

Press release

8 November 2011

**Is 21st century land ownership a responsibility or a privilege?**

Do landowners owe it to society to ensure we are provided with all the services we need from this vital national asset? Or does land ownership in today’s Britain already carry too many burdensome responsibilities?

In a debate on this topic organised by the UK Research Councils’ Rural Economy and Land Use Programme on16 November, environmental consultant Mark Avery says: “The entire population depends on land for a wide range of ecosystems services including ecological resources, carbon storage, flood management, and leisure facilities. Regulation is therefore essential to ensure that those privileged to own land are not entirely motivated by profit but also take into account their obligations to society.”

**Members of the press are welcome to attend the debate and the conference.**

Professor David Harvey from the Centre for Rural Economy, Newcastle University will be supporting Mark Avery and they will be opposed by land use consultant Alan Woods and Lord Joicey, principal trustee of the Ford and Etal Estate. Chairing the debate will be House of Lords crossbencher Lord Haskins.

Notes for editors:

1 The Relu conference “Who Should Run the Countryside” takes place at The Sage, Gateshead on Wednesday 16 November 2011.

Big Debate 2: Is 21st century land ownership a responsibility or a privilege?

Venue: Hall 2, The Sage, Gateshead

Time: 13.10-14.10 hrs

Date: Wednesday 16 November 2011

Speaking for 21st century land ownership as a responsibility:

Alan Woods, Freelance consultant on land use policy

James Joicey (5th Baron Joicey of Chester-le-Street) principal trustee of the Ford & Etal Estates

Speaking for 21st land ownership as a privilege:

Mark Avery, independent ecological consultant

David Harvey, Professor of Agricultural Economics, Newcastle University.

1. The Rural Economy and Land Use Programme is an interdisciplinary collaboration between the Economic and Social Research Council (ESRC), the Biotechnology and Biological Sciences Research Council (BBSRC) and the Natural Environment Research Council (NERC), with additional funding provided by the Scottish Government and Defra. See [www.relu.ac.uk](http://www.relu.ac.uk) for more information about the Relu programme.
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