

# Public Document Pack

## RURAL FORUM

THURSDAY, 9 MARCH 2017

PRESENT: Councillors Christine Bateson (Chairman), David Evans (Vice-Chairman), David Coppinger and David Hilton

Also in attendance: Councillor Samantha Rayner, Louise Warbrick (Thames Valley Police), Tim Parry (Community Council for Berkshire), Paul Rinder (Rinder Ltd), Richard Copas (Copas Farms), Michael Craig (Forest Green Farm), William Emmett (Hornbuckle Farm), Andrew Randall (Randall Farms), Pauline Watts (How Lane Farm), Phil Watts (How Lane Farm), Phil Mortimer (Fairacres Farm), Annie Keene (Applehouse Farm), Alan Keene (Applehouse Farm and Bisham Parish Council Chairman), James Copas (Copas Farms), David James (C Farms) and Barbara Story (Sunninghill and Ascot Parish Council).

Officers: Harjit Hunjan, Arlene Kersley, Shilpa Manek, Kevin Mist, David Scott and Helen Steward

### CHAIRMAN'S INTRODUCTION

The Chairman welcomed everyone to the meeting. All attendees introduced themselves.

### APOLOGIES FOR ABSENCE

Apologies for absence were received from Councillor Colin Rayner, Jane Jennings, NFU, John Emmett, Simon Rinder and Russell Watts.

### DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST

None received.

### MINUTES

The minutes of the last meeting were **Unanimously Agreed**.

### ORDER OF ITEMS

**RESOLVED UNANIMOUSLY** that the order of items on the Agenda be changed.

### UPDATE FROM THE FARMING COMMUNITY (20 MINS)

An update was received from Mr Nick Philp, the potential impact of BREXIT and the farming world. Presentation attached with minutes.

Points discussed after the presentation included:

- Why the production has gone down over the years, is it a result of more imports? The Forum was informed that it was cheaper to produce milk and pig meat abroad, potentially prices could increase once out of Europe.
- Comparison to New Zealand farming. The Forum was informed that New Zealand farming was very different, they had a no-nonsense policy with no red tape and bureaucracy.

- The Forum was asked what they thought were the views of the Agriculture Minister, the Forum felt the decision lay in the Prime Ministers hands. The word “trading” had been used many times by the Prime Minister, now it was time to see what that meant.
- Councillor Samantha Rayner asked the Forum, how RBWM could help the farmers. It was suggested that it would be really helpful to raise awareness to residents of farmers using HGVs and working at night, due to efficiency and effectiveness.
- It was noted that there was a risk that a commonly used herbicide (glyphosate) could be banned as it was thought to have carcinogenic properties. This herbicide was used widely and banning it would significantly effect every industry and would have a major impact on the agriculture production.
- Rural economy and planning.

The Forum thanked Nick Philp for a very interesting and informative overview of the issue.

**ACTION: Update at next meeting**

RBWM LAND OWNERSHIP (20 MINS)

Kevin Mist, Head of Communities & Economic Development gave a presentation on Ockwells Country Park. See attached presentation.

Points discussed after the presentation included:

- Hay collection from Ockwells Country Park was this being considered for ‘set aside’.
- What were RBWM future plans to buy more land for more public parks, Maidenhead Golf Club. Kevin Mist advised that he was not aware of loss of any Public Open Space in the borough and Maidenhead Golf Club was not public open park space.
- Councillor Samantha Rayner explained that a good opportunity arose to buy the land so it was bought. The borough did not go specifically looking to buy land.
- Councillor Hilton advised the Forum that some opportunist land had also been bought in Ascot. It was always on a case by case basis.
- The demand for footpaths was enormous in the rural areas of the borough, this had been recognised and was being addressed.
- The budgets for maintenance were discussed and considered to be based on our wider management of public open space expenses.

**ACTION: Report further updates back at a future Rural Forum**

RURAL CRIME (20 MINS)

Inspector Louise Walbrick, Thames Valley Police, introduced herself to the Forum and explained that if there were any specific questions, she could take them away and respond via email directly.

Points highlighted included:

- Currently looking at 100 offenses in the current year.
- There had been a rise in theft of tools and hare coursing locally.
- Training was being given to all officers to help manage the accurate recording of crimes and support to the rural community
- In February 2017, a week of action had taken place refreshing rural crime activity. Tool marking kits had been purchased and officers had gone to farms to use them to help protect equipment.
- The Forum asked ‘what is considered as rural crime?’ Some of the examples included theft from sites, the hunting act, criminal damage, burglary of dwelling, on farm and from out farm buildings, theft of plant, damage of land and damage to animals. Mr Emmett highlighted that fly tipping was also a major problem. The Inspector advised that the police could not prosecute for fly tipping but could work with council to prevent and pursue the offenders.

- Mr Rinder gave the Forum a list of events and examples of actions that had taken place on farms in the area with respect to hare, deer and sheep coursing. A local resident patrol team had been put together to try to prevent the incidents taking place. Public awareness had been raised of the local issue and now great feedback was received from the public. Police had been very helpful but if there was no evidence, it was not taken forward.
- The penalty for hare coursing may involve a custodial sentence and any dogs could be removed or destroyed.
- The closing of or restriction of access along different public rights of way was discussed as this could reduce vehicular access and may deter offenders.
- The Royal Estate was also suffering hare coursing.
- Only one/two hares were typically taken per surveillance session, however prize money could be very substantial.

### AFFORDABLE HOUSING AND THE BOROUGH LOCAL PLAN (20 MINS)

Jenifer Jackson, Head of Planning updated the Forum on the development process of the Borough Local Plan. The first stage had now completed and all 7000 issues from residents were currently being considered by officers. The next stage was Regulation 19 once approved by Council. Currently the infrastructure was being considered and Planning was working very closely with the Housing team.

Helen Steward, Housing Enabling Officer on Affordable Housing addressed the Forum explaining her role. The role bridges the gap between frontline housing services and the planning system to translate housing need into new housing delivery. The main aim is to improve the availability of affordable housing and diversify the types of housing available to meet the needs of more people, taking into consideration the recently published Housing White Paper, funding and national trends.

Arlene Kersley, Rural Housing Independent Advisor has worked with RBWM for the previous 11 years. There were 11 RBWM Parishes deemed to fall in what are defines as rural parished areas, however the current definition/order were due to change shortly. The housing in these 11 areas involves additional restrictions in relation to sale of the properties. Rural exception sites were discussed since the borough currently only had two and more were required. The legislation on this was currently changing. Community Land Trusts were discussed where communities could come together to create a trust.

Points discussed by the Forum included:

- Forum members were happy to hear the passion in the new team.
- There was a significant disconnect between housing need and availability of suitable housing for farm workers.
- Farm workers should be considered as key workers.
- Currently, housing was provided on farms but new workers could not afford housing in the area.
- The borough had an aging population and therefore the borough needed youngsters to stay within RBWM to provide an aging workforce.

**ACTION: Confirm current list of the 11 rural parished areas with the minutes.**

### RURAL FARM WALK (10 MINS)

The Chairman advised the Rural Forum that the Rural Walk was due to be on Monday 12 June 2017 at 6pm at Stroud Farm, Holyport, Maidenhead, Berkshire, SL6 2LJ. There would be a tour round the farm followed by a BBQ.

**ACTION: Clerk to advise all Members of the Council to 'hold the date'.**

**ACTION: Farming Association to personally invite Ward Councillors and their partners in May 2017.**

Tim Parry, Chief Operating Officer, Community Council for Berkshire, highlighted the Thames Valley Berkshire Local Enterprise Partnership is inviting owners of new and established businesses based in rural Berkshire to find out more about how they can apply for a share of the European Agricultural Fund for Rural Development (EAFRD).  
If you would like to attend the event on 14 March, please click on the link below to book your place. Please be aware that places are limited.

<https://www.eventbrite.co.uk/e/thames-valley-berkshire-lep-eafrd-workshop-tickets-31876681011>

DATES OF FUTURE MEETINGS

The dates of the next Rural Forum are :

- Monday 6 November 2017 at 5.30pm in the Council Chamber, Maidenhead
- Tuesday 6 March 2018 at 5.30pm in the Guildhall, Windsor

The meeting, which began at 6.00 pm, finished at 8.00 pm

CHAIRMAN.....

DATE.....

# BREXIT

## Implications on Farming in the Royal Borough

5



Our escape?



# Our Brexit Team



# Impact of BREXIT

Focus is on the three main policy areas of:

**TRADE**



**LABOUR**



**DOMESTIC  
AGRICULTURAL POLICY**





# Policy position - TRADE



- EU Membership enables free movement of trade and labour to other member countries
- Other trading nations e.g China, USA, India subject to tariffs and restrictions through EU

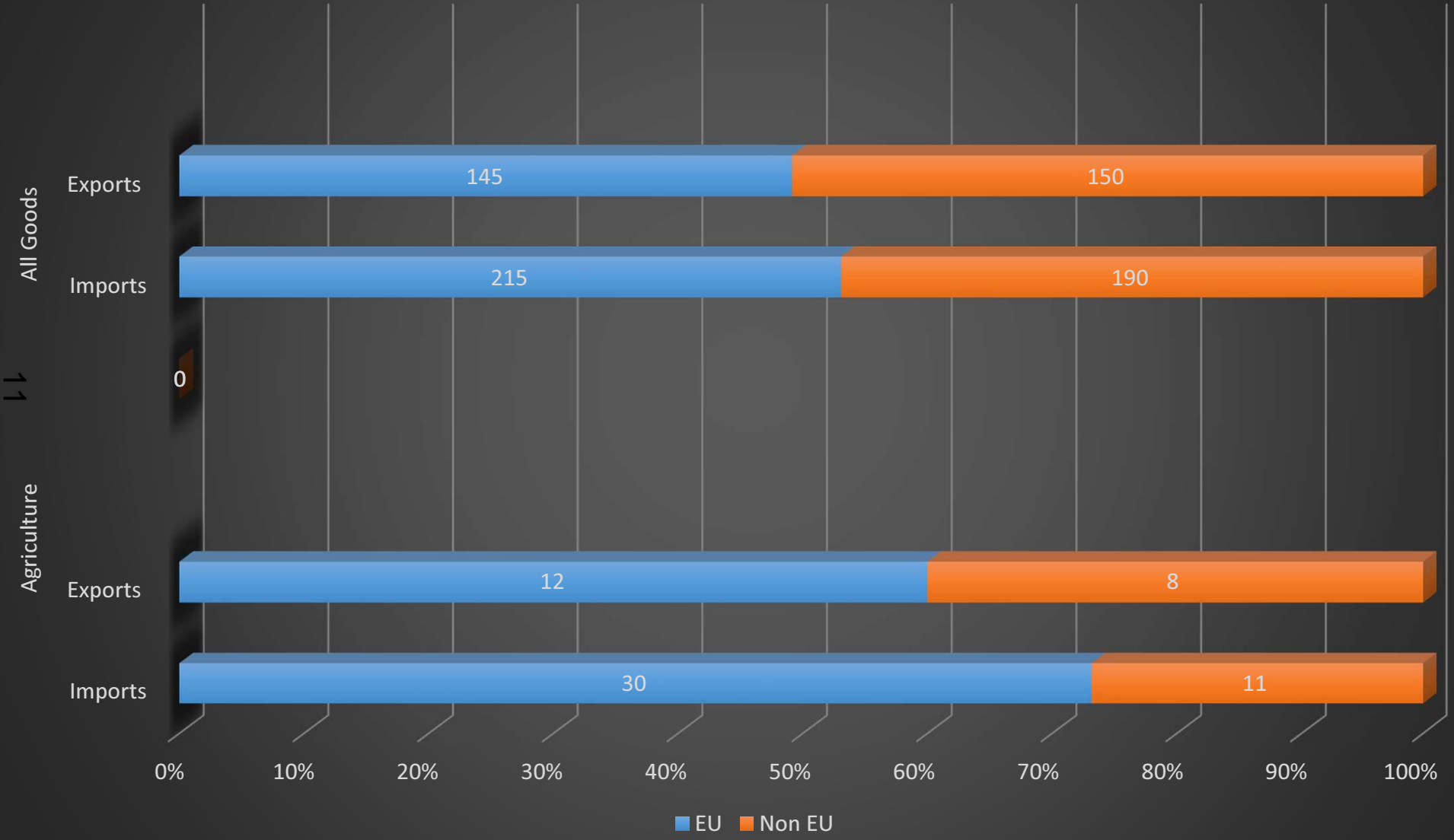
- o - If no agreement made by March 2019 WTO rules imposed
- UK Government position moving towards free trade arrangements with other nations
- Standards – possible compromise of British high standards e.g. potential of hormone treated beef from USA?



# Under WTO scenario, UK exports to EU would be subject to import tariffs

Product	Effective % tariff (2015 prices)	Tariff (p/kg) (current)
Fresh/chilled pig carcasses	50%	47.8
Frozen boneless pork cuts	65%	77.5
Fresh milk	74%	19.4
Natural butter	63%	169.0
Cheddar cheese	42%	149.0
Fresh/chilled sheep meat, bone-in, excluding short forequarters, chines/best ends	51%	236.7

# Import / Export £bns to UK



# Kent in April 2019?



# Policy position - LABOUR



- EU labour - particularly affecting the horticulture and poultry sectors (permanent and seasonal)
  - Horticulture requires 95,000 seasonal workers by 2021

13

- Seasonal Agricultural Permit Scheme (SAPS) the obvious solution.
- Can the government have it in place soon enough?
- At least ten years before robotics could take over from seasonal labour



# Domestic Agricultural Policy



# Current system

- One size fits all Common Agricultural Policy
- Currently paid on an area based scheme with environment and social conditions
- <sup>15</sup>Environmental schemes available but only financially reimburse farmers for possible loss of income on land taken out of production. i.e. not incentive or reward based

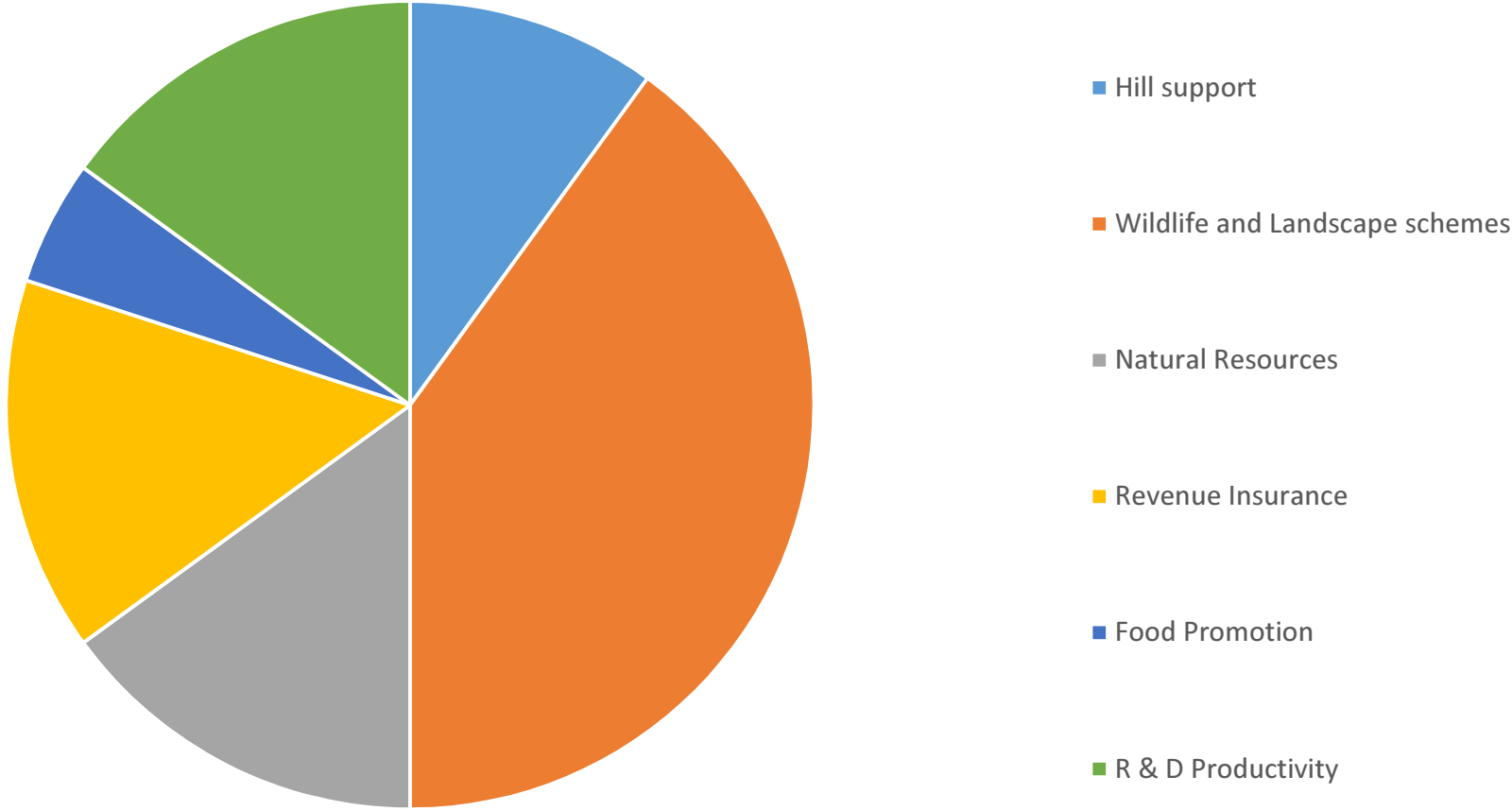
# Future UK Agricultural Policy

- Current spend £3 billion on farm schemes.
  - Only keep NHS going for 9 days
- Could remove all support and leave it to the open market e.g. New Zealand
  - Massive impact on rural landscape and communities
  - Government will have no control
  - Food Security

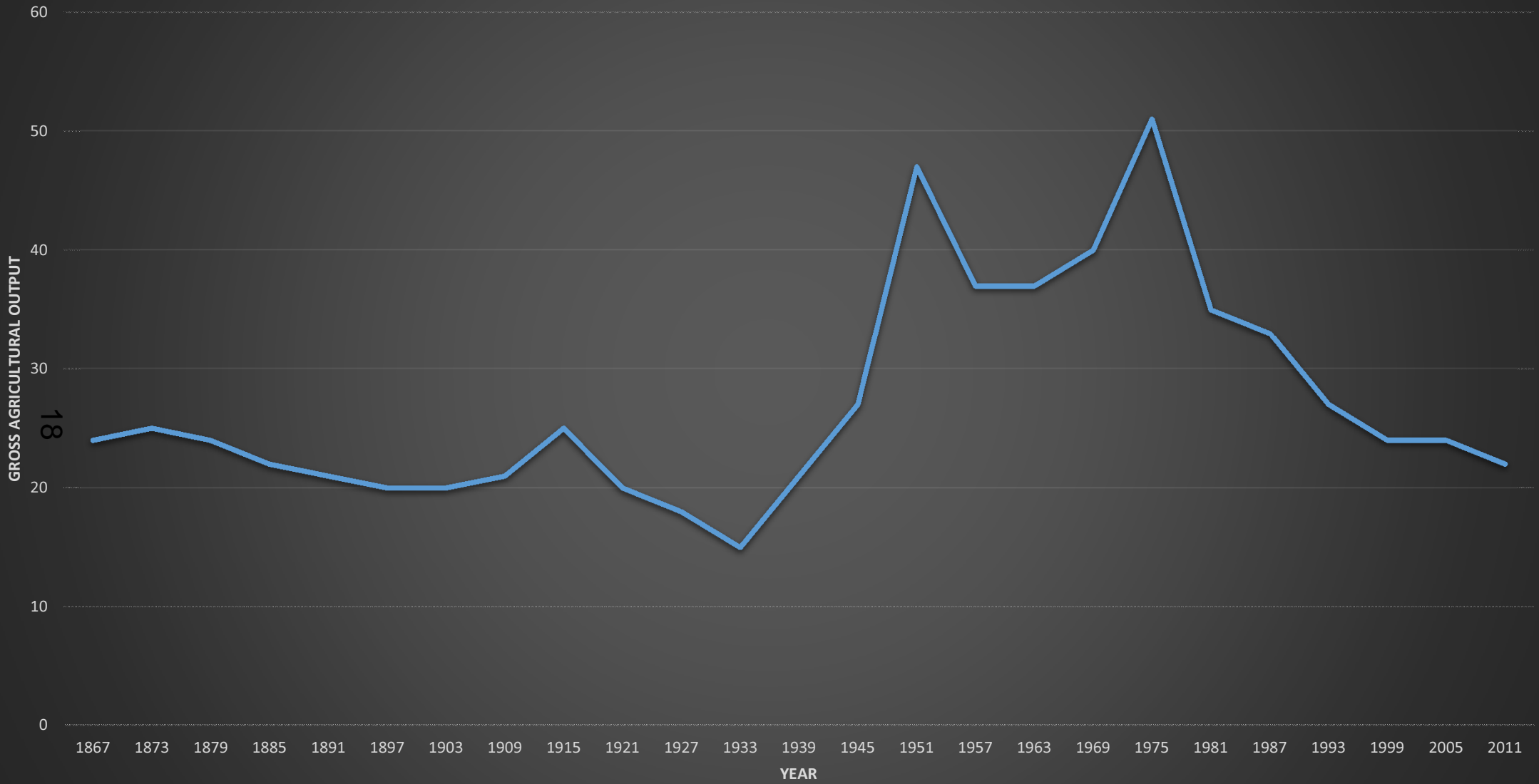


# Possible UKAP Budget Share 2025?

17



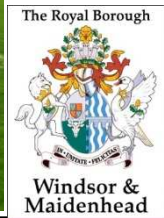
# Uk Farm Output 1867 to 2015



# Ockwells Country Park

Kevin Mist





# Why we purchased the land

- Outdoor Space Strategy and Playing Pitch Strategy both identify need for additional facilities in the Maidenhead area
- The land is adjacent to existing Ockwells Park (54.14 acres) which provides the built infrastructure such as car park, toilets, formal play area and café
- The land is close to existing housing, a public bridleway and public rights of way
- It has ancient woodland and potential to provide areas of ecological interest and biodiversity

# What did RBWM purchase and what did it cost?

- 34.91 Hectares (86.27 Acres)
- £725k



# What have we done so far



- Ecological survey
  - Topographical survey
  - Tree survey
  - Bridge survey
- 
- Submitted a planning application for change of use from Agricultural to Assembly & Leisure (Public Open Space)
  - Cleared the site of inappropriate materials
  - Undertaken tree works and tree planting
  - Opened up junctions to the existing park

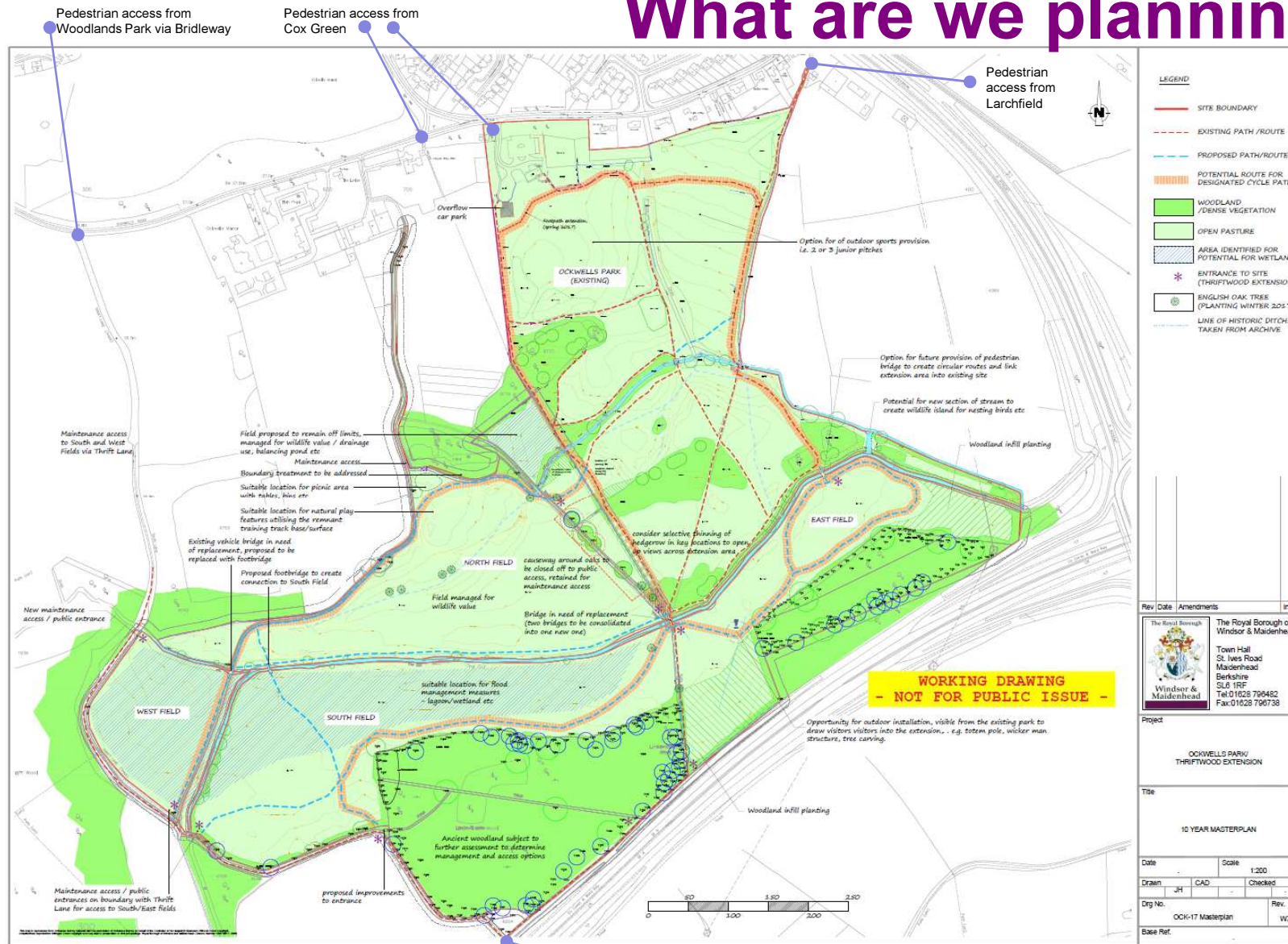
## Consultees to date

- Local Parish Council
- Local Ward Councillors
- Wild Maidenhead
- Cycle Forum
- Public Rights of Way officers
- Ecologists
- Tree Officers
- Café operator
- Braywick Nature Centre





# What are we planning?



**LEGEND**

- SITE BOUNDARY
- EXISTING PATH /ROUTE
- PROPOSED PATH/ROUTE
- POTENTIAL ROUTE FOR DESIGNATED CYCLE PATH
- WOODLAND /DENSE VEGETATION
- OPEN PASTURE
- AREA IDENTIFIED FOR POTENTIAL FOR WETLAND
- ENTRANCE TO SITE (THRIFTWOOD EXTENSION)
- ENGLISH OAK TREE (PLANTING WINTER 2027)
- LINE OF HISTORIC DITCHES TAKEN FROM ARCHIVE

Rev	Date	Amendments	INT

The Royal Borough of Windsor & Maidenhead  
 Town Hall  
 St. Ives Road  
 Maidenhead  
 Berkshire  
 SL6 1RF  
 Tel: 01628 796482  
 Fax: 01628 796738

Project  
 OCKWELLS PARK / THRIFTWOOD EXTENSION

Title  
 10 YEAR MASTERPLAN

Date	Scale	1:200
Drawn	JH	CAD
Checked		
Rev.		
Dirg No.		
Rev.		
Base Ref.		



25

**WORKING DRAWING  
 - NOT FOR PUBLIC ISSUE -**

# Any Questions

26



Windsor & Maidenhead