by [x]').

Authority sector	Rent per hectare due for equipped farms	Rent per hectare due for bare land farms	Rent per hectare due for agricultural licenses	Total rent per hectare for land let as smallholdings
Arable	352	319	294	345
Dairy	409	258	284	388
Dairy and stock rearing	389	214	291	369
Horticulture	[x]	[x]	[x]	[x]
Mixed and general	387	403	208	472
Stock rearing	319	107	1,050	133

Authority sector	Rent per hectare due for equipped farms	Rent per hectare due for bare land farms	Rent per hectare due for agricultural licenses	Total rent per hectare for land let as smallholdings
ALL TENANCIES	374	345	278	387

Table 7: Total area acquired and disposed of by smallholdings authorities between April 2024 and March 2025 (hectares)

Notes:

1. Column totals (TOTAL') are underestimations due to an absence of information (indicated by [x]').

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

Local authority	Acquired - Newly acquired	Disposed – Sold or exchanged	Acquired - Formerly leased	Disposed - Leased land	Total land acquired	Total land disposed
Bedford	[x]	[x]	[x]	[x]	[x]	[x]
Brighton & Hove	0	0	0	0	0	0
Buckinghamshire	[x]	[x]	[x]	[x]	[x]	[x]
Cambridgeshire	[x]	[x]	[x]	[x]	[x]	[x]
Central Bedfordshire	[x]	[x]	[x]	[x]	[x]	[x]
Cheshire East	0	0	0	0	0	0
Cheshire West and Chester	0	93	0	0	0	93
Cornwall	0	19	0	0	0	19
Cumberland	7	0	0	0	7	0
Devon	0	3	0	0	0	3
Dorset	0	28	0	49	0	77
Durham	[x]	0	[x]	[x]	[x]	0
East Riding of Yorkshire	0	0	0	0	0	0
Essex	1	11	0	0	1	11
Gloucestershire	[x]	[x]	[x]	[x]	[x]	[x]

Local authority	Acquired - Newly acquired	Disposed – Sold or exchanged	Acquired - Formerly leased	Disposed - Leased land	Total land acquired	Total land disposed
Hampshire	[x]	[x]	[x]	[x]	[x]	[x]
Hartlepool	0	0	0	0	0	0
Herefordshire	[x]	[x]	[x]	[x]	[x]	[x]
Hertfordshire	0	8	0	0	0	8
Hillingdon	[x]	[x]	[x]	[x]	[x]	[x]
Leicestershire	0	8	0	0	0	8
Lincolnshire	0	12	0	0	0	12
Medway	0	0	0	0	0	0
Milton Keynes	0	0	0	0	0	0
Norfolk	0	3	0	0	0	3
North Lincolnshire	0	0	0	0	0	0
North Somerset	0	0	0	0	0	0
North Yorkshire	[x]	[x]	[x]	[x]	[x]	[x]
Nottinghamshire	[x]	[x]	[x]	[x]	[x]	[x]
Oxfordshire	0	0	0	0	0	0
Shropshire	0	15	0	0	0	15
Somerset	0	169	0	0	0	169
South Gloucestershire	0	0	0	0	0	0
Staffordshire	0	1	0	0	0	1
Suffolk	0	0	0	0	0	0
Surrey	0	0	0	0	0	0
Swindon	[x]	[x]	[x]	[x]	[x]	[x]
Warwickshire	0	34	0	0	0	34
West Berkshire	[x]	[x]	[x]	[x]	[x]	[x]

Local authority	Acquired - Newly acquired	Disposed – Sold or exchanged	Acquired - Formerly leased	Disposed - Leased land	Total land acquired	Total land disposed
West Sussex	0	0	0	0	0	0
Westmorland and Furness	[x]	[x]	[x]	[x]	[x]	[x]
Wiltshire	0	0	0	0	0	0
Worcestershire	0	64	0	0	0	64
TOTAL	8	468	0	49	8	517

Table 8: Number of smallholding tenancies granted for the first time or terminated by smallholdings authorities between April 2024 and March 2025

Notes:

1. Column totals (TOTAL') are underestimations due to an absence of information (indicated by [x]').

2. Equipped and bare land farms only.

Local authority	Number of tenancies in 2025	Net change since 2024	Tenancies granted	Tenancies ceased
Bedford	[x]	[x]	[x]	[x]
Brighton & Hove	16	0	0	0
Buckinghamshire	[x]	[x]	[x]	[x]
Cambridgeshire	[x]	[x]	[x]	[x]
Central Bedfordshire	[x]	[x]	[x]	[x]
Cheshire East	40	-3	1	4
Cheshire West and Chester	8	-1	0	1
Cornwall	107	18	28	10
Cumberland	52	7	7	0
Devon	71	1	5	4
Dorset	41	-7	3	10
Durham	15	0	0	0
East Riding of Yorkshire	86	1	1	0
Essex	2	-1	1	2
Gloucestershire	[x]	[x]	[x]	[x]
Hampshire	[x]	[x]	[x]	[x]
Hartlepool	3	1	1	0
Herefordshire	[x]	[x]	[x]	[x]
Hertfordshire	49	1	2	1
Hillingdon	[x]	[x]	[x]	[x]
Leicestershire	58	-1	3	4
Lincolnshire	152	0	20	20
Medway	1	0	0	0
Milton Keynes	5	0	1	1
Norfolk	96	-3	4	7
North Lincolnshire	2	0	0	0
North Somerset	10	-3	0	3
North Yorkshire	[x]	[x]	[x]	[x]
Nottinghamshire	[x]	[x]	[x]	[x]
Oxfordshire	29	0	8	8

Local authority	Number of tenancies in 2025	Net change since 2024	Tenancies granted	Tenancies ceased
Shropshire	10	-2	0	2
Somerset	25	-5	0	5
South Gloucestershire	5	0	0	0
Staffordshire	63	-3	3	6
Suffolk	88	0	1	1
Surrey	43	0	1	1
Swindon	[x]	[x]	[x]	[x]
Warwickshire	79	-1	23	24
West Berkshire	[x]	[x]	[x]	[x]
West Sussex	28	-1	0	1
Westmorland and Furness	[x]	[x]	[x]	[x]
Wiltshire	39	0	1	1
Worcestershire	42	0	2	2
TOTAL	1,265	-2	116	118

Table 9: Specific details of smallholding tenancies granted and ended by smallholdings authorities between April 2024 and March 2025 (number of tenancies)

Notes:

1. Column totals (TOTAL') are underestimations due to an absence of information (indicated by [x]').
2. Equipped and bare land farms only.
3. 'New tenants' are lettings to first time entrants to the individual estate (those who have not previously occupied a smallholdings authority farm).

Local authority	New tenants - Equipped farms	New tenants - Bare land farms	Internal promotion	Transfer to other estates	Leave estate for other opportunities
Bedford	[x]	[x]	[x]	[x]	[x]
Brighton & Hove	0	1	2	0	0
Buckinghamshire	[x]	[x]	[x]	[x]	[x]
Cambridgeshire	[x]	[x]	[x]	[x]	[x]
Central Bedfordshire	[x]	[x]	[x]	[x]	[x]
Cheshire East	1	0	0	0	0
Cheshire West and Chester	0	0	0	0	0
Cornwall	2	0	0	0	0
Cumberland	0	0	0	0	0
Devon	3	1	1	0	0
Dorset	2	1	0	0	0
Durham	[x]	[x]	[x]	[x]	[x]
East Riding of Yorkshire	0	1	0	0	0

Local authority	New tenants - Equipped farms	New tenants - Bare land farms	Internal promotion	Transfer to other estates	Leave estate for other opportunities
Essex	0	0	0	0	0
Gloucestershire	[x]	[x]	[x]	[x]	[x]
Hampshire	[x]	[x]	[x]	[x]	[x]
Hartlepool	0	0	0	0	0
Herefordshire	[x]	[x]	[x]	[x]	[x]
Hertfordshire	2	0	0	0	0
Hillingdon	[x]	[x]	[x]	[x]	[x]
Leicestershire	0	0	[x]	[x]	[x]
Lincolnshire	0	1	1	0	0
Medway	0	0	0	0	0
Milton Keynes	3	2	[x]	[x]	[x]
Norfolk	3	1	0	0	0
North Lincolnshire	0	0	0	0	0
North Somerset	0	0	0	0	0
North Yorkshire	[x]	[x]	[x]	[x]	[x]
Nottinghamshire	[x]	[x]	[x]	[x]	[x]
Oxfordshire	0	1	0	0	0
Shropshire	0	0	0	0	0
Somerset	0	0	0	0	0
South Gloucestershire	[x]	[x]	[x]	[x]	[x]
Staffordshire	3	0	0	0	2
Suffolk	0	1	0	0	0
Surrey	1	0	0	0	0
Swindon	[x]	[x]	[x]	[x]	[x]

Local authority	New tenants - Equipped farms	New tenants - Bare land farms	Internal promotion	Transfer to other estates	Leave estate for other opportunities
Warwickshire	4	0	2	0	0
West Berkshire	[x]	[x]	[x]	[x]	[x]
West Sussex	0	0	0	0	0
Westmorland and Furness	[x]	[x]	[x]	[x]	[x]
Wiltshire	1	[x]	[x]	[x]	[x]
Worcestershire	0	0	0	0	0
TOTAL	25	10	6	0	2

Table 10: Breakdown of the number of smallholding tenancies held between April 2024 and March 2025

Notes:

1. Column totals (TOTAL') are underestimations due to an absence of information (indicated by [x]').

2. Equipped and bare land farms only.

Local authority	Lifetime	Retirement	Farm Business Tenancies	Secondary lettings	Total lettings and tenancies
Bedford	[x]	[x]	[x]	[x]	[x]
Brighton & Hove	0	12	4	0	16
Buckinghamshire	[x]	[x]	[x]	[x]	[x]
Cambridgeshire	[x]	[x]	[x]	[x]	[x]
Central Bedfordshire	[x]	[x]	[x]	[x]	[x]
Cheshire East	14	7	19	1	41
Cheshire West and Chester	3	4	1	0	8
Cornwall	10	11	86	5	112

Local authority	Lifetime	Retirement	Farm Business Tenancies	Secondary lettings	Total lettings and tenancies
Cumberland	0	0	10	0	10
Devon	4	4	63	19	90
Dorset	2	4	35	9	50
Durham	[x]	[x]	[x]	[x]	[x]
East Riding of Yorkshire	14	10	62	36	122
Essex	0	0	2	0	2
Gloucestershire	[x]	[x]	[x]	[x]	[x]
Hampshire	[x]	[x]	[x]	[x]	[x]
Hartlepool	0	0	3	0	3
Herefordshire	[x]	[x]	[x]	[x]	[x]
Hertfordshire	7	3	39	14	63
Hillingdon	[x]	[x]	[x]	[x]	[x]
Leicestershire	8	11	39	24	82
Lincolnshire	38	14	100	0	152
Medway	0	0	1	0	1
Milton Keynes	0	0	5	[x]	5
Norfolk	6	8	82	63	159
North Lincolnshire	1	0	1	0	2
North Somerset	1	0	9	2	12
North Yorkshire	[x]	[x]	[x]	[x]	[x]
Nottinghamshire	[x]	[x]	[x]	[x]	[x]
Oxfordshire	1	0	28	0	29
Shropshire	4	1	5	1	11
Somerset	6	10	9	5	30
South Gloucestershire	2	1	2	5	10

Local authority	Lifetime	Retirement	Farm Business Tenancies	Secondary lettings	Total lettings and tenancies
Staffordshire	8	2	53	18	81
Suffolk	21	8	59	25	113
Surrey	13	0	30	2	45
Swindon	[x]	[x]	[x]	[x]	[x]
Warwickshire	10	6	56	[x]	72
West Berkshire	[x]	[x]	[x]	[x]	[x]
West Sussex	4	2	22	[x]	28
Westmorland and Furness	[x]	[x]	[x]	[x]	[x]
Wiltshire	7	2	30	12	51
Worcestershire	19	7	16	0	42
TOTAL	203	127	871	241	1,442

Table 11: Revenue account for land held by smallholdings authorities between April 2024 and March 2025

Notes:

1. For authorities that provided complete financial information (19 out of 43 authorities).

2. All values are rounded to the nearest £100.

Table 11a: Operational account income

Operational account - Income	Amount (£)
Rent from holdings	10,946,900
Other rents	487,300
Other income	546,700
TOTAL	11,980,900

Table 11b: Operational account expenditure

Operational account - Expenditure	Amount (£)
Repairs and maintenance	2,729,000
Rents, rates, annuities and water charges	486,400
Net tenant rights valuations	128,900
Estate management	1,846,600
Other expenditure	433,300
TOTAL	5,624,200

Table 11c: Non-operational account income

Non-operational account - Income	Amount (£)
Indirect income	98,100
TOTAL	98,100

Table 11d: Non-operational account expenditure

Non-operational account - Expenditure	Amount (£)
Central support costs	166,500
Other expenditure	45,800
TOTAL	212,300

Table 11e: Revenue account net surplus

Revenue account net surplus	Amount (£)
Operational account surplus	6,356,700
Non-operational account deficit	-114,200
NET SURPLUS	6,242,500

Glossary of terms

- **Agricultural letting farms** - Farms possessing, for example, grazing licences, contract farming agreements, 364 day licences, and agricultural lettings for less than one year.
- **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.
- **New tenants** - These tenancies are lettings to first time entrants to the individual estate (those who have not previously occupied a local authority farm).
- **Number of smallholding lets** - This is equal to the number of equipped farm lets plus the number of bare land farm lets plus the 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 or licenses are occupied 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, for example lettings made under the provisions of the Agricultural Holdings Act 1986, but before the Agricultural Tenancies Act 1995.
- **Secondary lettings** - Secondary lettings describe additional land let as part of a Farm Business Tenancy to tenants of principal holdings, such as equipped or bare land holdings managed as an integral part of principal holding.
- **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, other fees and charges. 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.
- **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, such as 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 (such as 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 or buildings.
- **Estate management (£)** - This includes professional (such as surveyors), administrative and clerical support employee costs, office accommodation charges, including expenditure on repairs and maintenance, transport costs and other sundry expenses, as well as any other ad-hoc specialist advice (such as payments to consultants). Employee costs include salaries, national insurance, training, pension, removal and resettlement costs and conference expenses. This also includes the

net cost (such as client or 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.

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.
- **Central support costs (£)** - This includes charges received from other departments within the estate not identified within the Estate Management section, such as 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.

ISBN 978-1-5286-6879-8

E03713378