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The Role and Economic Function of Rural Estates

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What is a Rural Estate?



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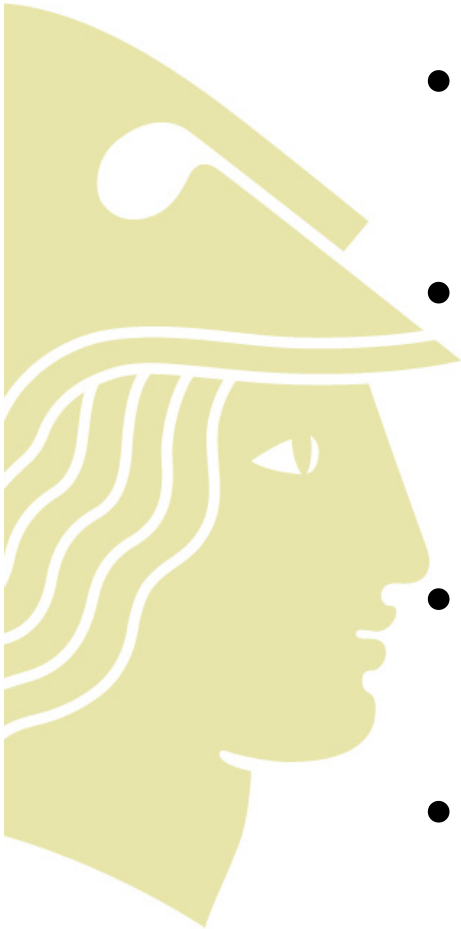
Copped Hall - an ancient hunting park and rural estate

Chatsworth estate, Derbyshire



What is a Rural Estate?

- An area of land managed as a whole organisation with overlying aims
- Estates tend to own a range of assets – land, houses, workspace and community facilities
- Estates are differentiated from farms based on the diversity of their assets
- The sizes of estates identified ranged from 100 acres (40ha) to over 20,000 acres (8,000ha)



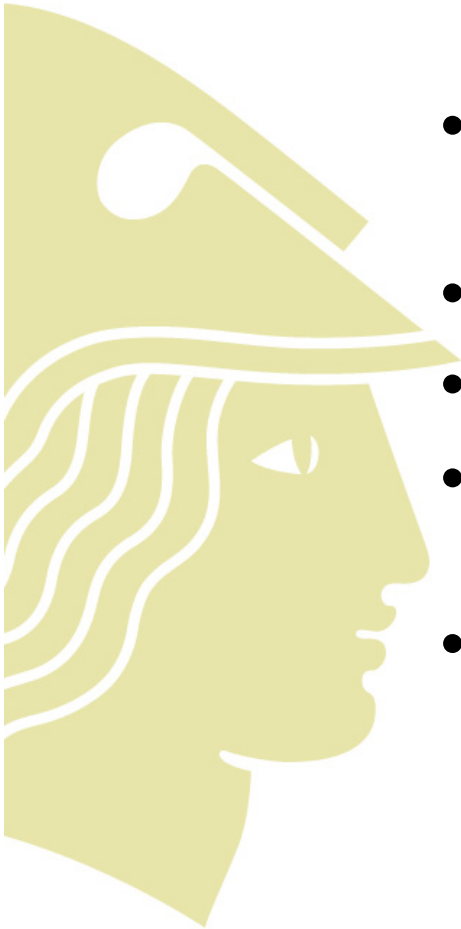
The estate sector in the East Midlands

- 290 estates
- 364,000 hectares (900,000 acres)
- 23% of region's land area
- 70% private,
10% public,
20% institutional / charity owned

North East Rural Estates Framework



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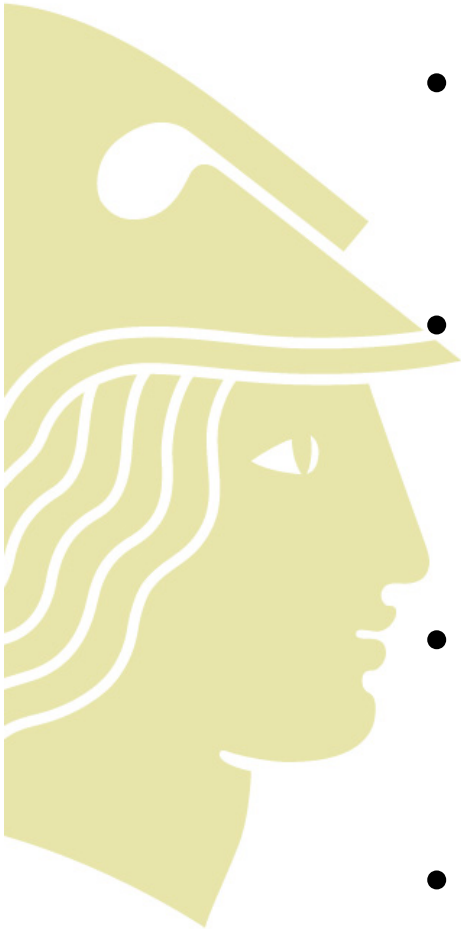


- A pilot programme to bring estates and the public sector closer together.
- 40% of NE in estates ownership
- “Paternalistic” approach
- Estates and government policy have similar objectives.
- *“Partnership between the public sector and individual estates could provide a truly cost effective and innovative means to regenerate significant parts of the North-east region’s rural economy”*

North East Rural Estates Framework 2



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- Estates and government share the obligation to provide good value, neither is exclusively profit led.
- Estates are often well practised in applying a long-term integrated approach involving joining-up and balancing economic, environmental and community strands.
- Estates find themselves having to join-up government organisations whose individual brief is for a single issue.
- Despite the recognised contribution of estates to meeting public policy objectives, estates are absent from any key regional rural policies.



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Economic Contribution

- 5,300 jobs (full-time equivalents)
- A further 13,300 working from estate owned properties
- A third of the case study estates provide more than 10% of employment in their immediate area
- On 95% of case study estates, employment was increasing





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Economic Contribution 2



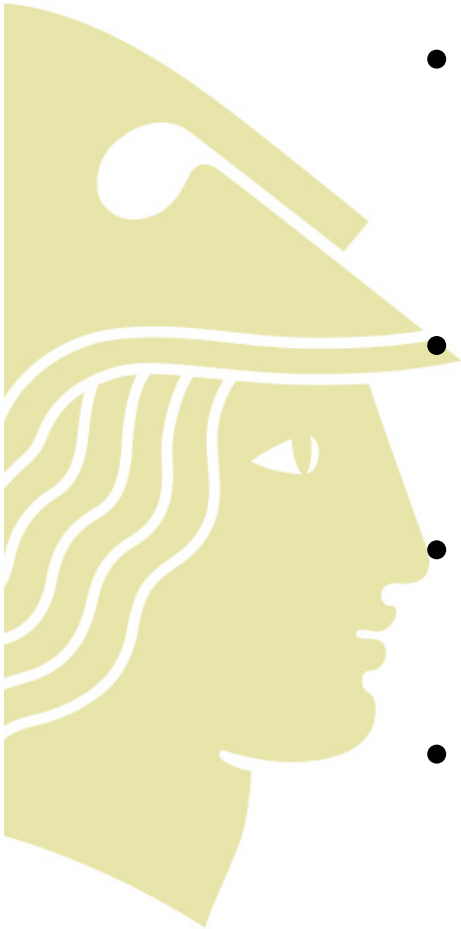
- Provide 2.5m ft² (232,000m²) workspace, 12,550 ft² (1,170m²) on average per estate
- 81% growth in workspace in 5 years
- 12 of top 20 paid-for attractions by visitor numbers in the region are estates or historic houses
- Visitor numbers growing faster to estates than other attractions (2006-07)
- 80% of estates host events
- Some estates create a destination (e.g. Burghley, Chatsworth)



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Educational Role

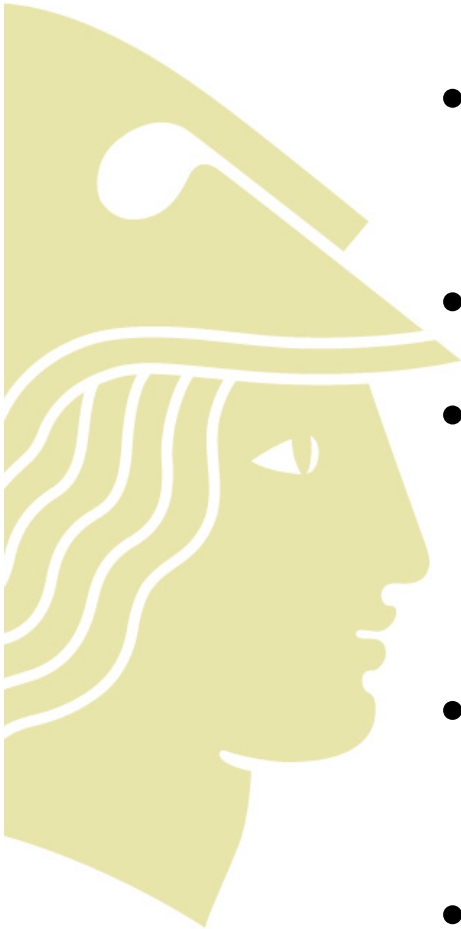
- Environmental management: working with Sheffield University and Natural England on improving wet heathland
- New technologies: working on bio-fuels with The University of Derby
- The same estate is working with University of Derby to develop an “artisan” food college
- Hosting students: students from University of Derby carried out visitor surveys
- University of the third age: offering lectures and courses on a range of subjects





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Brokers of Knowledge



- Farm managers and land agents advise farm tenants – link to professional & policy advice
- Introduction of green technologies
- Land-based training through county training groups and Lantra. Other training provided in conjunction with universities.
- Most estates did not identify any unsatisfied training needs
- Some estates deliberately try to attract Knowledge Intensive Businesses



Social and Community Role



- On average, the estates provided 70% of all private-rented sector housing in their areas.
- 13% is rent free or below market rents.
- Extrapolated to the regional level, this equates to some 870 homes being provided below market rent.
- Two thirds own and maintain community facilities including sports grounds, churches, parks, allotments, pubs and village shops
- Over 50% provide a village hall, estimated to be at least 166 village halls in the region, (14% of the regional total)



Environmental Conservation

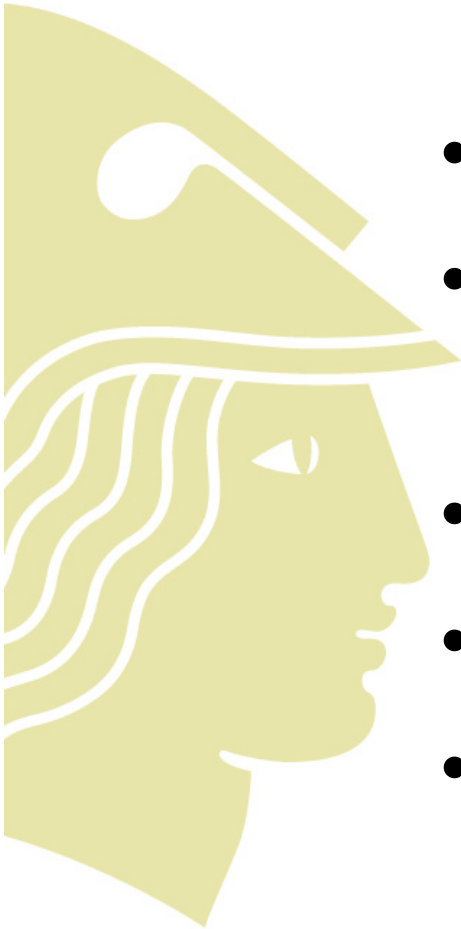
- Estates own 23% of the region's land so have significant say in how it is managed – this includes:
 - 29% of the region's Ancient Monuments
 - 27% & 33% of Grades I and II* Listed Buildings
 - 50% of Parks & Gardens
 - 23% of SSSIs
- This is aside from environmental stewardship attached to agricultural land





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Environmental Development



- Long term investment horizons
- Increasing linkages with business and educational worlds
- Diversification of investment portfolio
- Access to professional advice & grants
- Economies of scale associated with land resources enable green energy investments

Neo-endogenous Rural Development



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- ‘Endogenous-based development in which extra-local factors are recognised and regarded as essential but which retains belief in the potential of local areas to shape their future’ (Ray, 2001)
- The potential for rural estates to shape local development - local knowledge, local resources, political influence



Links with Local Authorities

- 19 out of 20 respondents dealt with LAs.
- One indicated a close working relationship describing “Involvement with many departments...Planning, learning, education, tourism, marketing, joint promotions,” adding that “The Council contributed towards the brown signs on the motorway.”
- This was the exception – others see planning as a barrier, especially conservation areas and listed buildings.
- Grant funding also difficult to access.



Estates and Rural Development



- **Key factors/opportunities:**
 - long term outlook
 - Place shaping role, historical connections
 - Social responsibility and local focus
 - Environmental role
 - Increasing need to maximise income
- **But...need to work with policy makers, often similar ambitions but very different perspectives**



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Working positively with rural estates

The scale and nature of rural estates and their contribution to the East Midlands



<http://www.emda.org.uk/ruralestates/>

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The Role of Estates in the Rural Economy



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