

# LAND USE

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LABOUR  
FOR A  
GREEN  
NEW DEAL



# Demand 7: Land Use

The impact of the current pandemic has brought into question how we relate to the land. Domestically it has highlighted our unequal access to green space and gardens. Globally, it has demonstrated our flawed relationship with the biophysical world. The Labour party must call for:

## 1. Natural carbon sequestration:

- Large-scale investment in planting 1 billion trees over the next 5 years (200 million trees or roughly 140,000 hectares per year) and the restoration of peatland bogs. Trees should be planted through a combination of more tested forestry, and rewilding techniques to study their sequestration effectiveness. Trees should be at an appropriate density to foster biodiversity and joined into [“nature corridors”](#).
- The establishment of [ten new national parks](#) in newly restored natural habitats, to improve the public’s access to green spaces; the importance of this for mental and physical health has been highlighted by the pandemic.
- The creation of unionised jobs and training opportunities in nature restoration and management. This would alleviate unemployment following coronavirus, and offer training for the jobs of the future in ecosystem restoration and management.
- A ban on the use of moors for grouse shooting and the practice of heather burning. Peatlands should be brought into public ownership for restoration.

## 2. Farming:

- The provision of a just transition from pasture-based farming - including support in retirement ([34% of farmers](#) are over 65), or retraining into good green jobs in woodland management or silvopasture (see Demand 2: Green Jobs Programme). This would help tree-planting schemes acquire

land. Moreover, the CCC estimate that a 50% reduction in UK beef, lamb and dairy production would [reduce total UK agriculture emissions by 37%](#), when coupled with measures to disincentivise red meat and dairy imports.

- A reduction in subsidies to pasture-based farming and increased financial incentives to use land for woodland and peatland restoration.
- Phase out subsidies for animal feed and energy crops domestically and increase import tariffs on these crops, to prioritise the use of land for food grown for direct human consumption or afforestation. [55% of the UK's cropland](#) is currently used to grow animal feed.

### 3. Land ownership:

- The protection of land in existing public ownership, particularly County Farms. An expansion of the County Farms scheme should be funded and financial incentives for routes into land acquisition for prospective agro-ecological farming (particularly plant-based) should be provided.
- The facilitation of public acquisition of land by local authorities through the provision of grants and reform of the Land Compensation Act (1961), specifically for the facilitation of urban agriculture, the Allotments Act (1908). Further, communities should be empowered through a Community Right to Buy scheme [as seen in Scotland](#), with funding available for ecologically or culturally oriented projects.
- These bold investment policies must form part of a Land Commission that not only radically tackles the issues of land ownership, accumulation and transparency in England (as called for by the [Land for the Many](#) report), but also begins to account for international land usage in policymaking to ensure damaging land use practices aren't exported overseas.