

STATES OF JERSEY

Economic Affairs Scrutiny Panel Rural Economy Strategy 2011-2015 Review

FRIDAY, 4th JUNE 2010

Panel:

Deputy C.F. Labey of Grouville (Chairman)
Deputy R.G. Le Hérisier of St. Saviour
Deputy D.J.A. Wimberley of St. Mary

Witnesses:

Mr. C. Alluto (Chief Executive, of the National Trust for Jersey)
Mr. M. Stentiford (President, of the National Trust for Jersey)
Ms. R. Collier (Chairman, of the National Trust for Jersey Lands Committee)

In attendance:

Mr. D. Scott (Scrutiny Officer)

[11:01]

Deputy C.F. Labey of Grouville (Chairman):

Good morning. Roy, we are starting now so I will remind you of the protocol as an audience member. Roy Le Hérisier is normally on this panel but because he is on your council, he is conflicted so he is sitting in the audience. So, we are going to start off with, for the purposes of the tape and Rebecca behind you, with introductions. I am Deputy Carolyn Labey and I am chairing the Scrutiny Panel with the Rural Strategy.

Deputy D.J.A. Wimberley of St. Mary:

I am Daniel Wimberley, the Deputy of St. Mary.

The Deputy of Grouville:

This is our Scrutiny Officer, Darren Scott

Scrutiny Officer:

Good morning.

The Deputy of Grouville:

And if you could introduce yourselves?

Chief Executive, National Trust for Jersey:

Charles Alluto, chief executive officer of the National Trust for Jersey.

Council member, National Trust for Jersey:

Rosemary Collier, council member and Chairman of the Lands Committee of the National Trust for Jersey.

President, National Trust for Jersey:

Mike Stentiford, President of the National Trust for Jersey.

The Deputy of Grouville:

Thank you. You have a notice in front of you, which you may wish to read. It explains about the immunity status of any evidence you give during the session. For the members of the public there, there is a notice somewhere about the protocol if you care to read it. Okay, so I will just make sure that ...Rebecca, is everything okay? Right okay. Okay, if I could start by asking you to explain about the National Trust,

the organisation, the membership and if there has been any consultation with your members before making your submission?

Chief Executive, National Trust for Jersey:

The National Trust for Jersey is a conservation organisation for the benefit of the Island and currently manages approximately 2 per cent of the Island's land base and around 20 historic buildings. We have a membership of approximately 2,000 people and we run a series of events and activities highlighting the work we do and we are an independent charitable organisation and totally self-funded.

The Deputy of Grouville:

Okay, and what specifically are the aims of the National Trust?

Chief Executive, National Trust for Jersey:

The aims of the National Trust are to permanently safeguard areas of natural beauty and historic buildings for the benefit of the Island.

The Deputy of St. Mary:

What went on before making this submission in terms of inside the organisation?

How did this submission come to be?

Chief Executive, National Trust for Jersey:

I was requested by council to review the document and I came up with a submission, which was then looked at by members of council to ensure that they were happy with the contents and that they represented the aims and objectives or were in accordance with the aims of the National Trust.

The Deputy of Grouville:

Okay, turning now to the actual draft strategy, no sorry, not the current draft strategy, the Strategy 2005 to 2010, do you feel the aims and objectives in there have been achieved during the past 5 years?

Chief Executive, National Trust for Jersey:

I have to say I have not reviewed that document personally very recently and so I am a bit loathe to comment on whether those objectives have been met. Obviously our direct experience of the Countryside Renewal Scheme has been a benefit to the National Trust in the work we do and I think that has been very successful during that period of time, and also I think it has succeeded in bringing the rural economy, raising the profile of the rural economy at a greater public level. I think it has definitely achieved that.

The Deputy of St. Mary:

So you have a direct experience of the C.R.S. (Countryside Renewal Scheme)?
Would you expand on that, that the National Trust has a direct experience? Does that mean you receive grants?

Chief Executive, National Trust for Jersey:

We do receive grants, yes.

The Deputy of St. Mary:

Expand a little bit on one or 2 projects?

Chief Executive, National Trust for Jersey:

Well, we apply for various projects where we are involved in conservation management and one of the key areas has been, for example, the management of the reed beds at St. Ouen's Pond and Grouville Marsh where we have secured funding to help with the cost of undertaking that work, so that has been of benefit to us. Also, some of the infrastructure projects, such as the fencing around Don Paton for the sheep conservation and grazing project and that was also covered by C.R.S. Also, assistance with improving the pond for the mill in St. Peter's Valley to make the pond bigger, which is essential to keep the mill running but also it benefits local wildlife as well.

The Deputy of Grouville:

Do you receive any other grants under other schemes such as the Rural Initiative Scheme?

Chief Executive, National Trust for Jersey:

We have not to date.

The Deputy of Grouville:

So it is only by the C.R.S.?

Chief Executive, National Trust for Jersey:

Yes.

The Deputy of St. Mary:

Okay, turning to PR 4, I do not know if you have got your copy there or your own submissions on PR 4, which is about the environmental costs of agriculture. You talk about improved environmental standards first of all, what do you mean by that in the Jersey context? And you talk about the link between subsidy and improved environmental science, which there is now, there is cross-compliance or it is certainly being proposed, what would you like to see under this heading?

Chief Executive, National Trust for Jersey:

I think really we were supporting the policy option that was outlined in PR 4, that there is a direct link between subsidy and environmental standards because obviously it is crucial that farming is undertaken in a sustainable way and it obviously has a potential huge impact on our natural environment, and so it is important that those 2 factors are taken into account. I think that was what we were seeking to do in terms of our comment on PR 4.

The Deputy of St. Mary:

You talk about environmental enforcement: “The Trust would also suggest that environmental enforcement needs to be as robust as the new criteria.” Could you expand on that, do you have a concern about environmental enforcement?

Chief Executive, National Trust for Jersey:

Enforcement generally perhaps could be a bit stronger in the Island as whole. It is important I think. I mean, we could look on the planning side of things but it is important if you are going to set criteria, and you want to ensure those criteria are

being met, that you have the necessary enforcement and officers on board to ensure that is taking place, otherwise you are ignorant of what is going on.

The Deputy of St. Mary:

Right.

The Deputy of Grouville:

Would you envisage that would take much more manpower than exists at the moment in the department?

Chief Executive, National Trust for Jersey:

I am unaware of manpower levels I am afraid in the department but I think it is important that you do have sufficient resource in order to support that policy.

The Deputy of St. Mary:

Right, so it is not ...I want to be clear on this, you are not saying that you suspect that the enforcement is not adequate now, you are saying that if you have criteria and if you do have compliance then you have got to enforce it, that is the sum of it?

Chief Executive, National Trust for Jersey:

Yes, I have experience on the planning side but I do not have experience on the other side of things in terms of enforcement.

The Deputy of St. Mary:

When you ...you have got experience on the planning side?

Chief Executive, National Trust for Jersey:

In that I have come across enforcement levels.

The Deputy of Grouville:

But not on the environmental side?

Chief Executive, National Trust for Jersey:

No.

The Deputy of St. Mary:

But enforcement adjustment, do you mean, as to the enforcement levels?

Chief Executive, National Trust for Jersey:

It could be improved.

Council Member, National Trust for Jersey:

I think in the past it is maybe external enforcement from a supermarket protocol that is being relied upon.

The Deputy of St. Mary:

Yes.

Council Member, National Trust for Jersey:

But as of the local government enforcement there is the risk of resources there.

The Deputy of St. Mary:

Right.

The Deputy of Grouville:

So the protocols are met by the standards given by the multiples in the supermarkets?

Council Member, National Trust for Jersey:

Yes, and some of them overlap with like the C.R.S. criteria or other environmental standards.

The Deputy of Grouville:

I mean one thing springs to mind, how you quite often see rucked-up polythene that has come off the potato fields stuck in the hedges for months, is that the sort of thing you mean? It is enforcing this?

Council Member, National Trust for Jersey:

Well, I think what we are talking about here in PR 4 is a link between environmental criteria and receiving grants.

The Deputy of Grouville:

Yes?

Council Member, National Trust for Jersey:

So, sort of flapping polythene, if you want that addressed it would have to be added into that grant system.

The Deputy of Grouville:

And it could be one of the criteria that is receiving a grant, that the environment is cleared up after a crop.

Council Member, National Trust for Jersey:

Yes, waste management.

Chief Executive, National Trust for Jersey:

Well, it also could come in as part of a farm plan, as to how you manage your landscape within your farm boundaries and that could be part of your farm plan.

The Deputy of St. Mary:

There is a danger of sort of bureaucracy that does not quite hit the target, is there not, here? You know, that you have a farm plan, somebody goes round or the farmer goes round and ticks the boxes and then what happens? So, can you suggest how it might look, that this plan is enforced or the environmental aspects of the plan would be enforced? I am not quite sure how this ... because you have got the supermarkets on the one hand who are doing this. They are setting protocols and they are probably enforcing them, so where does government fit in alongside that?

Chief Executive, National Trust for Jersey:

Well, if government is offering a subsidy to a farmer in order to produce certain standards, as pointed out in the farm plan, then obviously you need an officer to have a good relationship with that farm to ensure that that plan is developed over time and the criteria are being met. So it is not ... I do not think it should be seen as someone sort of coming along and telling the farmer off. It has to be part of a working relationship where they build up the environmental standards on that farm, and that needs to be adequately resourced. You cannot just ... as you say, otherwise it will just become a tick the box exercise, which I do not think is in the interests of Jersey's natural rural environment.

The Deputy of Grouville:

Okay, I would like to move now to the land classification system that is suggested in the draft strategy. Now, I have to say that your submission surprised us because it was probably one of the only ones that supported a land classification system. So, could you explain why you support this?

Council Member, National Trust for Jersey:

I am surprised to hear that we are the only people that have mentioned that because as part of another organisation I am involved with I was aware that they too very much wanted to see some clarification and a land classification system because at the moment I think there are some grey areas with land classification, so that decisions are being made in land use that are doubtful because of the way the law of 1970. whenever it was, a long time ago, categorises people, of whether they are bona fide agriculturalists or smallholders or whatever. So, I believe it should be clarified so that decisions about land use are more objective.

[11:15]

The Deputy of Grouville:

I think the thinking behind it was all land is valuable, so if you then start to set up a very bureaucratic system where each piece of land has got to be classified, it will not only take huge amounts of time and manpower to do that but it could also have the effect of sort of enhancing, potentially enhancing the value of certain pieces of land, whereas it should all be classed the same.

Council Member, National Trust for Jersey:

Well absolutely, it should be valuable. At least let us hope every piece of land in Jersey is valuable but if it is valuable for its farmer use, growing use, it does not want to have building encroaching on it or non-agricultural use encroaching on it like horse grazing or garden extensions.

The Deputy of Grouville:

Well exactly, so if it is all classed as valuable you do not then get into the specific it is valuable for this or that.

Council Member, National Trust for Jersey:

Some decisions seem to be being made that take land out of agricultural use.

Chief Executive, National Trust for Jersey:

It is already happening because planning applications are made and then some of those go back for comment from the agricultural advisers at P. and E. (Planning and Environment) regarding the value of that land. So their judgment has already been made. The question is whether it is appropriate for those judgments to be made without a classification system being in place. We are already classifying our land, the Countryside Character Appraisal classifies our land in terms of character, so it is already happening. What we are saying is that, you know, the agricultural land should ... we need to look at it closely to see what are for those prime pieces so that they do not end up being used in the wrong way. Otherwise you are just relying on subjective judgment.

The Deputy of St. Mary:

What do you see as the benefits of an overall, because what is being talked about is an overall land classification system that would cover all unbuilt on land, undeveloped land? What are the benefits of that as opposed to the case-by-case approach, which is what is being used now, as you have mentioned, with the officer saying: "This is of such and such a value." What is the advantage of having the overall, in your view, classification system?

Chief Executive, National Trust for Jersey:

I think it is more rigorous for starters. We also do not have full control over land usage at the moment. Certain land is controlled but a large chunk of our land is not appropriately controlled so it can be used for equine use, it can be used for orchards, it can be used for various uses. Whereas, if it was classified potentially as prime agricultural land, say for potato growing, then one would question whether then you

should have controls in place to ensure that it is used for something that is productive, though some would argue equine use is productive, but it does not get the use as marginal land.

The Deputy of St. Mary:

Is the issue not more the legal constraints around ... and how you would set those up around different uses, rather than the so-called land classification value?

Chief Executive, National Trust for Jersey:

I personally see them going in tandem. I think both things need to be reviewed.

The Deputy of Grouville:

Okay. You made the comment in PR 6 about the countryside being accessible, or you were of the view it is not accessible, were you not? I have not got your submission here; I think Deputy Le Hérissier walked off with my copy.

The Deputy of St. Mary:

It might be the wrong page.

The Deputy of Grouville:

Yes, it was just on the countryside access.

The Deputy of St. Mary:

It was the access one?

The Deputy of Grouville:

Yes, so that it is not having a detrimental effect on the ... Yes sorry, I have misinterpreted it. So, perhaps you can speak about the countryside being accessible, or if you think it is accessible or could be more so.

President, National Trust for Jersey:

I think it could be more accessible. I know there have been many ideas mooted recently to provide access for a pedestrian way where you do get the country parishes where people do enjoy walking, families enjoy walking. We have got the green lanes but in many areas where you have not got that and ... there are so many sort of margins. We are not talking about a huge piece of field that is devoted to access, it is just along the edge where people can walk safely. It encourages certainly a lot more people, a lot more families to take up the healthy option of walking but, as we state here, it is fine on paper to do that but one must make sure that you are not destroying any of the biodiversity of the ecology - biodiversity, what have you, that should be there - but I think access to the countryside is really quite crucial. It is very, very important.

The Deputy of Grouville:

But it is accessible now.

President, National Trust for Jersey:

It is accessible but I would argue that in certain areas it is accessible but only with a little bit of ... danger is not the right word but it could be made much, much easier. With most of it north to south, east to west you have got pathways, footpaths, et

cetera, but you have also got a lot of roadways as well, and I think if that could be looked into. It is not easy, I am sure, but that is the sort of thing that could really ... it would make a big difference to Jersey as a whole I think to have that into the countryside where you can enjoy it to the full without having the fear of being ... The big problem of course is the traffic on the Island and I think if you could take that equation out and enjoy the countryside then it has got to be a good thing.

The Deputy of St. Mary:

Do you take the point that, you know, where you talk about a detrimental impact on landscape, ecology or biodiversity that there is not something missing? That there is another impact that you have left out, because that is all the natural impacts?

President, National Trust for Jersey:

Yes.

The Deputy of St. Mary:

There are other stakeholders involved who might have a view.

Chief Executive, National Trust for Jersey:

Agriculture.

The Deputy of St. Mary:

A few, yes.

President, National Trust for Jersey:

Yes, well exactly.

The Deputy of St. Mary:

And there would be quite a strong view in the other direction.

President, National Trust for Jersey:

Exactly.

Council Member, National Trust for Jersey:

But, sort of from previous experience with the river footpath at the Elms and, sort of, there is the agriculturalist's fear that perhaps swarms of people will have litter but I think from experience on paths at the National Trust Foundation that does not happen. You might have an initial flurry of interest in a new path but then people do respect the countryside and you do not get ... I walk a lot in the countryside and rarely do you meet hordes of people, yes a few walkers.

Chief Executive, National Trust for Jersey:

I think also, this policy, from my reading of it, is saying that they would like to encourage increased access by paying farmers to provide that access. So, the agriculture industry in some ways has to decide whether it wants the payment or it does not. No one is going to force a footpath across someone's land. It is up to them whether they want the money and the footpath or not. The principle must be a good thing.

The Deputy of Grouville:

So you would like to see dedicated footpaths, not just a case ... like I mean, I have got fields round home and there are tracks that people can walk on but you would like it a more formalised footpath and then payments to the farmers? Whereas now ...

Council Member, National Trust for Jersey:

Well the Countryside Renewal Scheme already has a footpath.

The Deputy of St. Mary:

Yes, because somebody did one, did they not, on the east coast?

Chief Executive, National Trust for Jersey:

Yes, and I think you can use those tracks. I do not think anyone wants to see sort of new pop-in paths appearing everywhere. I think it is the use of the tracks and making sure that they are clear and cut appropriately and are reasonably level, but I think that that is the joy of Jersey to have these tracks in place, is that it has this, especially around Crabbé. It has this wonderful network of tracks, which give you access into that area. So I think you would want to see those being kept but if the States were able to support that it seems a good thing really. At a step you would be into the heart of the countryside and also if the public are paying through their taxes to support the countryside in your scheme in other aspects then they should be able to enjoy the fruits of that payment.

The Deputy of Grouville:

Well, I am suggesting that the public should not have to pay because it is accessible now.

Chief Executive, National Trust for Jersey:

It is accessible in certain areas but I think there is scope perhaps to have increased access... You would have to look at it in detail so that you can develop networks of paths where they are sensibly located. There is no point just having a path which goes nowhere but it does seem that there is potential scope to get people to be able to enjoy more of the heart of the countryside as opposed to having to use roads, et cetera.

The Deputy of St. Mary:

Would you see the policy option on page 46 of the document P10 about a forum where different stakeholders can get together and talk their way through possible ways of progressing this, rather than a policy to be in place to increase the access? There is a suggestion there of starting with a forum and more or less seeing where it goes. Would you endorse that? How would you see that developing? Is that enough or would you want more than that?

President, National Trust for Jersey:

It is a starting point. I think you would have to get people together to discuss this. You might get division, or you might have a lot of them that would be very, very open to it but they really have to start somewhere so to start with a discussion of stakeholders would be a good move I would say.

The Deputy of Grouville:

Okay.

Chief Executive, National Trust for Jersey:

As long as you do not get stuck in treacle.

President, National Trust for Jersey:

Yes, there is always that. Speaking from experience, Charles.

The Deputy of Grouville:

Can I move on to the Single Area Payment with direct support? I would like you to expand on this because you would like to see it reviewed because you have certain concerns about its inflating. You know, if it is given to the potato industry it could inflate land rental ratings. So, could you expand on what you said about the Single Area Payment?

Chief Executive, National Trust for Jersey:

I think it is important that the Single Area Payment supports the overall objectives of the Environment Department in terms of its agricultural strategy and we are not just ... and then we do not just end up simply paying for someone to do a certain type of farming, which actually could stand well on its own 2 feet, and what it simply does that payment is that then it just gets fed into the rental figures, and the land rental figures simply increase and you are not really getting any benefits. I think Single Area Payment has to be seen to be supporting elements of the industry, which justify needing support.

The Deputy of Grouville:

Which are?

Chief Executive, National Trust for Jersey:

I definitely have not got the expertise to start telling which sectors of the agriculture industry need support and those that do not.

The Deputy of Grouville:

But you would suggest probably not the potato industry?

Chief Executive, National Trust for Jersey:

I would suggest the potato industry should be reviewed.

The Deputy of St. Mary:

How would you comment on the likely point that would be made by others that as soon as you start to grade the S.A.P. (Single Area Payment) or say: “Well, it is a floating thing depending how good the money is in the potato this year or next year or the year after” and other products you said, well you would not know because of the expertise? If you make it complicated then you make it complicated and there are disadvantages to that. How would you comment on that particular cost to come?

Chief Executive, National Trust for Jersey:

That is true but I think at the moment rental values for potato land are very high, you know, some areas of really good land you would have at least £400 a vergée and possibly in excess of that, and so one would question this as to why you are then having a Single Area Payment to that element of the industry. If you take out the £50 per vergée then you can bet your bottom dollar then that the rental values will go

down by that amount. So, I do not know if we can provide the solution but I think there is an issue there that needs to be addressed.

The Deputy of Grouville:

Right.

Chief Executive, National Trust for Jersey:

Without, you know ... I totally take on board you do not want over-bureaucracy but also you want a system, which ... There is no point the public subsidising something that does not need subsidising, is there?

The Deputy of St. Mary:

So, the next one is your comment on self-sufficiency and food security. I think probably I would just ask you to expand on why you fully support that notion because it is controversial surprisingly.

The Deputy of Grouville:

Is it?

The Deputy of St. Mary:

Yes, within the context of this review it is.

Council Member, National Trust for Jersey:

There is a big push in the Island for buying local and how much local produce is on the shelves. I know a lot of the farm shops produce quite a lot of what they sell but I

am sure there is land not used for half the year and there is land that could produce local fruit and vegetables, and I just think, with oil prices going up and, you know, with the ash cloud that almost ground us to a halt, yes we have still got boats but, you know, if anything could happen and we have got very good soil, very good land and we should be using it to produce the local fruit and veg.

[11:30]

Chief Executive, National Trust for Jersey:

I think food security seems to be an international concern; it is not just an Island of Jersey concern.

The Deputy of Grouville:

Do you think it is taken seriously enough in Jersey?

Council Member, National Trust for Jersey:

We just see a lot of unused fields for half the year.

The Deputy of St. Mary:

Yes, the argument I suppose would be, well the market should take care of that kind of thing because an unused field, and somebody thought it was worthwhile cultivating it and growing something for the local market then they would do.

Council Member, National Trust for Jersey:

Well, there must be a way of sorting out the economics of that surely. I have not got the answers but people want to buy local and they see land unused.

The Deputy of St. Mary:

Right, and in that context you mention safeguarding the agricultural land bank. I know I think we have touched on this already but how would you see that being done?

Chief Executive, National Trust for Jersey:

We need to review the current control system in terms of usage. That probably needs to be urgently reviewed and then also in terms of your planning policy. We need to ensure that your land bank is appropriately safeguarded through planning.

The Deputy of St. Mary:

When you say current control system on land usage, can you expand on that? That is what I am sort of trying to see how you would do that.

Chief Executive, National Trust for Jersey:

Your security?

The Deputy of St. Mary:

Is this is to do with the 74 and the 64 ...

Chief Executive, National Trust for Jersey:

The 74 yes, which are ...

The Deputy of St. Mary:

It is in that area.

Chief Executive, National Trust for Jersey:

Yes, which basically restricts or controls usage of certain areas of land but it is not island wide.

The Deputy of St. Mary:

No.

Chief Executive, National Trust for Jersey:

So that is the problem, it is that you have a system in place to control your land usage, which does not apply to all land. So, until you sort that out you are going to have trouble safeguarding your land bank for agricultural usage.

The Deputy of St. Mary:

Got it, thank you. I am trying to get a formulation of ... Yes, okay.

The Deputy of Grouville:

Okay. Going to PR 18 in your response. It is quite an interesting response because we have not had many submissions talking about agriculture in the marine industry. So, what pro-active measures would the Trust like to see projected or implemented? Where you talked about sustainable pro-active marine policy, so could you just expand on that?

Chief Executive, National Trust for Jersey:

I think what it was, we looked at issue PR 18b, which highlights that actually there are some problems, and then we looked at the policy option thereafter and we found that it did not really seek to actively address the problems which had been highlighted in PR 18b. It was rather non-committal and a bit weak. So our suggestion is that if you are highlighting there is an issue then address the issue as opposed to simply saying: “Well, we might, you know, we will just sort of support those that have got less impact and there you go.” It is not really good policy, is it? If government is going to do something then do it, do not dilly-dally.

The Deputy of Grouville:

Yes.

The Deputy of St. Mary:

And the importance of doing this?

Chief Executive, National Trust for Jersey:

It is crucially important because the marine environment around Jersey is exceptionally rich and we have a successful fishing industry and we want it to remain successful. So you have got to do that in a sustainable way. Obviously we have got international agreements with Ramsar, and I think that our marine environment perhaps, it is valued but it could be valued a lot higher.

The Deputy of St. Mary:

Okay, thank you.

The Deputy of Grouville:

Do you have any concerns about the aquaculture industry, for example the oysters that are on the southeast coast, the oyster industry and how the foreshore is used in that way and is licensed?

Chief Executive, National Trust for Jersey:

One would hope that through planning and the license arrangements that great care is taken when you set up oyster farms or mussel farms. I have recently seen the sight of an E.I.A. (Environmental Impact Assessment), which has been prepared for a small oyster farming area, and I think if those issues are raised at the beginning and it is done in an appropriate manner then it should be able to sustain a certain amount, but you have also got to be careful about how much of that industry you put in place in our marine environment. It is taking care and looking at the issues and trying to mitigate against those potential harmful factors but, you know, it seems to be that it is a good industry for the Island. It is diversification and so it should in some ways be encouraged, but with care, I think.

The Deputy of Grouville:

Yes okay, and our community agriculture, what would the Trust like to see, how would the Trust like to see this promoted?

The Deputy of St. Mary:

It is PE2, PE3, PE8.

President, National Trust for Jersey:

I think there are lots of opportunities there with this one with the ... you have got down here the PE2 with the option there but I say there are plenty of opportunities there, community agriculture, countryside classrooms, something that seems to be taking off very, very well. I have heard an awful lot recently about the forest schools. It is the educational side of it, which seemed to be taken on very, very good but then we go up a peg with the training for the best environmental practice from forests that comes up every year. Actually, it has gone quite quiet; I am not sure quite what is happening with that and agri-tourism, so there are opportunities there. We did add about Hamptonne on, but I just think it is something that could be explored. It could be looked at in depth and the sustainable possibilities there.

The Deputy of Grouville:

Are the States doing enough to promote people to use these opportunities or explore them?

President, National Trust for Jersey:

Well I know we are. We are doing a lot certainly with classroom education, if you like, with the schools. Around college obviously it is carried out very, very carefully. Agri-tourism, I am not sure if we are into that quite yet but on the whole we use the best practices.

The Deputy of St. Mary:

Yes. Can you spell out what you see the benefits of community agriculture, and community supported agriculture would be?

President, National Trust for Jersey:

Well, I suppose community agriculture; the bringing people in, I think it brings a much better understanding of the countryside. It is as simple as that, in one word, because a lot of people do not quite understand the workings of the agricultural industry, how one thing works for another, how things have got to be done at certain times of the year. I think most people ... there is a huge percentage of the people who have got no idea about that at all, and then I think we are a small island after all, we are a very, very small island, and I think the more the people can integrate with ideas and reasoning for doing this and for doing that then it has to be a good thing.

The Deputy of Grouville:

How should we go about doing this? How should government go about doing this?

President, National Trust for Jersey:

Well, I am not sure if it is a ... is it a government thing? I mean it is for agencies to actually promote that in their own individual ways. There are enough agencies around to be able to do this, and, to be honest, I mean it is already happening. I mean you have the country fairs, et cetera, which again bring an awful lot of families with people onboard and a better understanding of this but, you know, you could take it one step further with the you know, actually hands on if you like, with that.

The Deputy of Grouville:

But with the partnerships, should these agencies be proactively going into schools, to promote it, to encourage sort of environmental classrooms?

President, National Trust for Jersey:

I am sure it happens already but on a very, very, very small scale. You know, it is there. Perhaps it is something that can be expanded upon because, as Rosemary said, with the fact that the finding food now, I think in the next 50 or so years it is going to be very, very top of the agenda, and I think in a small island like this where the opportunities are there, you have got the land mass, hence the importance of land banks, et cetera. You know, it is here but you have to put that seed in everybody's mind that this is going to become very, very important, and with something like this then you can do that; you have the opportunity of going into, taking children into farms. I am sure it happens. I am sure it happens but, as I say, the potential for doing more as we start getting closer to the possibility of finding that there are going to be shortages in the not too distant future. I think getting in ahead of the game is not a bad thing.

The Deputy of St. Mary:

Yes, it is sort of puzzling because government, where does government fit in? It does not fit in with the R.I.S. (Rural Initiative Scheme), it does not fit in with the C.R.S. and yet it needs to happen so this is the puzzle, is it not? Yet there is a whole page on it in here.

President, National Trust for Jersey:

Well, it does not have to be financial. I think it is just that support should be there.

The Deputy of St. Mary:

Yes.

President, National Trust for Jersey:

Maybe as long as you give that support and show that support it is a, you know, it is a tremendous boost.

The Deputy of Grouville:

What about schools taking on allotments?

President, National Trust for Jersey:

Great idea but I think some of them do, do they not? It is very, very small scale.

Council Member, National Trust for Jersey:

Schools already have their own vegetable patches and they grow at some of them.

The Deputy of Grouville:

I know a group of schools, they have a few tufts in the area.

Council Member, National Trust for Jersey:

There are some in the area, I mean the R.J.A.&H.S. (Royal Jersey Agricultural and Horticultural Society) goes into quite a few schools. That helps children understand where their fruit and veg come from.

The Deputy of St. Mary:

So would you care to comment on allotments in general because that is an interesting area; you might have something to tell us about how you see the importance of that?

Chief Executive, National Trust for Jersey:

Just go one step back, I just think ... up until very recently, I see it was in the cuts yesterday, the States paid for school children to go and visit Durrell. Yet there was not, as I am aware of, a similar scheme to pay for children to go and visit, for example, local farms and work on a farm that could be open to school children on a regular basis. Yet, agriculture is a key element of our rural heritage as an island, so it is an incredibly important part of our history. Also, children are educated about food chains and yet the very part of the food chain where they are involved there does not seem to be that option to go out and see: "You are here at the top of the food chain. This is the cow; this is what you eat. This is the chicken." So we all look at these food chains and we educate children about food chains, but there is very little, it seems to me, focus on the end of the food chain where we are involved. If we want people - not just children but across the board - to value our countryside and be willing to support it, then they have to be willing to understand what it is about. Until you address that avidly it is difficult to tell people why they should be paying for Joe Bloggs to milk his cow or to plant his potatoes. So, it is crucial to get that through the system. It seems to me that there is a link between the Education, Sport and Culture Department and the Environment Department. Between those 2 departments there is an incredible crossover, in terms of many issues. That is what needs to be addressed.

The Deputy of Grouville:

So government could be doing more?

Chief Executive, National Trust Lands Committee:

Government could be doing more. I think the first step might be a review to see what is being done at the current time, both in terms of government and also in terms of the voluntary sectors. So you have some sort of feeling of where you are going. But it would be nice to have that system whereby there is a real commitment to educating our children about our cultural heritage and also our cultural future, the future of the agricultural industry.

The Deputy of St. Mary:

Moving on to climate change, you highlight the role of wetlands. Could you tell us how you would like to see Jersey's wetlands being protected better?

Chief Executive, National Trust Lands Committee:

Our concern is the buffer zones around the wetlands, in that the heart of our wetlands have recently achieved protection through S.S.I. (site of special interest) status, but the buffer zones are also incredibly important to wetlands. It is not just the bit of water in the middle; it is the habitat and the fields around those wetlands. It acts as one substantial ecosystem. What seems to be happening, particularly at Grouville, unfortunately, is development occurring around the fringe of the wetlands and everyone says: "It is just on the edge, so it will be okay" but it will start to have an impact.

[11:45]

The Deputy of Grouville:

Are you talking about the sheltered housing?

Chief Executive, National Trust Lands Committee:

I am talking about the sheltered housing. I am talking about the redevelopment of De La Mare Nursery. I am talking about the developments that occurred when Terry Le Main redeveloped his site. That wetland at Grouville Marsh is getting pressurised all the time. There will be a point where if you put more and more people around it and more activity around it, it will begin to lose its value.

The Deputy of St. Mary:

You mentioned carbon storage. That is new to me, that wetlands are for carbon storage. Can you explain that just a little bit?

Chief Executive, National Trust Lands Committee:

That was our lines manager. **[Laughter]** I shall defer to him. He highlighted that they were a valuable form of carbon storage, but I do not want to pretend that I know the technical details.

The Deputy of St. Mary:

Do you have any comment on carbon storage within agriculture? Do you have any awareness of that particular issue? I am thinking of climate change and the need to sequester carbon.

President, National Trust for Jersey:

If I could just, as a P.S. (post script) with the wetlands, I think what we need to recognise is that we only have 3 areas of wetlands, making them increasingly important for all sorts of reasons. We are now down to about 3. I think you cannot afford to lose any of them.

The Deputy of Grouville:

The Trust does not support enabling or linked development. Could you just explain this and why not?

Chief Executive, National Trust Lands Committee:

We feel that if you are going to have an Island Plan - and I stress the word "Island" - the policies of that Island Plan should apply to everyone within the community and you should not have differentials within that Island Plan or certain sectors of the community. That is our first bug-bear. Then also, we think that if you wish to subsidise the agricultural industry - and there are good reasons and arguments for doing so - that you should do that in a clear and transparent manner as opposed to seeking to subsidise certain businesses by enabling them planning gain on areas of land which would not normally be developed. That is really why we are against the concept of enabling development. We are aware that there has been some enabling development, despite not being fully endorsed by the States of Jersey as it was supposed to be. We think it is a dangerous policy. As I say, if you want to subsidise the agricultural industry then fair enough, but do it in a clear manner where everyone is able to benefit from that subsidy.

The Deputy of Grouville:

So if a farmer wants to put up a whacking great shed in the middle of the countryside because they need it, how do you think Planning ought to go about addressing this issue, because as you rightly say nobody else would be allowed to put up a construction bang in the middle of a field?

Chief Executive, National Trust Lands Committee:

With sheds, there is a policy that you have to use that shed for agricultural usage for a minimum of 5 years. If you are going to allow agricultural buildings to be erected to help that business and it is fully justified then you need to ensure that it stays within that business for longer than 5 years, because you want to ensure that no one is seeking a loophole. The 5-year period is a very short period of time. But if there are good reasons for supporting that business and that shed is essential to that business then it seems reasonable. Although obviously you also have to make sure that the site chosen is the only site and the most appropriate site. It needs to go through that process. It seems to be an enabling development is a different ballgame. Whereby you are saying certain developments would be allowed on a piece of land or within a farm complex and then that development could potentially be sold on and then the money used in some way to reinvest in that business. It seems odd that the agricultural business or industry should have that benefit, as opposed to other businesses or industries.

The Deputy of St. Mary:

Going back a bit, you said that the enabling development policy was not fully endorsed by the States. I am interested in that statement. What did you mean by that?

I can quite believe it, but could you expand on it?

Chief Executive, National Trust Lands Committee:

It has been some time since I looked at that, but my understanding is that it was a draft policy that was put together by Economic Development and then it was meant to go back to States for full States approval, but a number of farmers were able to benefit from it without it going back to full States.

The Deputy of St. Mary:

Thank you. On your last comment, which is really quite a big one and quite appropriate to more or less end on, your question, basically, the whole report's emphasis, even its title. Could you just let us know your concerns there on this last page? You think the report should be an open draft official strategy, because there is so much, in a sense, missing or the focus is not quite right.

Chief Executive, National Trust Lands Committee:

There are a lot of businesses happening within Jersey's countryside other than the agricultural industry. It is quite odd, I suppose in some ways, that you have the fisheries in there, because that is the marine environment as opposed to the rural environment. So it seems to me a bit of an odd title to give to it, when really its focus is on agriculture and fisheries. It just does not seem to tie up really.

The Deputy of Grouville:

So would you prefer to see the strategy expanded?

Chief Executive, National Trust Lands Committee:

It either has to be potentially expanded or it has to have the title rewritten.

[Laughter]

The Deputy of St. Mary:

Let us pursue this a little bit. It does say Rural Economy Strategy. I look at your list of things that perhaps should be in it. The historic environment; how does that fit with rural economy? Smallholders? What is really bugging you that is missing that you would like to see create references on here or some connections being made that are not being made?

Chief Executive, National Trust Lands Committee:

I suppose it is looking at the rural economy in a slightly wider context than what this report focuses on and looking, I suppose, at what makes the rural economy tick. Farm shops, smallholdings, they are all quite essential elements, but there does not seem to be a lot of detail or focus on those elements within this report. They are crucial planning issues as well. The level of support you give a smallholder where they can then build a house in the countryside, again to support their business. For us, those are quite crucial issues and yet there does not seem to be a lot of detail on those elements. Farm shops suddenly boomed in the last 5 or 6 years. I think it is important to recognise what the farm shops are doing, what impact they are having on the rural economy, what impact they are having on those agricultural businesses, have they taken over those agricultural businesses? I suspect there is quite a lot of work to be done, but I think it needs to be acknowledged that that work needs to be done, as opposed to simply sort of thinking: "Well we will not look at that too much." I think a bit more attention could be paid.

The Deputy of Grouville:

Okay. Do you have any further comments, anything you would like to say for the record about the strategy?

Chief Executive, National Trust Lands Committee:

I would like to pick up on our (f), level of grant funding available from the various initiatives. I think it is crucial that levels of funding are clarified. Also, that they are not adjusted willy-nilly. The Countryside Renewal Scheme is important because it has to have long term objectives, if you suddenly slash the budget you are going to undermine the work that you may have done in the first couple of years quite severely. So you really, in some respects, might as well not have started in the first place. If you are going to have a Countryside Renewal Scheme, you have to have a long term commitment and you have to have a secure pot of funding.

The Deputy of St. Mary:

Do you see C.R.S. as being particularly valuable in what it has achieved so far?

Chief Executive, National Trust Lands Committee:

We argued quite strongly to try and get C.R.S. up and running, because Jersey's landscape does need some investment. In some ways C.R.S. has not even touched on landscape elements and with the budget having being slashed in half it is unlikely to be able to do so for quite some considerable period of time. So what we were arguing for 7 or 8 years ago in some ways we are not going to achieve. It seems to be, again,

that is what the States voted for. Whether they need to decide, whether that is what they are getting really.

The Deputy of St. Mary:

Investment in the landscape, what exactly would you like to see that is not happening?

Chief Executive, National Trust Lands Committee:

Personally I would like to see improved hedgerow management. I would like to see repairs to dry stone walls. I would like to see repairs to roadside banks and fosses. Those would be my first points of call.

Chairman, National Trust Lands Committee:

Yes, hedgerow management within the field as well as on the roadside; buffer zones that are substantial. Water quality comes into that as well as flora and fauna, in the hedgerows.

The Deputy of Grouville:

Okay. Finally, would you say that there is a champion within government for rural enterprise or rural affairs?

Chief Executive, National Trust Lands Committee:

Our silence would suggest otherwise. **[Laughter]** I am not aware that there is a leading light or champion.

The Deputy of Grouville:

Is it represented?

Chairman, National Trust Lands Committee:

I think it is disappointing that over the years the environment appears in policies and then government does not seem to put its money where its mouth is; over 10 or 15 years. Just bearing in mind the C.R.S. budget was slashed and various issues of planning and you think the environment is supposed to be thought of first and you see things happening and think: “That is not taking the environment into account at all.”

The Deputy of Grouville:

That is the environment, but there are sort of rural affairs.

Chairman, National Trust Lands Committee:

It is tied up, really.

The Deputy of Grouville:

Yes, it is.

Chief Executive, National Trust Lands Committee:

The cuts that took place in terms of the original Agricultural Department at Howard Davis, I suspect that it does ... it has been marginalised since that point. Whether it can result it ... it will never regain, I suppose, the statute we had in those heady days, but it does need a bit more of a voice in government, which it probably does not really have at the moment.

The Deputy of Grouville:

The Rural Economy is not at Howard Davis Farm, is it? The tourism ... well, I call it, the tourism building.

Chief Executive, National Trust Lands Committee:

Do they not bridge though? Do you not have some people ... I think you have some people at Howard Davis and some ...

The Deputy of St. Mary:

Nothing to do with those. Depends whether it is rural or economy.

The Deputy of Grouville:

Okay. You have come in for an hour and it is 12 noon now. I would like to thank you very much for sparing us the time. The transcripts will be sent to you in about a week's time to verify you are happy with them and what has been said and they are accurate. Thank you for coming in on this hot, sunny day.

[12:00]