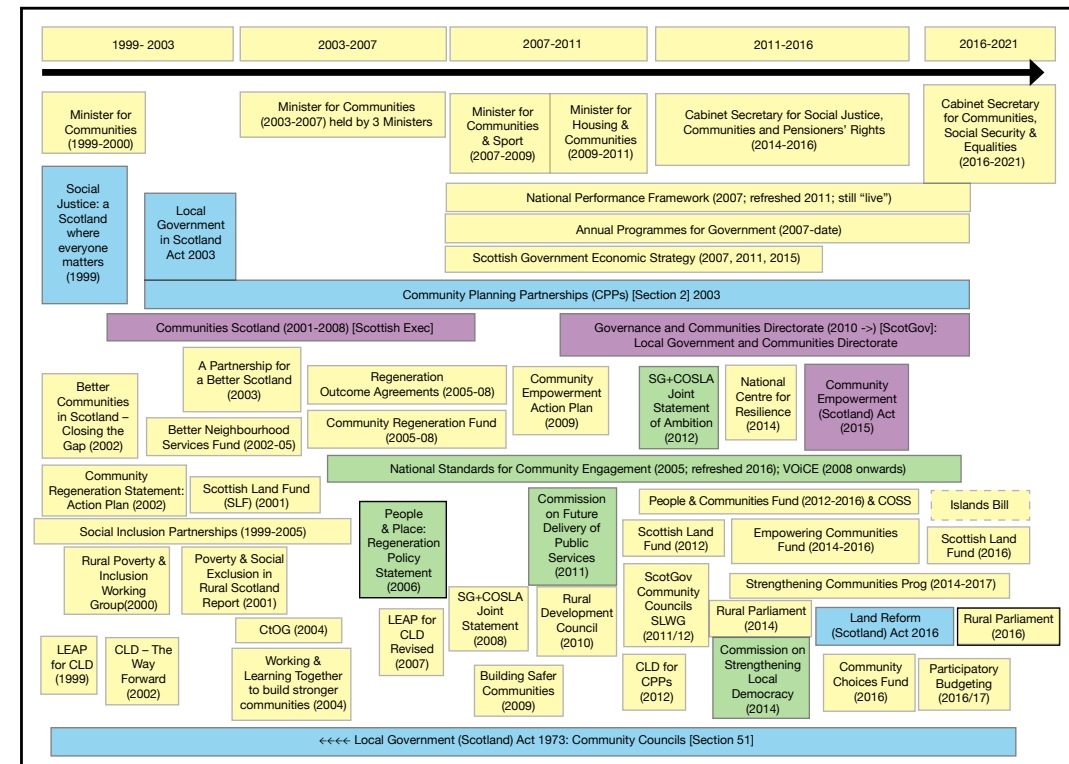


# Policies for Communities in Scotland: are they delivering national resilience outcomes?

- **Since 1999**, there have been **many policies, programmes and funds** to support community resilience.
- When the original Social Justice Strategy was launched, **data** was seen as **essential**, so that **"Scotland will know** if we are moving towards a fairer, more just nation".
- However, 17 years later, **we do not know** whether all these policies have changed outcomes for communities across Scotland.
- This is because: (1) **policies and programmes do not feed into each other**; (2) **indicators change significantly** with each new policy; and (3) **local-level evidence** is not pulled together to assess progress towards **national community outcomes**.
- In rural areas, **lack of evidence** is particularly concerning, especially coupled with over-reliance on the Scottish Index of Multiple Deprivation (SIMD). **But it is no longer acceptable to say that it is "too difficult" to collect data in and for rural areas.**
- There is an urgent need to **develop a framework** for further evidence-gathering plus smarter use of what we already know.
- If this does not happen soon, we will have **no clear picture of what has changed and why**. It will also be **impossible to know** what to stop and what to continue.



## Rural Scotland in Focus 2016

In our 2016 Report, we have examined agricultural sectors and their trends, the multiple outcomes of diverse estates, the feasibility of woodland and forestry goals, the economic significance of wider rural businesses, and the policy landscape surrounding community resilience.

We have highlighted complexities, trends, drivers, inhibitors and enablers. We have described directions of travel, exploring how and whether these have delivered (or could deliver) higher-level outcomes, together with the need for adaptation.

We have reflected on timelines dating back many decades. These reflections have enabled us to assess where rural has come from, where and how drivers and priorities have changed over time, and – by projecting forward, even in these times of heightened uncertainty – we have explored potential future options.

Based on our analysis, we continue to see the need for a **coherent, measurable rural strategy situated within a national policy framework, which builds on the innovation and creativity of those in rural Scotland**. Such a strategy would bring together the resources, needs, opportunities, conflicts, threats, drivers and wider policy context within a **collective, single frame of reference**.

We propose that such a rural strategy would need to have **three aims**:

1. To set out the **vision for rural Scotland**, and how the different rural-specific interventions deliver to that vision;
2. To monitor, evaluate and review how national policies are supporting, or **hampering, delivery of that rural vision**, potentially using a type of “rural proofing” approach;
3. To develop **ways of measuring progress** in order to track how rural is delivering to (a) its vision and (b) the Outcomes of the National Performance Framework.

Combining these three aims ensures that the rural strategy would not lead to rural becoming siloed or separated. Instead, the role of both national and rural-specific interventions in supporting (or hindering) the vision of rural Scotland would be tracked, and the integral contribution of rural to Scotland’s National Outcomes would be “mapped”.

Although we are entering a time of unprecedented uncertainty, this period also presents opportunity – one which a confident and ambitious rural Scotland can seize by being inclusive, innovative and forward-thinking.

# Rural Policy Centre



# Rural Scotland in Focus 2016



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# Foreword

I am delighted to welcome you to the fourth edition of SRUC's *Rural Scotland in Focus*. Our two-yearly reports give you a fast-track to up-to-date evidence and commentary on key topics of rural and national importance, in order to inform policy, practice and research.

In our 2016 Report, we have focused on three themes. Firstly, changing land management, where we show the evolving face of agriculture across all its sectors, examine the important role of private, community and non-governmental organisation owned estates, and explore the importance of woodland and forestry for Scotland's environment and economy. Secondly, we describe the critical contribution made by Scotland's wider rural economy which encompasses a range of enterprises across a breadth of sizes and sectors. Thirdly, we analyse the policy push towards resilient communities, and question whether the evidence exists to say with certainty that such policies have made a significant difference at national level. For all three themes, we have looked both backwards and forwards, identifying how various drivers have shaped decisions over many decades, exploring how this leads to an accumulation of outcomes which then determine options for the future.

As with our previous reports, we are driven by the desire to provide impartial, objective, high quality evidence and commentary around issues of central importance to the future of rural Scotland. We have been supported in our analysis by contributors from across the private, public and third sectors, who have shared their valuable perspectives and knowledge, lending additional depth to the themes we have presented. This partnership approach continues to be a valued hallmark of the *Rural Scotland in Focus* reporting process.

In 2016, this combination of evidence leads us to conclude, as in our previous reports, that there is a pressing need for a rural strategy which not only brings together the policies and programmes that affect rural areas, but also couples these with the energy, innovation, resourcefulness and entrepreneurship of those living and working in rural communities and businesses. A forward-thinking and coherent policy approach, underpinned by solid evidence for its evaluation, monitoring and adaptation, will support an ambitious and confident rural Scotland that will create a step change in its contribution to a fairer, greener, smarter and more prosperous Scotland.

## Ro-ràdh

Tha mi toilichte fàilte a chur oirbh chun cheathramh iris de *Fòcas air Tuath* na h-Alba bho Cholaiste Tuath na h-Alba. Tha na h-aithisgean againn gach dara bliadhna a' toirt dhuibh slighe sgiobalta chun fhianais agus na beachdan as ùire air cuspairean cudromach dhan tuath agus dhan dùthaich. Tha seo feumail ann a bhith a' dealbh phoileasaidhean, chleachdaidhean agus rannsachaidh.

Ann an Aithisg 2016, chuir sinn ar fòcas air trì cuspairean. An-toiseach, atharrachadh ann an riaghladh talmhainn, far a bheil sinn a' foillseachadh fàs air gach earrann de dh'ìomhaigh àiteachais, sgrùdadh air dleastanas cudromach oighreachdan fo shealbh phrìobhaideach, fo shealbh choimhearsnachdan agus fo shealbh bhuidhnean neo-riaghaltais, agus gu rannsachadh dè cho cudromach 's a tha coilltean do dh'àrainneachd is do dh'eaconamaidh na h-Alba. San dara h-àite, tha sinn a' mìneachadh cho riatanach sa tha eaconamaidh tuath na h-Alba san fharsaingeachd, a' gabhail a-steach raon de dh'ìomairtean de dh'iomadh meud is cruth. San treas àite, tha sinn a' toirt sùil mhionaideach air sparradh poileasaidh a chum coimhearsnachdan làidir, agus a' faighneachd a bheil fianais ann le cinnt gun tug na poileasaidhean sin buaidh mhòr sam bith aig ìre nàiseanta. A thaobh na trì cùisean, thug sinn sùil air ais agus air adhart, a' comharrachadh mar a tha cuid de dh'ùilean air buaidh a thoirt air co-dhùnaidhean thairis iomadh bliadhna, a' rannsachadh na builean a dh'èirich asta sin agus mar a dhearbhas seo roghainnean airson an àm a tha romhainn.

Coltach ri na h-aithisgean eile a dh'ullaich sinn, 's e tha fa-near dhuinn fianais agus beachdan a thoirt seachad, a tha neo-thaobhach agus aig sàr àrd inbhe, mu chuissean a tha fìor riatanach do thuath na h-Alba san àm ri teachd. Fhuair sinn taic leis an anailis bho fheadhainn an sàs ann an roinnean prìobhaideach agus poblach agus cuideachd bhon treas roinn. Bhuapasan thàinig seallaidhean agus eòlas, a' toirt dhuinn dòimhneachd a bharrachd air na cùisean. Tha an compàirteachas seo na chomharra luachmhor ann am pròiseas aithriseachd *Fòcas air Tuath* na h-Alba.

Ann an 2016, tha an cruinneachadh de dh'fhianais gar toirt gu co-dhùnadh, dìreach mar a thachair anns na h-aithisgean roimhe seo, gu bheil dian-fheum air ro-innleachd dhan tuath a bhios a' toirt ri chèile, chan e a-mhàin na poileasaidhean is prògraman a tha ri toirt buaidh air sgìrean san tuath, ach a tha dhan ceangal ri lùths, ùr-ghnathas, innleachdas agus gnothachas an fheadhainn a tha a' fuireach agus ag obair ann an coimhearsnachd air an tuath. Nan deidheadh gabhail ri poileasaidh soilleir, reusanta, stèidhichte air fianais làidir, bhiodh bun-stèidh ion-mhiannaichte, misneachail aig tuath na h-Alba a' cosnadh atharrachadh mòr a thaobh Alba a bhith nas cothromaiche, nas uaine, nas comasaiche agus nas saidhbhire.

Wayne Powell

Professor Wayne Powell  
Principal and Chief Executive Scotland's Rural College

Àrd-ollamh Wayne Powell  
Ceannard and Àrd-oifigear



## Changing Land Management

### Agriculture – time for change?

- Scottish agriculture is constantly **changing**. However, the farming sector is in the midst of the most **fundamental reforms** of the Common Agricultural Policy in over a generation.
- **Uncertainty** leads to a drop in investment; important long-term system changes are postponed.
- Farmers need to grasp the nettle and **make changes** to improve technical **efficiency**, business **viability**, and improve the **vibrancy** of the sector – increasing the attractiveness of farming as a career choice..
- The farming population is ageing. There is a need to allow the **younger generation** to implement **new ideas** and take new approaches to farming, by stimulating quicker **intergenerational transfer** of farms and crofts.
- It is time to revisit the Scottish Government's *Future of Scottish Agriculture: A Discussion Document* and create a **roadmap for success** during this unprecedented period of policy transition.

### Outcomes from different landownership models:

- Policy shifts have increased pressure on landowners to deliver **public benefits** and involve **communities**. All landowners face **challenges**: financial pressures, public and political perceptions and expectations, uncertainty and conflict.
- Some diversification of landownership types has occurred, with different outcomes: **Private estate owners** emphasise long-term estate viability and deliver economic impacts. **NGO landowners** play a key role in conservation, delivering economic and social outcomes. **Community landownership** rebuilds community capacity, confidence, increases employment, investment, housing and reduces out-migration.
- 'New' landownership models can increase **rural resilience**. Pro-active **community engagement** and **partnership** by private landowners can enhance community outcomes.

### What future for woodland and forestry in Scotland?

- A **goal** exists to increase Scottish woodland and forest cover from **18% to 25% by 2050** to achieve economic, environmental and social **benefits**.
- This goal faces practical and climate change-related **challenges**.
- Existing **planting targets** of 10,000 ha of new woodland and forest each year between 2012 and 2022 are currently **falling short** of the goal.
- Information and guidance exists to address these challenges. However, **leadership is needed** to change attitudes and perceptions on the ground towards woodland and forest management and creation.
- Scottish Government, its Divisions and agencies will need to work even more **in partnership** with forestry and wider rural land use representatives to achieve the desired increase in woodland and forestry.



## Scotland's Rural Economies

– looking beyond the land-based sector

- There are **51,000 businesses** in rural Scotland. This is **one third** of Scotland's registered small and medium sized enterprises (SMEs). **Over 70%** of these - nearly 37,000 businesses - operate outside the primary sector.
- While the evidence base about primary sector businesses is relatively good, **evidence** about the characteristics, needs and contributions of businesses operating outside the primary sector is more limited. This has led to two **false assumptions**: (1) that the rural economy = agriculture and (2) that cities are the only engines of growth with rural areas dependent on them.
- Evidence shows that rural businesses are **different** to those in urban Scotland, in terms of size, ownership structure and growth plans. They may therefore need **different support**.
- Rural businesses generally have **good survival rates**. **Business registration rates** vary – higher in Aberdeenshire and Stirling, lower in Dumfries and Galloway and East Ayrshire.
- We **need to know** much more about: business productivity, innovation and connectivity, the numbers of unregistered businesses, the routes that individuals take into setting up their business and their future plans.
- **Improving the evidence base** is now more important than ever. We need to understand: the impacts of Brexit and associated uncertainty for businesses; the role of new actors (particularly LEADER) in providing support for rural enterprises; the impacts of Scotland's changing financial powers and of new support for businesses announced in the Programme for Government 2016-17; and the increasing diversity of businesses across rural Scotland.
- We need much better evidence about all of Scotland's businesses, to **challenge assumptions** and to ensure **appropriate support is available to all businesses** in order to fulfil the Scottish Government's purpose of building a **dynamic, inclusive and sustainable economy** across Scotland.

