



ANNUAL REPORT 2008/9

1. GENERAL OVERVIEW

Statement of aims

The Centre for Rural Research (CRR) has five main aims:

- to supply an independent consultancy service for quality rural research;
- to develop national and international research interests whilst maintaining a local focus on Worcestershire and neighbouring counties;
- to disseminate knowledge in an accessible manner to the wider public including policy-makers, countryside managers, those in education, voluntary organisations and people living and working in the countryside;
- to contribute to the development of geography and rural studies;
- to assist in the strategic delivery of the mission of the University of Worcester in the key areas of 'research' and 'contribution to the region'.

Summary of Position

This report covers the activities of the CRR from 1st September 2008 until 31st August 2009. In summary, this has been a relatively quiet year. Three major projects were undertaken in 2008/9 and one completed after being commissioned in the previous year. CRR's financial position remains healthy at the end of the period. As always, CRR delivered successfully client contract work whilst the principal researchers (NE and DS) continued to commit themselves fully to teaching and administrative duties. CRR was delighted welcome Alan Dixon on board as a full member of the Research Centre. His activities in the rural geography of developing countries will strengthen considerably CRR's international dimension.

Work continues to be commissioned by a variety of rural organisations based on CRR's reputation for quality in research. CRR remains highly active as a University of Worcester research centre, continuing to raise the research profile of the institution. It was identified as a specialist area of research within the Geography Unit of Assessment submission to the 2008 Research Assessment Exercise and its excellence in rural geography identified in the feedback from the Geography Panel. In total, two new research projects were initiated in the period of the report. The year was notable in that it represents the first since 2000 in which no dedicated full-time research assistants were employed. Katie Milburn left in the summer of 2008 to take up a permanent post with a county wildlife trust. CRR staff for 2008/9 therefore comprised academic staff, Peter Carruthers as CRR Senior Research Fellow and two part-time researchers/casuals. CRR continues to make very tangible contributions to raising the profile of the University

of Worcester internationally in the world of research and within the regional community of the West Midlands.

2. CURRENT STAFF

CRR had the following staff profile, as at September 2009.

i) Current Academic Staff

Dr. Nick Evans (NE, Director)

Dr. Heather Barrett (HB)

Dr. Peter Carruthers (PC), seconded from the Commission for Rural Communities

Dr. Alan Dixon (AD)

Dr. Cheryl Jones (CJ)

Dr. David Storey (DS)

ii) Part-time Research Staff

Rona Davis (RD)

iii) Former Research Staff

Full-time Research Assistant: Miss Elizabeth Connolly (EC) (Sept 2004 – Apr 2008)

Full-time Research Assistant: Miss Katie Milburn (KM) (Feb 2007 – July 2008)

iv) Casual Research Staff

Ms Deborah Collins (DC)

v) Line Management

Prof. John Newbury (JN), Head of Institute of Science and the Environment (from Oct 2008)

vi) Administrative / Support

Miss Jo Dyson (JD) mapping and GIS support

Mrs Clare Smith (CS), with Miss Laura Starkie (LS), with assistance from Miss Hannah Downs, Ms Trish Clutterbuck, Mrs Lisa Hopkins and Dr. Anne Sinnott.

vii) Research Associates

Dr. Ian Maddock (IM): river management and conservation research.

Mr David Lovelace (DL): independent consultant, not a member of UoW staff, sub-contracted to assist with specific contract work.

3. POSTGRADUATE RESEARCH STUDENTS

None, but 2008/9 witnessed a highly successful acquisition of PhD studentships under the CRR umbrella. Three new full-time research studentships were awarded to NE for September 2009 start, including one jointly with Prof D. Upton in IHS. CJ obtained a PhD studentship *Towards numerical forecasting of atmospheric concentrations of allergenic pollen from trees of the Fagales order in the UK* (Joint with NPARU). AD also acquired a fully funded Worcester-Coventry PhD studentship '*Building resilient institutions for wetland management in Ethiopia*'.

4. RECORD OF PUBLICATIONS FOR THE YEAR

Contributions of current members of CRR are shown in bold type.

ia) Publically Released (print or e-versions) Articles in Refereed International Journals

Buch, A. and **Dixon, A.** (2009) South Africa's working for wetlands programme: A win-win situation for environment and development? *Sustainable Development*, 17, 3, 129-141.

Dixon, A., Hailu, A, Semu, T, Taffa, L (2009) Local responses to marginalisation: human-wildlife conflicts in Ethiopia's wetlands. *Geography* 94, 1, 38-47.

Dixon, A. (2008) The resilience of local wetland management institutions in Ethiopia. *Singapore Journal of Tropical Geography* 29, 3, 341-357.

Evans, N. (2009) Adjustment strategies revisited: agricultural change in the Welsh Marches. *Journal of Rural Studies* 25, 217-230.

Maconachie, R, **Dixon, A.** and Wood, AP (2009) Decentralization and local institutional arrangements for wetland management in Ethiopia and Sierra Leone. *Applied Geography*, 29, 2, 269-279.

Price, L. and **Evans, N.** (2009) From farming stress to distress. *Journal of Rural Studies* 25, 1-11.

Storey, D. and Connolly, E. (2008) A countryside for all? *Town & Country Planning* 77 (12), 523-526.

Storey, D. (2009) Segregation and territoriality: comments on Waterman, *Irish Geography* 42 (2), 253-255.

ib) Publically Released (print or e-versions) Articles in Non-Refereed International Journals

Storey, D. (2009) Heritage and place promotion *Geography Review* 23 (1), 36-39.

ii) Contributions to books

Dixon, A., Wood, A., Finlayson, M. and Halsema, G. (2008) Exploring agriculture-wetland interactions: a framework for analysis. In Wood, A. and Halsema, G. (Eds) *Scoping agriculture-wetland interactions: Towards a sustainable multiple response strategy*. FAO, Rome. p5-28.

Wood, A., **Dixon, A.**, and Maconachie, R. (2008) Small swamp wetlands in southwest Ethiopia. In: Wood, A., van Halsema, G. (eds.) *Scoping agriculture – wetland interactions: Towards a sustainable multiple-response strategy* (FAO Water Report 33).

Rome, Italy: Food and Agriculture Organization of the United Nations.p65-73

Evans, N. (2009) Contextualising Agricultural Change: Agricultural change in the Welsh Marches. In Winchell, D., Ramsey, D. and Robinson, G. (eds.) *The Global Rural*, Eastern Washington University Press, Spokane, USA. Forthcoming.

Morris, C. and **Evans, N.** (2008) Agricultural turns, geographical turns: retrospect and prospect. In Munton, R. (ed.) *The Rural: Critical Essays in Human Geography*. Ashgate, Aldershot, Chapter 19, pp.321-339.

Storey, D. (2008) Territory, space and society, in P. Daniels, M. Bradshaw, D. Shaw and J. Sidaway (eds) *An Introduction to Human Geography. Issues for the 21st Century* (3rd edition), Harlow: Prentice Hall, 399-416.

Storey, D. (2009) Political Geography, in R. Kitchin and N. Thrift (eds) *International Encyclopedia of Human Geography*, Oxford: Elsevier.

Storey, D. (2009) Rural economic development, in R. Kitchin and N. Thrift (eds) *International Encyclopedia of Human Geography*, Oxford: Elsevier.

iii) Forthcoming Publications Accepted in the Period 2008/9

Barton, A. and **Storey, D.** (forthcoming) A trip in the countryside, in R. Yarwood and R. Mawby (eds) *Constable Countryside? Policing, Governance and Rurality*, Aldershot: Ashgate. Due 2009.

Carruthers, P. (2009) The land debate – ‘doing the right thing’: ethical approaches to land-use decision making. In Winter, M. and Lobley, M (eds.) *What is land for? The food, fuel and climate change debate*. London, Earthscan. (Forthcoming, November)

Evans, N. (forthcoming) Contextualising Agricultural Change: Farm Adjustment in the Welsh Marches. In Ramsay, D., Robinson, G. and Winchell, D. (eds) *The Global Rural*. Spokane: Eastern Washington University Press, USA. Due 2009.

Evans, N. (forthcoming) Land Use in Worcestershire. In Maskew, R. (ed.) *A Flora of Worcestershire*, Chapter 3. Due 2010.

Hall, T. and **Barrett, H.** (forthcoming) *Urban Geography* (2nd Edition). Routledge. Due 2010.

Holmes, M. and **Storey, D.** (forthcoming) Mercenaries or nationalists? National identity and the Republic of Ireland football team, in P. Gilchrist and R. Holden (eds) *The Politics of Sport: Community, Mobility, Identity*, London: Routledge. Due 2009.

Holmes, M. and **Storey, D.** (forthcoming) Transferring national allegiance: cultural affinity or flag of convenience? *Sport in Society*. Due 2009.

Storey, D. (in press) Partnerships, people and place: Lauding the local in rural development, in G. Halseth, S. Markey and D. Bruce (eds) *The Next Rural Economies: Constructing Rural Place in Global Economies*, CABI: Oxford.

Storey, D. (forthcoming) Using the past: heritage and the commodification of rural places, in D. Ramsey *et al* (eds), *The Global Rural*, Spokane: Eastern Washington University Press, USA. Due 2009.

Storey, D. (forthcoming) Land, territory and identity, in I. Convery, T. Dutson, P. Davis and G. Corsane (eds) *Making Sense of Place: An Edited Collection*, Basingstoke: Palgrave. Due 2010

Storey, D. (forthcoming) *Territories. The Claiming of Space* (2nd edition). To be published by Routledge in 2010.

iv) Refereeing Activity in the Period 2008/9

In addition to publication, staff again acted as journal referees for international academic journals across and beyond the discipline of Geography.

- Journal of Rural Studies (twice) [NE];
- Children's Geographies [NE]
- Geographical Journal [NE]
- Land Use Policy [NE]
- Finnish Journal of Rural Research and Policy [NE]
- Geopolitics [DS]
- Children's Geographies [DS]
- Urban Morphology (twice) [HB]

DS was also appointed External Reviewer at Bath Spa University.

The growth in this activity is again a mark of the increasing external, and indeed international, esteem in which CRR's academic staff are held.

v) Book Reviews

DS: Review of S. Gupta and T. Omoniyi (eds) Cultures of Economic Migration: International Perspectives, *Gender, Place and Culture* 16 (1), 2009.

DS: Review of S. Buzar Energy Poverty in Eastern Europe. Hidden Geographies of Deprivation, *Geografiska Annaler B* 91(2), 2009.

DS: Review of G. M. Robinson (ed.) Sustainable Rural Systems. Sustainable Agriculture and Rural Communities, *Irish Geography* 42 (2), 2009.

DS: Review of B. Graham and P. Howard. (eds) Ashgate Research Companion to Heritage and Identity, *Gender, Place and Culture* 16 (5) 2009.

NE Review of Multifunctional Agriculture: A transition theory perspective by Geoff A. Wilson, *Journal of Rural Studies*, forthcoming.

NE: Review of Rural Geography by Michael Woods, *Global Built Environment Review* (2008) 6, pp63-5.

5. CONFERENCES: ATTENDANCE AND PRESENTATIONS

AD: People: lifelines for wetlands on the edge'. Paper presented at the *Wetland And Aquatic Ecosystems: Their Functions And Values* conference, Oxford University, 25th November 2008. With Prof Adrian Wood (Wetland Action and University of Huddersfield).

NE: British Farmers and Spanish Polytunnels: Strawberry Fields Forever? *3rd Anglo-Spanish Rural Geography Symposium*, Rural Geography Research Group, Royal Geographical Society. Canterbury Christ Church University, July 2009.

NE: Monitoring Landscape Change: AONBs and Landscape Character Assessment in the Malvern Hills. Paper presented to the *Landscape and Heritage Research Focus Conference*, University of Worcester, 3rd November 2008.

DS: Rural development, heritage and place promotion. Paper presented to the *Landscape and Heritage Research Focus Conference*, University of Worcester, 3rd November 2008.

DS: Delegate at Conference of Irish Geographers, Cork, May 2009.

PC: Convenor of Commission for Rural Communities, Uplands Inquiry Seminar: *The State of the Uplands 1*.

PC: Convenor of Commission for Rural Communities, Uplands Inquiry Seminar: *The State of the Uplands 2*.

PC: Convenor of Commission for Rural Communities, Uplands Inquiry Seminar: *The Value and Valuation of Public Goods in the English Uplands*, Penrith, UK.

PC: Valuing People and Nature in the Uplands. Paper presented to the Commission for Rural Communities, Uplands Inquiry Seminar: *The Value and Valuation of Public Goods in the English Uplands*, Penrith, UK, 21 May 2009.

PC: Convenor of Commission for Rural Communities, Uplands Inquiry Seminar: *Managing, Developing and Formulating Policy for the English Uplands*.

PC: Ethics, Public Policy and Upland Communities. Paper presented to the Commission for Rural Communities, Uplands Inquiry Seminar: *Managing, Developing and Formulating Policy for the English Uplands*, Penrith, UK, 22 May 2009.

PC: Convenor of Commission for Rural Communities, Uplands Inquiry Seminar: *International Experience of Managing and Developing Uplands*.

6. LECTURES AND SIMILAR ACTIVITIES

The 57th Lovatt Lecture in Geography was on a rural topic, *New Technologies In Farming: Remaking Animals, Knowledges And Agricultural Geographies*, delivered by Dr. Lewis Holloway, Department of Geography, University of Hull, March 2009.

CRR hosts regular meetings of the Chaplaincy for Agricultural and Rural Life (CARL) of Worcester Diocese.

Media Work

NE contributed to the following:

BBC Farming Today – The geography of endangerment amongst farm livestock breeds, broadcast 16th December 2008

ITN National News – Climate Change Special Report – future agricultural land use. broadcast 18th June 2009

BBC Midlands Today – The geography of endangerment amongst farm livestock breeds, broadcast 2nd August 2009

AD contributed to the production of a short film entitled 'Striking a balance: sustainable wetland environmental management and livelihood development in Zambia and Malawi'. This film is being distributed widely throughout Africa as a training resource for governments and NGOs. (See <http://www.wetlandaction.org/SAB.html>)

7. DESCRIPTION OF CONSULTANCY UNDERTAKEN

Staff have been engaged on the following funded research projects in the year 2008/9. These are **additional to** any personal academic research projects undertaken. Full details of these projects are available from the project leaders whose initials appear next to each project. Further, several projects mentioned in last year's report have been completed to the satisfaction of clients and staff have written up findings for publication in academic journals.

i) Consultancy Projects in 2008/9

St. Wulstan's Nature Reserve Visitor Survey (KM, EC, DC, NE) For the Countryside Service, Worcestershire County Council.

The State of the Malvern Hills AONB: A Second Look (NE) For the Malvern Hills AONB Partnership.

Geology and Art Feasibility Study. (CJ, RD) For Natural England.

Geographical Endemism as a Definition of Endangerment in Farm Livestock Breeds (NE) For the Rare Breeds Survival Trust.

ii) Consultancy Portfolio

This sub-section provides a comprehensive listing of completed consultancy research projects undertaken by CRR since its formation in 1996 to date (only current staff indicated in brackets).

- 1996 *The Geography of Rare Breeds of Domestic Livestock*** (NE, RY) Nuffield Foundation.
- 1997 *Environmental Monitoring and Evaluation of the Countryside Stewardship Scheme*** (NE) Report to Countryside Commission. For CCRU, Cheltenham & Gloucester College of H.E.
- 1997 *SSSI Owner-Occupier Segmentation Project Phase 1*** (NE) Report to English Nature. With CCRU.
- 1997 *The CAP Beef Regime in England and its Impact on Nature Conservation*** (NE) Report to English Nature. With CCRU.
- 1998 *SSSI Owner-Occupier Segmentation Project Phase 2*** (NE) Report to English Nature. With CCRU.
- 1998 *Trade and Commerce in Cleobury Mortimer*** (HB, DS, RY). Report to Cleobury Mortimer Chamber of Trade, LEADER II.
- 1998 *Fear of Crime in Rural Areas*** (RY) Royal Geographical Society, with West Mercia Constabulary and Inkberrow Parish Council.
- 1998 *Economic Evaluation of the Countryside Stewardship Scheme*** (NE) Report to Countryside Commission. For CCRU, Cheltenham & Gloucester College of H.E.
- 1998 *The Rare Breeds Meat Marketing Scheme***. (RY, NE) for Rare Breeds Survival Trust.
- 1998 *Obstacles to Affordable Housing in Rural Areas*** (RY) Report to Worcestershire Housing Association and the Housing Corporation.
- 1999 *SSSI Owner-Occupier Segmentation Project Phase 3*** (NE) Report to English Nature. With CCRU.
- 1999 *Deer and Grazing Management Assessment of Little Doward, Crocker's Ash, Herefordshire*** (NE) Report to the Woodland Trust.
- 1999 *Urban and Rural Interdependency*** (DS, RY) Report to Advantage West Midlands.
- 2000 *Evaluation of the Edinburgh Questionnaire Amongst Post-natal Women in Herefordshire*** (RY, HB) Report to Herefordshire Health Authority.
- 2000 *A Visitor Survey of Hartlebury Common*** (NE, RY) Report to The Countryside Service, Worcestershire County Council.
- 2000 *A Visitor Survey of Blackstone Meadows Country Park and Blackstone Picnic Place*** (RY, NE) Report to The Countryside Service, Worcestershire County Council.
- 2001 *The Herefordshire Farming Study*** (NE, DL) Report to Herefordshire Partnership.
- 2001 *Child Care Provision in Bromyard*** (HB, DS, RY) Bromyard HOPE group, LEADER II.
- 2001 *Rural Deprivation Hotspots*** (DS) Report to Worcestershire County Council.
- 2001 *The Economic Impact of Foot and Mouth Disease in Worcestershire*** (HB, NE, DS) Report to Worcestershire County Council.
- 2002 *Leominster Young Persons Drug Outreach Project: an Evaluation*** (DS) Report to Drug Services Hereford (DASH).

2002 Recycling Feasibility Study for Worcestershire Lifestyles (NE) Report to Worcestershire Lifestyles.

2002 Agricultural Biodiversity Resources of Welsh Domestic Livestock (NE, with RY) Report to Countryside Council for Wales.

2002 Sustainable Landscapes in Shropshire: A Farm Study for Shropshire (NE, DS, DL) Report to Shropshire County Council and partners.

2002 Analysis of Consultation Data for Malvern Hills AONB Management Plan (NE). Report to Malvern Hills AONB Partnership

2003 The Characterisation of the Severn-Vrynwy Land Management Initiative Project Area (KW, NE). Report to Countryside Agency

2003 Waseley Hills Country Park Visitor Survey (NE). Report to The Countryside Service, Worcestershire County Council.

2003 Herefordshire Farming Study – post-FMD Follow-up (NE). Report to The Herefordshire Partnership.

2003 Areas of Outstanding Natural Beauty in the West Midlands – a Statistical Digest (NE, DS, CJ, PA). Report to Countryside Agency.

2004 The University College Worcester Student Survey (NE) Report to Academic Quality Unit, UCW.

2004 Cleobury Mortimer and Hinterland: Survey of Environmental Issues (DS, HB, CJ) Report to Cleobury Mortimer Partnership Forum and South Shropshire District Council.

2004 What Kind of and Institution Are We? (NE) Report to Equal Opportunities Department, UCW.

2004 Blackstone Riverside Park Visitor Survey (EC, NE) Report to the Countryside Service, Worcestershire County Council.

2004 Fish Hill Picnic Place Visitor Survey (EC, NE) Report to the Countryside Service, Worcestershire County Council.

2004 A Recreational Strategy for the Abberley and Malvern Hills Geopark (EC, NE, JRH) Report to Countryside Agency.

2004 The Geotouristic Potential of the Abberley Hills (EC, JRH, NE) Report to the Abberley and Malvern Hills Geopark and Herefordshire and Worcestershire Earth Trust.

2005 The Liveability of Public Parks in the South West Midlands (EC, NE) Report to the Office of the Deputy Prime Minister.

2006 A Methodology for Assessing the State of the Malvern Hills AONB Landscape (NE, EC) Report to the Malvern Hills AONB Partnership.

2006 Pershore Bridges Picnic Place Visitor Survey (NE, EC, NG, ME) Report to the Countryside Service, Worcestershire County Council.

2006 Worcester Woods Country Park: Perspectives of Under-represented Societal Groups (DS, EC) Report to the Countryside Service, Worcestershire County Council.

2006 Under-represented Groups and use of Rights of Way in Worcestershire (DS, EC, NE) Report to the Countryside Service, Worcestershire County Council.

2007 Access to Foundation Degrees (EC, NE). For Aimhigher West Midlands.

2007 Hartlebury Common Visitor Survey: a second look (KM, DC, ME, NE, EC) Report to the Countryside Service, Worcestershire County Council.

2007 Worcestershire: A Place to Live and Work. Work-life Balance Issues in Rural Areas. (DS, EC, HB) Report for by Adjust the Balance/Learning and Skills Council.

2007 St. Wulstan's Nature Reserve Visitor Survey (KM, EC, DC, NE) In progress for the Countryside Service, Worcestershire County Council. £3000.

2007 The State of the Malvern Hills AONB (NE, EC) Report to the Malvern Hills AONB Partnership.

2007 A Second Evidence Base for West Midlands Areas of Outstanding Natural Beauty. In progress for the West Midlands AONB consortium.(NE, KM, EC)

2007 The National Stepometer Campaign (KM, EC) Data input and analysis for Dr. D. Peters and H. Jarrett, Department of Sport and Exercise Science, University of Worcester.

2007 The Geographical Distribution of Undergraduate Applicants to the University of Worcester (EC) GIS analysis for Registry Services, University of Worcester. £500.

2008 St. Wulstan's Nature Reserve Visitor Survey (KM, EC, DC, NE) For the Countryside Service, Worcestershire County Council.

2008 A Second Evidence Base for West Midlands Areas of Outstanding Natural Beauty (NE, KM, EC) For the West Midlands AONB consortium.

2008 Land and identity (DS) Section of wider project *Rural People and the Land – the Case for Connections*. Commissioned by Commission for Rural Communities (sub-contracted by University of Aberystwyth).

2008 Social and Community Impacts of Changes in the Hill Farming Economy (DS, EC, KM, NE) For the Commission for Rural Communities.

2008 Polytunnels and Rural Communities (NE, KM, EC) For the Commission for Rural Communities.

2009 Feasibility Study Of Community Engagement In The Geopark Area. Report to Natural England (CJ, RD)

2009 The State of the Malvern Hills AONB: A Second Look (NE) For the Malvern Hills AONB Partnership.

2009 Geographical Endemism as a Definition of Endangerment in Farm Livestock Breeds (NE) For the Rare Breeds Survival Trust.

8. RECORD OF FUNDING APPLICATIONS

Consultancy conducted outwith CRR

CJ: External Specialist. Dust Suppression of trackside ballast. Network Rail, Wardell Armstrong and Air-Spectrum. (Research Project- submitted May 2009).

CJ: Evaluation of Lets GO Outside Healthy Towns Initiative. Dudley PCT (Joint with Sport and Exercise Science. February 2009.

AD: Collaboration with Professor Adrian Wood (Huddersfield University) on EU Research proposal (Thematic Programme for Environment and Sustainable Management of Natural resources, Including Energy).

AD: Collaboration with Dr Alec Thornton (ADFA at University of New South Wales) on British Council DeLPHE Proposal.

AD: consultancy work for Wetland Action on their 'Striking a Balance' (SAB) project, co-financed by Wetlands International and Self Help Africa.

Dr. Nick Evans, Director

November 2009