



**LAND AT TREADING FIELD, TYDD ST GILES
INFORMATION UPDATE FOR THE INSPECTOR
APPEALS 6001285 AND 6001284**

January 2026

1 Introduction

- 1.1 This update follows the issuing of evidence from the Council in the form of:
- (i) Statement of Case, South Holland District Council, December 2025;
 - (ii) Statement of Case, Fenland District Council.
- 1.2 It is provided to cover changes to the ALC Methodology (**section 2**), the NPPF (**section 3**) and recent appeals (**section 4**) subsequent to the Appellant's Statements (October 2025), plus an update on land use statistics (**section 5**).

2 ALC Methodology

- 2.1 In December 2025 Defra published revised guidelines for ALC (Agricultural Land Classification of England and Wales: guidelines for grading the quality of agricultural land, Defra, Updated 2025). They do not alter the ALC grading, so there is no fundamental change for the appeal, but references can be updated.

3 NPPF

- 3.1 A consultation on revisions to the NPPF was published in December 2025. This is in draft form and so carries limited weight.
- 3.2 Of most relevance to this appeal is the statement in Annex A, paragraph 10, that the WMS of 15 May 2024 has either been incorporated within the NPPF or no longer represents up-to-date government policy. SHDC in particular relies upon this WMS to opine that food security is an essential part of national security.

4 Updated Decisions

- 4.1 Attention is drawn to three recent decisions that all post-date the Appellant's Statement:

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- (i) Fillongley (APP/R3705/W/24/3349391, 11 December 2025), a site with 96% BMV, which considered the 2024 WMS and food security in paragraphs 135 to 151;
- (ii) Hillam Grange (APP/U2750/W/25/3369368, 19 December 2025), where 71% of the site was BMV, in an area where there is a disproportionately high amount of BMV. See the decision paragraphs 19 to 24;
- (iii) Helios Renewable Energy Project [EN010140], consented 3 December 2025. The site included 383 ha of BMV land, 97.3% of the site. The ExA assigned great weight to this, the Secretary of State assigned significant negative weight (paragraph 4.92). Despite this in the overall balance (section 7) the benefits outweighed the adverse impacts.

5 Updated Land-use Statistics

- 5.1 In the Agricultural Evidence on behalf of the Appellant (Tony Kernon, October 2025) reference is made at 8.16 to the area of uncropped arable land in agri-environmental uses, with the June 2024 figure of 305,000 ha set out.
- 5.2 The statistics for 1 June 2025 are provided at **Attachment A** and are:
 - 444,000 ha used for environmental benefit;
 - 101,000 ha left as bare fallow;
 - 545,000 ha total not cropped.
- 5.3 The croppable land area, including temporary grassland, is 4.9 million hectares (see 2.1 in **Attachment A**). The uncropped land (545,000 ha) represented over 11% of the croppable land area in 2025, see Figure 2.

ATTACHMENT A
Agricultural Land Use in England
at 1 June 2025 (25 September 2025)



Department
for Environment,
Food & Rural Affairs

Accredited official statistics

Agricultural land use in England at 1 June 2025

Updated 25 September 2025

Applies to England

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This release contains the estimates of crop areas, land use and land ownership on commercial agricultural holdings in England on 1 June 2025 from the June Survey of Agriculture. Cereal and oilseed areas were published on 28 August. They are included here for completeness and remain unchanged.

All results tables are available in the datasets at

[Agricultural land use in England at 1 June](https://www.gov.uk/government/statistics/agricultural-land-use-in-england)

(<https://www.gov.uk/government/statistics/agricultural-land-use-in-england>)

[Agricultural land ownership and tenure structure in England at 1 June](https://www.gov.uk/government/statistical-data-sets/agricultural-land-ownership-in-england)

(<https://www.gov.uk/government/statistical-data-sets/agricultural-land-ownership-in-england>)

This year we have simplified the way we collect some of the crop area information through the June Survey of Agriculture. One key change is that we no longer collect oilseed rape broken down by winter and spring varieties, instead, this is now reported under the single category of oilseed rape. See [section 2](#) for further details.

Key points

Agricultural land use

- The utilised agricultural area (UAA) is 8.8 million hectares in 2025 and accounts for 68% of the total area of England. This area has stayed relatively consistent over the past decade.
- The total croppable area accounts for just over half (56%) of UAA whilst permanent grassland accounts for an additional 39%.

Crops

- The total area of arable crops saw a 1.6% decrease to 3.4 million hectares between 2024 and 2025. This fall was primarily due to a continued long-term decrease in the areas of oilseed crops as well as a fall in other arable crops which together make up almost one quarter of the overall arable crop area.

- The area of uncropped arable land decreased by 6.2% to 545 thousand hectares. Of this area, 101 thousand hectares were left as bare fallow and the remaining 444 thousand hectares were used for environmental benefit.
- The area of wheat increased by 8.8% to 1.5 million hectares in 2025, slightly exceeding the five-year average. This increase has halted a two-year decline and is largely due to generally better weather conditions when planting in the autumn compared to the previous year.
- The total English barley area decreased by 13% between 2024 and 2025 to 742 thousand hectares, this area is below the five-year average. Winter and spring barley sown crops both saw a decrease, with winter barley falling by 7.2% to 302 thousand hectares, the lowest area since 2020 and spring barley decreasing by 16% to 439 thousand hectares.
- The area of oilseed crops decreased by 18% to 223 thousand hectares in 2025. Oilseed rape accounts for 91% of this area and fell by 18% to 204 thousand hectares in 2025.
- Potatoes increased by 7.7%, rising to 90 thousand hectares in 2025.
- The area of horticultural crops covers 117 thousand hectares of land in 2025, an increase of 3.9% reversing the trend of decreases seen in recent years.

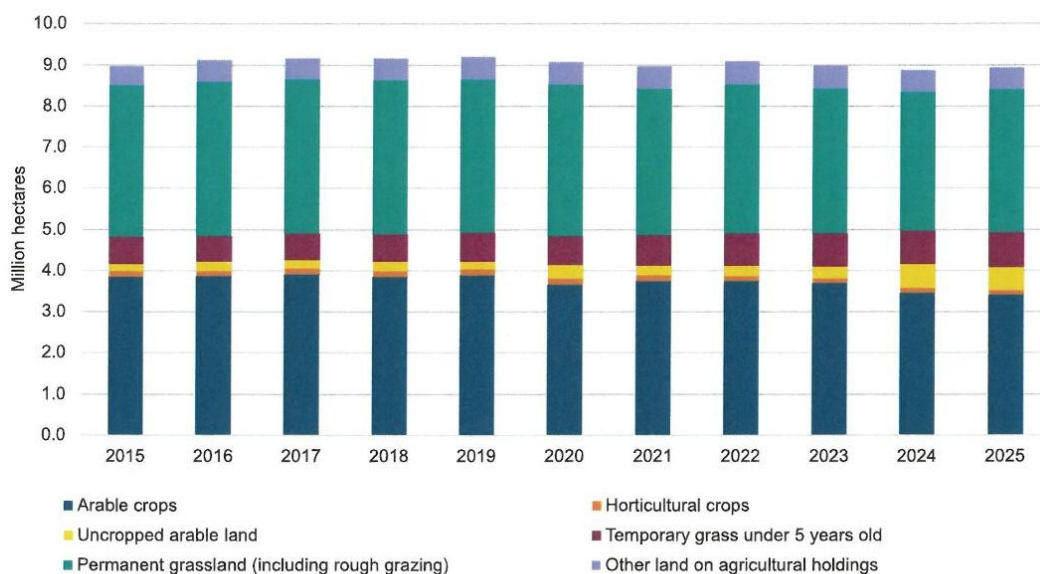
Land ownership

- The area of agricultural land owned in England was little changed at 6.1 million hectares in 2025. Land rented in for a year or more remained at 2.9 million hectares.

Section 1 Detailed results

1.1 Utilised agricultural area

The utilised agricultural area in England is 8.8 million hectares in 2025 and accounts for 68% of the total England area. This area includes all arable and horticultural crops, uncropped arable land including bare fallow and arable land used for environmental benefit, land used for outdoor pigs, temporary and permanent grassland and common rough grazing. UAA has stayed relatively consistent over recent years. (Figure 1).

Figure 1 - Agricultural land use areas in England at 1 June

1.2 Croppable area

The area of land available for cropping decreased by 0.9% to 4.9 million hectares and accounts for 56% of UAA. The croppable area consists of cereals, oilseeds, potatoes, other arable crops, horticultural crops, uncropped arable land and temporary grassland.

Figure 2 shows that in 2025, the proportion of croppable land used for each purpose remained similar to those in 2024; however, some categories did see changes. In particular, cereal crops saw an increase in area as a result of generally better weather conditions which allowed drilling to proceed without major disruption and aided crop establishment. Oilseed crops and uncropped arable land both saw decreases in 2025. Oilseed rape accounts for 91% of the oilseed crops area and fell by 18% to 204 thousand hectares in 2025, continuing the long-term downward trend. The area of uncropped arable land decreased by 6.2% to 545 thousand hectares. Of this area, 101 thousand hectares were left as bare fallow and the remaining 444 thousand hectares were used for environmental benefit. Arable land used for environmental benefit but not in production includes pollen and nectar flower mixes, winter bird food, buffer strips on arable land, flower rich margins and in field strips.

Figure 2 - Total croppable area in England at 1 June

Year	Cereals	Oilseeds	Temporary grass	Other arable crops	Uncropped arable land (1)	Horticult
2021	55%	6%	16%	13%	5%	3%
2022	54%	7%	16%	13%	5%	3%
2023	52%	8%	16%	14%	6%	2%
2024	49%	6%	17%	13%	12%	2%
2025	50%	5%	17%	12%	11%	2%

(1) From 2024 uncropped arable land was collected as two separate categories: bare fallow and arable land used for environmental benefit but not in production. Areas for both are available in the agricultural land use dataset that accompanies this publication.

1.3 Arable crops

The total area of arable crops saw a 1.6% decrease between 2024 and 2025, falling to 3.4 million hectares. This was largely due to a decrease in the oilseed crops and other arable crops areas, which together account for almost one quarter of arable crops.

The wheat area increased by 8.8% to 1.5 million hectares in 2025. This is the first increase in wheat area since 2022 but is still lower than the area recorded that year, although slightly ahead of the five-year average. The generally better weather conditions in autumn allowed drilling to proceed without major disruption and aided crop establishment. The barley area decreased by 13%, from 849 thousand hectares in 2024 to 742 thousand hectares in 2025. Wet weather in September impacted on the planting of winter barley and is the lowest area since 2020. Spring barley also saw a fall and decreased by 16% to 439 thousand hectares (Figure 3).

The total area of oilseed rape decreased by 18%, from 250 thousand hectares in 2024 to 204 thousand hectares in 2025. This continues the overall downward trend since the peak in 2012 and is the lowest area of land used for oilseed rape since the early 1980's. Over the past decade winter sown varieties have consistently made up 98% or more of the total area used to grow oilseed rape, as a result the area of oilseed rape has been collected as a single category from 2025 onwards.

For more detailed information please go to the full [Cereal and oilseed areas in England release \(https://www.gov.uk/government/collections/crops\)](https://www.gov.uk/government/collections/crops).

Figure 3 - Area of wheat, barley and oilseed rape in England at 1 June (thousand hectares)

year	2023	2024	2025
wheat	1,580	1,402	1,525
barley	799	849	742
oilseed rape	342	250	204

The total potato area increased by 7.7% to 90 thousand hectares in 2025. This rise was driven by an 8.6% increase in main crop potatoes, while the area of early crop potatoes saw a smaller increase of 1.6%.

Other arable crops covered 604 thousand hectares in 2025, a decrease of 6.8% since 2024 and this is the second consecutive year to see a fall in overall area. Peas for harvesting dry saw the largest area change, decreasing by 32% to 60 thousand hectares. Maize accounts for over a third of the other arable crops area and increased by 1.9% to 241 thousand hectares in 2025.

1.4 Horticultural crops

Horticultural crops covered 117 thousand hectares in June 2025, increasing by 3.9% since 2024. This area is mostly used to grow fruit and vegetables, which covers 90% of the total horticultural area.

The total area of orchards and small fruit decreased by 4.2% between 2024 and 2025 to 27 thousand hectares, with orchards covering 17 thousand hectares in 2025 and small fruit grown on the remaining 9.3 thousand hectares. Although slight changes in some categories the proportions remain steady (Figure 4).

Figure 4 - Breakdown of small fruit areas in England at 1 June

Year	Stawberries	Blackcurrants	Wine grapes	Raspberries	Other small fruit	Total small fruit
2021	26%	24%	29%	11%	10%	100%

Year	Stawberries	Blackcurrants	Wine grapes	Raspberries	Other small fruit	Total
2022	22%	23%	32%	12%	11%	10
2023	21%	21%	36%	10%	12%	10
2024	19%	22%	37%	9%	12%	10
2025	21%	23%	35%	10%	11%	10

The area used to grow vegetables and salad for human consumption increased by 7.8%, to 79 thousand hectares in 2025. This was largely due to higher areas of other peas and beans and other vegetables and salad, which together cover 66% of the total area used to grow vegetable and salads for human consumption. Other peas and beans saw the largest proportional increase, rising by 43%, but still only accounts for 3.5% of the total vegetable and salad area. Whilst vining peas for processing saw the largest proportional decrease, falling by 14% (Figure 5).

Figure 5 - Breakdown of vegetable and salad areas in England at 1 June

Year	All other vegetables and salad (incl. carrots & onions)	Vining peas for processing	Culinary plants for human consumption (incl. herbs)	Other peas and beans	Total vegetables and salad
2021	59%	33%	5%	3%	100%
2022	59%	34%	4%	3%	100%
2023	59%	34%	4%	3%	100%
2024	56%	36%	6%	3%	100%
2025	63%	29%	5%	4%	100%

1.5 Land ownership

The total area of land owned in 2025 remained stable at 6.1 million hectares. Land rented in for a year or more has seen little change in recent years and remained at 2.9 million hectares in 2025. Farm Business Tenancies account for 44% of this area and saw an increase of 1.4%, rising to 1.3 million hectares in 2025. Land under Full Agricultural Tenancies has continued to decline, falling by 0.8% to 1.1 million hectares. Land covered by other agreements of a year or more decreased by 5.2% in 2025 (Figure 6).

Figure 6 - Breakdown of area of land rented in for a year or more in England at 1 June (hectares)

Rented land	2023	2024	2025
Full Agricultural Tenancy	1,153,136	1,128,836	1,119,590
Farm Business Tenancy	1,257,789	1,253,753	1,271,014
Other agreement	487,940	493,492	468,019

Section 2 About these statistics

2.1 Survey methodology

Full details of the survey methodology are available on the [Structure of the agricultural industry guidance web page \(https://www.gov.uk/structure-of-the-agricultural-industry-survey-notes-and-guidance\)](https://www.gov.uk/structure-of-the-agricultural-industry-survey-notes-and-guidance).

The June Survey of Agriculture and Horticulture has been run predominantly online since 2011, with an option for farmers to complete a paper form if they prefer. The survey is annual and samples around 30,000 holdings most years, with a full census run once a decade. The last census was run in 2021.

The June 2025 survey was sent to a sample of 55,000 commercial holdings and responses were received from 27,000 holdings, representing a response rate of 51%. This is a larger sample than usual which will enable us to provide detailed geographical breakdowns later in the year and help to understand changes currently happening within the farming sector, e.g. changes in land use following the introduction of ELM schemes. Commercial holdings are defined as those with more than five hectares of

agricultural land, one hectare of orchards, 0.5 hectares of vegetables or 0.1 hectares of protected crops, or more than 10 cows, 50 pigs, 20 sheep, 20 goats or 1,000 poultry.

Table 1 provides details of the sample survey population broken down by farm size. The size of a farm is determined by its Standard Labour Requirement (SLR) which is the typical number of full-time workers required on the holding based on its activity.

Table 1: June 2025 population size and sampling rate

Stratum	Description	Sampling rate (%)	Population size
1	SLR < 0.5	35%	56,109
2	SLR >= 0.5 and < 1	55%	13,020
3	SLR >= 1 and < 2	78%	12,020
4	SLR >= 2 and < 3	78%	5,652
5	SLR >= 3 and < 5	78%	5,411
6	SLR >= 5	78%	5,710
10	SLR unknown	97%	3,968
	All	52%	101,890

For pig and poultry sectors, an additional data collection exercise was run to collect data from a central point for some of the largest companies. Cattle results are sourced from the Cattle Tracing System (CTS). The data include returns from all holdings with cattle so are not subject to survey error.

2.2 Data analysis

The data are subject to rigorous validation checks which identify inconsistencies within the data or large year-on-year changes. Any records that have not been cleaned by the results production stage are excluded from the analysis.

Population totals are estimated for each question on the survey to account for the non-sampled and non-responding holdings. This survey uses the technique known as ratio raising, in which the trend between the sample

data and base data (previous year s data) is calculated for each stratum. The calculated ratio is then applied to the previous year s population data to give England level estimates. For holdings where we do not have base data (new holdings or long-term non-responders) the sample estimates are raised according to the inverse sampling fraction.

2.3 Confidence indicators

Confidence intervals and tick based indicators are shown alongside all of our estimated figures and can be found in the data tables within the [dataset](https://www.gov.uk/government/statistics/agricultural-land-use-in-england) (<https://www.gov.uk/government/statistics/agricultural-land-use-in-england>). These both help to show where there is more variability around results and highlight whether year-on-year changes are statistically significant or not. Whilst these are a useful indicator, they do not take into account any other sources of survey errors, such as non-response bias or administrative data errors.

2.4 Survey changes

Since the June 2024 Survey of Agriculture, we've made changes to how we collect some data, including simplifying the survey form and reducing the number of questions asked. Certain crops are now grouped together instead of being collected separately for example, stock feeding crops, oilseed rape and maize. Consequently, we no longer split oilseed rape into winter and spring varieties. Instead, all figures are now shown under one category, oilseed rape.

2.5 Data notes

- All figures relate to commercial holdings.
- All percentage changes are based on unrounded figures.
- Totals may not necessarily agree with the sum of their components due to rounding.
- Proportional breakdown rounding may be adjusted to add up to 100%.

2.6 Data uses and users

Results from the June Survey of Agriculture and Horticulture have a wide range of uses and users with requests for data being made on a frequent basis. A document providing information of specific uses and users can be found on our [guidance and notes \(https://www.gov.uk/guidance/structure-of-the-agricultural-industry-survey-notes-and-guidance\)](https://www.gov.uk/guidance/structure-of-the-agricultural-industry-survey-notes-and-guidance).

2.7 Other survey results and publications

The next releases from the June Survey will be UK results and are expected to be in December. The definitive publication date will be announced on the [research and statistics \(https://www.gov.uk/search/research-and-statistics\)](https://www.gov.uk/search/research-and-statistics) webpage on gov.uk.

More detailed results from the June Survey can be found on our [Structure of the agricultural industry in England and the UK at June web page \(https://www.gov.uk/government/statistical-data-sets/structure-of-the-agricultural-industry-in-england-and-the-uk-at-june\)](https://www.gov.uk/government/statistical-data-sets/structure-of-the-agricultural-industry-in-england-and-the-uk-at-june). This includes various time series of crop areas and livestock numbers dating back as early as 1866 and detailed geographical breakdowns of the results.

2.8 Feedback

We welcome feedback and any thoughts to improve the publication further. Please send any feedback to: farming-statistics@defra.gov.uk.

Section 3 - What you need to know about this release

3.1 Contact details

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3.2 Accredited official statistics

Accredited official statistics are called National Statistics in the Statistics and Registration Service Act 2007. An explanation can be found on the [Office for Statistics Regulation website](https://osr.statisticsauthority.gov.uk/accredited-official-statistics/) (<https://osr.statisticsauthority.gov.uk/accredited-official-statistics/>).

Our statistical practice is regulated by the Office for Statistics Regulation (OSR). OSR sets the standards of trustworthiness, quality and value in the Code of Practice for Statistics that all producers of official statistics should adhere to.

These accredited official statistics were independently reviewed by the Office for Statistics Regulation in 2014. They comply with the standards of trustworthiness, quality and value in the Code of Practice for Statistics and should be labelled accredited official statistics .

You are welcome to contact us directly with any comments about how we meet these standards (see [contact details](#)). Alternatively, you can contact OSR by emailing regulation@statistics.gov.uk or via the OSR website.

Since the latest review by the Office for Statistics Regulation, we have continued to comply with the Code of Practice for Statistics, and have made the following improvements:

- Reviewed and amended the validation checks carried out on response data including validation against new administrative data sources to better assure ourselves of the quality of the statistics.
- Enhanced trustworthiness by removing pre-release access.



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