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Rennie, Frank

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Community land ownership and the reorganisation of rural settlement systems in Lewis and Harris, Scotland

Frank Rennie¹, Shuichi Nakagawa², and Yuzuru Isoda³

1. Introduction

1.1 What is community ownership?

At its simplest, this is the ownership by a registered community organisation or group of communally held assets. For the purposes of this paper, the assets are primarily areas of land, but in practice this could include other land-based assets, including woodland, rivers and lochs, or community-owned buildings which are held in common trust.

1.2 Expectations: sustainability and resilience of rural communities

In a recent position paper published in response to calls by some individuals to reintroduce “wildness” into certain rural regions of Scotland, Community Land Scotland, the representative organisation for Community Landowners in Scotland made an opening statement that neatly summarises the expectations of the long-term sustainability and resilience of the places that they manage.

“Community land owners see their function as bringing about the renewal of their place, its people, its built and natural heritage. Renewal embraces the social and economic development of the place, and the enrichment of the life, environment and culture of that place. This happens under the direction of the people of that place, through their participation and ownership of key decisions. The yield from the investment in the land is opportunity, in perpetuity, for the common good of the people of that place and its environment.” (CLS, 2017).

In contrast to this “back-to-nature” aspiration, an ambition of many people supporting the establishment of Community Land Trusts is to encourage the Trusts to stimulate local democracy and community empowerment in the management of those areas. It is notable that in their short existence, Community Land Trusts have evolved into much more than just managers of marginal agriculture and hill grazing, and have extended into a wide range of social, economic, and environmental initiatives, and some of these will be outlined in this study.

¹ Lewis Castle College, University of the Highlands and Islands, Scotland

² Meiji University, Japan

³ Tohoku University, Japan

1.3 The objectives of this paper

This paper aims to explain the context of the ownership and management of land and other landscape assets in the Highlands and Islands of Scotland by the resident communities living on that land. The consequences of community ownership have impacts on many other areas of society other than land-based issues, and some of these new developments will be indicated.

2. Historical background

2.1 The reorganisation of rural settlement since the clearances

Following the defeat of the Jacobite army in 1746, the Highlands and Islands of Scotland became the new frontier for internal colonialism. The Gaelic language was suppressed, and important Scottish cultural motifs, such as the wearing of tartan or the playing of bagpipes, were banned. *Clann* is Gaelic for “children” but over the following century, the leaders of the clan, who found themselves to be rich in natural resources, but cash poor, slowly removed ownership of the communal land from the community, into their personal ownership (Dodgshon, 1998). Over time, these clan leaders learned that sheep-farming and deer-hunting brought cash, and they welcomed that cash to allow them to emulate the lifestyle of their new rulers. Many of the new landowners forcibly removed the local population from their smallholdings, sometimes quite brutally (Hunter, 2015) in a manner that we would now unquestionably refer to as “ethnic cleansing”. Those new landowners became spiritually, ideologically, and physically distant from their roots and the extended families of their clan. This period, called “the Highland Clearances” has left a deep scar in many areas, which remains in the collective folk-memory to this day (Prebble, 1969; Richards, 1985; Devine, 2018). The architects of the clearances called themselves “Improvers” but the only thing they were attempting to improve was their own situation. The result was that many families were compelled to leave their traditional homes and seek a new life in other areas, including in the cities of the south by migration to other countries. Large areas of rural country remains uninhabited to this day, with a concomitant effect on the social fabric, the economy, and the natural environment of the region. This legacy has sometimes been called “*the man on Scotland’s conscience*” (MacDonald, 2017) yet, due to the absence of this narrative from the history syllabus in British schools, many people even today are unaware of the details of this episode of persecution in the history of their own country.

Over the subsequent two hundred years, the present form of rural settlement and landuse emerged. Large areas of the Highlands and Islands region, which covers around 38% of the landmass of Scotland, are devoid of human habitation, and in rural areas, the main centres of population are the small coastal villages which are often the sites on which the clearance generation was forcibly resettled (Devine, 2013). In the rural countryside of the NW Highlands and Islands, sparsely populated villages with some residents having access to small tenant farms

on largely poor agricultural ground (called crofting) (Hunter, 2000; Rennie, 1991). The land use pattern now known as 'crofting' was established during the nineteenth century, largely as a means to resettle the local population, who were forcibly removed from the productive land that was to become a sheep farm, to poorer areas of land, frequently along the coast. The crofting tenants are usually grouped into townships, most of which have some land for personal agricultural work, as well as some Common Grazings land held in common by the crofters, all of which is enclosed on more extensive areas of land called "landed estates". (It is informative to note that the retention of crofting as a settlement response has resulted in a greater population in the 30km coast of the northwest of the Isle of Lewis, than in the 160+ km of coast along the NW Highland mainland, where conversion to sporting estates was favoured over crofting as a land use). The majority of the land area of the Highlands and Islands is of low agricultural value, suitable only for extensive agriculture, although frequently regarded as high-value habitat in terms of the natural environment (Beaufoy et al, 1994; SCU/RSPB, 1992). In most areas, there is a high aged population, a loss of younger people towards the cities, and there are logistical problems in providing public services - healthcare, social facilities, public transport etc. - due to the low population density. As a result of historical campaigning, crofters still maintain the right of secure tenure and inheritance of their croft, the right of compensation for fixed improvements, and the right to the independent fixation of a fair rent.

At the turn of the twentieth century, many communities in the Highlands and Islands were little better than they had been 100 years previously. All of this changed with the First World War. There have been many books and articles written about the changes within society which the Great War brought about – how the role of women in the workplace began to change, how the socio-economic divisions within the population began to break-down and merge, how the big country houses and great estates were no longer viable and had to restructure their purpose and ownership. These changes, of course, have also been documented at the local level, as well as the national, and it is perhaps at this local level that the trauma and dislocation of that war is still most painfully visible (Moireasdan, 2014). It could be argued that the Outer Hebrides, and the Highlands and Islands in general, encountered land enclosure and population clearance later than further south in the UK, due to their less fertile land and less commercial attraction for 'the improvers' (Richards, 2016). Despite the persistence of crofting, it might be argued that we are still in the process of decolonisation.

When they went off to the war, the political recruiting slogans promised the men (and it *was* largely men) "*A land fit for heroes*" (Leneman, 1989) – but the returning soldiers found that nothing had changed. Many villages were overcrowded, with poor housing, little paid employment, and most importantly, no access to land on which to build family houses, or to cultivate for food and income. There was no lack of available land, but it was regarded as the private property of a landlord, and for most parts the landlords had no intention of making any of this land available, even to returning servicemen. The land hunger of the previous century was

still smouldering away, and in many locations, this took the form of land raids. During the night, people would emerge from neighbouring townships and pull down the stones of the farm boundary walls to let the livestock escape to the moor; during the day, the farmers would recover their livestock and repair the walls. In some areas, the landless protesters would invade the landlord's fields and state their intention to remain until the Government allocated parcels of land to them. Social and political tensions were high. The land raids continued, and within a few years the UK Government stepped in and created new crofts and new villages to allow settlement for younger families. Many of those crofts now have multiple houses on them, as families have grown and built new homes close to their parents and siblings. The legal position between crofting tenants, and landlords, however, has continued to be upheld.

2.2 Who owns Scotland now?

The publication of a pioneering work of research (McEwen, 1977) generated a considerable interest in the subject of land ownership in contemporary Scotland. The realisation that the distribution of land-ownership in Scotland is so inequitable, that a very small proportion of people own rights to a considerable proportion of the land of the nation, became a topical political issue for the first time since the Clearances. Initial studies focused on attempting to understand the ownership boundaries and their implications (Wightman, 1996). Subsequent work, as public understanding and discontent grew, has dealt with documenting the implications of the centralisation of land-owning power (Cramb, 2000; Wightman, 2013) and considering the potential effects of reducing this concentration of control by extending community ownership further (Peacock, 2018).

2.3 Contemporary land reform in Scotland

Following a national referendum in 1997, a majority of the Scottish population voted for increased devolution of political decision-making from the Westminster Parliament in London, and consequently the Scottish Parliament, which had been combined with the English Parliament since 1707, was re-established in Edinburgh. One of the early actions of the reconstituted Scottish Parliament was to address the issue of land reform, particularly with regards to the crofting areas of the Highlands and Islands, which have a historical legacy of contested and highly emotive land ownership issues (Wightman, 2013). Both before and subsequent to the Land Reform Act of 2003, there has been an extensive contemporary dialogue on land reform in Scotland (Rennie, 1995) placing this regional debate in a national (Hoffman, 2013; LRRG, 2014) and an international context (Bryden & Geisler, 2007). Although there were already three crofting estates under different forms of community ownership, Glendale Estate, established in 1908; Stornoway Trust Estate, in 1923; and the Assynt Trust in 1992 (MacAskill, 1999). The 2003 Land Reform Act, has enabled a dramatic growth in the ownership and management of crofting estates by the resident communities, predominantly in the Highlands and Islands, but recently, throughout Scotland. Community land purchases after the Land Reform Act have become a more straightforward process, although not without obstacles. A Community Land

Unit at Highlands and Islands Enterprise, an economic and community development agency of the Scottish Government, provides advice and funding support for new land acquisitions by communities, and funding has also been significant from the national lottery, and other charities. Using both locally generated and external funds, community owned Trusts have now bought more than 200,000 hectares of land throughout Scotland which are managed for the common good. A membership organisation, Community Land Scotland, has more than 80 membership Trusts throughout Scotland, many of whom have now acquired the title to the land on which their own communities reside, and this has resulted in a changing emphasis in management practices and development agendas, which in turn has impacts on the sustainability and resilience of many rural communities (Hunter & MacLean, 2012).

2.4 Common land and resources

In the crofting areas, which cover much of the northwestern mainland of Scotland as well as the major island regions, the small areas of workable agricultural land are supplemented by large areas of Common Grazing land. These areas are, as the name suggests, primarily rough grazing of coarse moor-grass and heather, which are held in common by individual crofting townships. Each township can elect a Common Grazings Committee, drawn from the crofters in that village, and usually one of this committee is elected to be the village Common Grazings Clerk. The clerk is responsible for coordinating village projects on the common ground, such as the repairs of fencing, the movement of livestock, or the allocation of areas of peat, which is cut for domestic fuel. With the creation of the community owned land Trusts, these have also become the body responsible for the management of any mineral rights, and hunting permissions, on their estates. In effect, all of the natural resources of the land, being owned by the Community Land Trust, which in turn is owned by the people of the local community, have become common property of the communities. Individual crofters and Common Grazings Committees share the development value 50:50 with the estate for any new development on their land (e.g. house sites or quarrying). New ownership rights and responsibilities are embedded in a legacy of many generations of local land-users who have maintained a close relationship with every aspect of this landscape in their strategies to survive and thrive (Rennie, 2008). The recent changes enabling Community Land Trusts to have land management responsibility are already having recognisable and positive impacts on local perceptions of the meaning of “sustainable development” for the long-term benefit of the local inhabitants. (Rennie and Billing, 2015). A significant point to note is that croft rents and other income from mineral or sporting rights, or wayleave permissions, is now paid directly to the Community Land Trust, and is thereby reinvested in the local area.

2.5 Which community?

It is generally clear in discussing these community-owned estates, that the reference to “community” is the resident geographical population living on that land. In most cases, the

membership of the Community Owned Trust - the social enterprise which manages that land - is open to everybody of the age of 16 or over, who is normally a resident, or tenants a croft, on that land. (In the Case of Urras Oighreachd Ghabhsainn, individual membership is available for £1 UK.) In some of the newer Trusts which also include city-based groups which have been established to bring assets into common ownership (such as areas of woodland or old buildings like schools or churches no longer in use) the community may be defined as a community of interest, although these are also primarily based on a geographical community of place. One of the fundamental conditions which the land reform legislation requires, is that before a group can register as a potential buyer of land for the community, under the Land Reform Act, it must be demonstrated that there is a constituted community group that has secured local community support. The land boundaries of Community Land Trusts are variable; some Trusts cover a whole island or peninsula, while others are based upon the boundaries of the previous private estate, which may be a single geographical community, or bring together several smaller communities under one umbrella. To add to the confusion of boundaries, a village Common Grazings is generally considered too small to be a viable or efficient unit for community purchase, and generally several townships will reside within one estate, and there may also be one or more Community Councils (another statutory organisation, the locally elected to represent local opinion to Local Government) within the area of an estate. The key point is that these communities are self-defined by the group seeking to purchase the land as a community asset.

2.6 How are land Trusts expected to work?

Community Land Trusts are generally charitable bodies, established as a form of social enterprise business, wholly owned by the people who live on that land. For a nominal membership fee, a typical Trust will offer open membership to the community (16 years old and over) which it seeks to serve. Members are then able to attend an annual general meeting and elect company directors to represent them on the Board of Management. A proportion of the Board will resign after serving a term of 3-5 years, but may be eligible to stand for re-election. Some Trusts have been able to afford to employ a Business Manager, who, together with the Board of Directors, will take the strategic and operational decisions of the company, with the general aim of benefiting the community which it was established to serve. In effect, each Community Land Trust is becoming a local development agency for the community, who can influence decisions on how and when (or if) to exploit the assets of the area. Previously these decisions were in the hands of a private landlord (an individual or business syndicate) who regarded such investment under very different criteria. A key purpose for the existence of a Community Land Trust is to reinvest any revenue from their developments for the benefit of the community, whereas there was no social obligation on the previous private landlords, who might choose to place the profits anywhere.

3. Method

The information for this paper was gained from a combination of semi-structured interviews with Managers and some Directors of Community Land Trusts in Lewis and Harris, Scotland, together with an analysis of Trust strategic business plans and other relevant contextual documentation. Six Community Land Trusts were investigated, which together cover just over 50% of the land area of the island, and over 90% of its population.

4. Case studies

4.1 Outline of Community Land Trusts in Lewis and Harris

Currently in the Outer Hebrides, it is calculated that around 75% of all land is community owned and 85% of the population now live on land which their community owns. For a crofter on that land, their legal rights and abilities to work that land as they choose, is unchanged. They remain tenant crofters with security of tenure and a fair, fixed rent. The main significance in legal terms is that the land-owning rights are transferred from a private owner (who may live anywhere in the world) to a non-profit-distributing company, owned by the community and managed through the democratic election by the members of that community. The tenant crofters now pay their rent to their own community company for reinvestment. In the northern islands of the Outer Hebrides, there are currently 10 community land-owners in Lewis and Harris totalling over 155,000 hectares (over 70% of the land surface) and another five groups at various stages in their investigation of a community buy-out. Funding for the purchase of these estates has come from a wide variety of public and private sources, including money which the groups have contributed themselves, and with support from the Community Land Unit of the regional development agency (Highlands and Islands Enterprise). Several national organisations have also been substantial financial supporters of individual Community Land Trusts, such as the UK National Lottery and some Local Authorities, but none of such funding is guaranteed, and is highly dependent on particular local agreements.

4.2 An Example

In response to the initiative by the Scottish Government, which led to the 2003 Land Reform Act, communities across Scotland are able to initiate legal proceedings to purchase the land on which they are resident. A number of crofting estates in the Highlands and Islands were quick to take advantage of this legislation to acquire the land, including the villages of the Galson Estate, in the Isle of Lewis. Initially the Galson Estate buy-out began as a so-called “hostile” buy-out (the owners had not intended to sell) but in the course of subsequent negotiations, this became an “amicable” settlement. In 2004, the local steering group organised a vote throughout the community, of the electorate over 16-years-of-age. In this public ballot, there was a 72% turnout

and an 85% majority vote in favour of a buy-out. A non-profit-distributing company with charitable status – (officially known as Urras Oighreachd Ghabhsainn) (UOG) was then set-up, and a working group was formed to steer the negotiations to secure community ownership (Galson Estate Trust, 2014). Over the next three years, the working group negotiated grant and loan funding – usually through contractual agreements with public agencies and charities – towards the cost of purchasing the land, at a cost of £600,000. A second public ballot was then held and, with a 76% voter turnout, a Board of ten Trustees was elected from 30 nominees to manage the business of the company. In 2007, the 22 villages of the Galson Trust Estate, with a resident population of just over 2000, were successful in purchasing the 55,800-acre (22,600 hectare) estate in the north-west of the Isle of Lewis, Scotland.

Although it was apparent from an early stage that the existing croft rents would enable UOG to remain solvent as a business, it was also clear that additional finance was required to facilitate new rural development activities which would be beneficial to the area. A number of public consultation meetings were held, and a community consultation study was prepared to outline local development aspirations (Handley, 2013). It quickly became clear that local residents had long-term aspirations to encourage social, economic, and environmental activities on the estate, rather than simply seek short-term profits characterised by the majority of private landowners. This in turn has had a profound effect on local perceptions of “sustainability”, prompting a long-term vision with a wide agenda beyond solely land management. For example, in the ten years since its creation, UOG has made land available to build social housing, has contracted with the Local Authority to manage a local waste disposal site, provided environmental education for schools and tourists, initiated a scheme to improve old houses and increase energy efficiency, and worked to relieve fuel poverty on the estate. Around 71% of householders in the islands (as compared with the Scottish average of 27%) indicate that they spend more than 10% of their income on fuel, (TEAS, 2014) while 18% are in severe fuel poverty, spending at least 20% of their income on fuel; and 11% are in extreme fuel poverty, spending 30% of their income on fuel. The production and efficient management of energy locally is therefore of prime community

A key to enabling these activities to be carried out is the establishment of three wind turbines, wholly owned by UOG, which sell electric power into the National Grid. Internationally, the islands are an important area for the generation of renewable energy - wind, hydro, tidal, solar - and the Galson area had been the target of a huge and controversial wind farm development which was subsequently refused planning permission (Wemyss, 2011). Although majority local opinion was opposed to the inappropriate scale of the commercial wind farm proposal, there was considerable local support for a small, community-owned initiative (cf Warren and McFadyen, 2010). These three turbines earned the community over one million pounds Sterling in 2017-18. Most of this income has gone towards repaying the costs of the turbine installation and to building financial reserves for UoG, but the Trust have now established a Community

Investment Fund which can award grants of £1,000, £5,000, and £10,000 to support local groups with their plans to enhance the social, economic, and environmental amenities of the community area. (UOG, 2017). Although all Trusts are governed through volunteer activities, a number of Trusts, including UOG have employed an estate manager to co-ordinate the day-to-day business. Under private ownership, Galson Estate provided no jobs in the community; UoG now employs 14 staff in various community-focused tasks.

4.3 Business plans and community aspirations

Where previously, many landed estates in the Highlands and Islands were viewed primarily as providing sport (shooting and fishing) for external guests, or for simply collecting land rents from tenant crofters, the new community-owned estates have based their business plans on the planned benefits and improvements for the whole of the local resident community. In the Outer Hebrides, it is calculated that around 75% of all land is community owned and around 85% of the population now live on community owned land. The main significance in legal terms is that the land-owning rights are transferred from a private owner to a non-profit-distributing company, owned by the community and managed through the democratic election by the members of that community. Land reform, as currently practiced in Scotland, is an attempt to create a more equal distribution of land ownership, and in effect, it “*implies changes in the balance of power between the individual property owners, communities, and the state.*” (Bryden and Hart, 2000). This shift from private ownership of land to community ownership is more than just semantics, for the new Land Trusts can have fundamentally different objectives than a private company created to maximise individual financial gain. The adherence to social, environmental, as well as economic objectives means that local Land Trusts, managed by local people, have a different and longer-term perception of what “sustainable development” actually means.

5. Discussion

5.1 Why not private landlordism?

Private landlordism in Scotland, for historical reasons, can be emotive, contested, and politically divisive, although it has been identified by successive Governments of Scotland as a fundamental agenda for reformative action (LRRG, 2014). Earlier studies (McEwen, 1977; Callander, 1987; Wightman, 2013) noted that 60% of Scotland’s land area is owned by just 1,430 landowners (in a population of over five million). Land reform, as currently practiced in Scotland, is an attempt to create a more equal distribution of land ownership, and in effect “*implies changes in the balance of power between the individual property owners, communities, and the state*” (Bryden & Hart, 2000 p3). The popular response of community interest in purchasing and managing the land, and other local assets (forests, foreshore, community buildings) has been specifically linked to community empowerment in order to enhance local democracy and influence the quality of

life in the locality (Dalglish, 2018) as well as the wider sense of redressing perceived historical ills linking land tenure with rural development (Bryden, 1996). Recent studies have explicitly associated the relationship between community resilience and community land ownership in Scotland (Skerratt, 2013) and concluded that “*The Scottish Government is committed to establishing resilient communities.... Evidence from the research shows that community land trusts are delivering that brief*” (Skerratt, 2011). In this context, a resilient community is one that has the capacity to engage with the changing socio-economic and political environment in ways that can adapt, mitigate, and benefit from the community strengths and responses.

There is a very clear agenda to move beyond conventional indicators of economic benefits (Macmillan, 2000) or even socio-economic sustainability (e.g. Copus and Crabtree, 1996) in order to optimise the social impacts of community land ownership (Bryan, 2015). In this, community resilience is seen as a legitimate indicator of the social sustainability of rural areas, (Magis, 2010) and a dynamic element in local empowerment in order to better facilitate community-led development (Braunholtz-Speight, 2015). The active engagement of local community is a crucial factor in facilitating an interactional approach to sustainable development (Bridger and Luloff, 1999) which enables the Community Land Trusts to exert influence, not simply within their immediate locality, but also within a region, national, and even international context. Community Land Trusts, effectively, have become “embedded intermediaries” who communicate, and are trusted, by both the grassroots community and the high-level authorities that are more distant from the area. This is a significant break from previous patterns of dependence on the benevolence (or otherwise) of private landowners, and the need for change which redresses power inequalities in the public sphere has been substantiated even in situations in which private landowners are seeking to address sustainability issue through partnerships with a local community (McKee, 2015).

The combination of community access to capital (land) and regular revenue (e.g. income from rents and power generation) is now providing a level of stability that is previously unknown. This is a game-changing scenario for local democracy that both supports further community empowerment, and encourages a long-term vision of local sustainability (Rennie and Billing, 2015).

5.2 The immediate impact of community land ownership

There is a particular word in the Gaelic language of the Highlands and Islands of Scotland for which is difficult to give a direct translation into English. “*Buntanas*” expresses sense of belonging, not simply in the present, but the concept of a person or community of people belonging to a certain area of land, a communal sense of embeddedness, and rootedness through family lineage and history of a community who *belong* to a certain place. This is contradistinction to the more usual Western concept of the land belonging to an individual

person, of people owning the land in its entirety. There are solid emotional, social, and heritage attractions to the sense of “belonging to the land” as well as good economic and political reasons. The holistic combination of these attachments to the land has the effect of discouraging quick-fix solutions and favouring long-term sustainability and community resilience (Skerratt, 2013). For these reasons, several Community Land Trusts in Lewis and Harris, for example, have targeted the creation of local opportunities in environmental conservation. One Trust employs a Countryside Ranger to guide ecotourists around their land and provide nature information for guests, another Trust manages a local nature reserve on their land which is important for migrating birds and is a favourite spot for bird-watchers. Several of the Trusts have given environmental tourism developments high priority in their business plans, including the provision of assistance with visitor accommodation, campsites, and eco-friendly businesses and activities. Although there is an awareness that “beautiful scenery” may not bring direct economic spending, the indirect effects, if managed effectively, can bring lasting benefits both to local residents and to visitors in the form of eco-tourism through which opportunities can be built on the strength of the natural assets of the rural region and can be promoted as key attractions of the locality

This process of local community empowerment has multiple results that are beneficial for ecotourism and heritage tourism (Dalglish, 2018). It can help place local decision-making within a wider national and international framework, which in turn can influence government policies. Sensitive engagement in the management of the natural environment also gives opportunities to visitors to experience more “authentic” interactions with the place, rather than feeling that they have visited a museum or a stage-set which has been constructed solely for the benefit of a tourism industry. These opportunities for ecotourism activities are now evolving new and deeper engagements to offer to both visitors and locals. Activities such as photo-stalking Red Deer instead of hunting them with a gun, wildlife retreats where local knowledge allows small groups of visitors’ unparalleled encounters with uncommon species, guided walking tours led by local Rangers that combine natural history with human history of the area to encourage a richer interpretation of human ecology. There are health walks and recovery breaks, which address both the physical and the mental health of participants, as well as art schools and residential stays through which the creative industries use the natural environment as a stimulation for artistic expression as well as outlets for commercial activity.

5.3 Future trends

These are especially significant changes for the renaissance of local identity and the strengthening of local empowerment. Following the successes of the land reform activities to-date, the Scottish Government have made public their aspirations to have one million acres of Scottish land in community ownership by 2020. The ability of Community Land Trusts to act as “embedded intermediaries” who are trusted partners of local organisations and individuals, but also national agencies and government bodies, has allowed Trusts to diversify their roles to

initiate, support, and manage a wide range of local development initiatives. These range from business interests, to not-for-profit social enterprises, including renewable energy generation, social housing, domestic energy and fuel poverty mitigation, conservation of peatland and other high-value nature conservation sites, and initiatives to support local heritage and cultural projects. A recent development of considerable potential is emergence of Community Land Trusts as local enablers for delivering community education. Through their extensive networks and expertise, the Trusts are ideally placed to link with external providers of education and training to enable easier local access for short courses and workshops. It is likely that these areas of diversifying interests will continue to expand, and it will be instructive to observe the responses of Community Land Trusts to the provision of further local services as Local Authorities and other sectors of national governance reduce their involvements and devolve their powers of intervention.

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