

The Land-Agent: Past, Present and Future

12-13 July 2013 at _____



This two day conference will examine the economic, social, political and cultural role of the land agent past, present and future. In historical terms the focus on the economic role of the land agent has been overwhelming. More recent research, however, has begun to see the land agent as pivotal to rural communities and the estates that they served and developed. The first day of the conference will thus focus on the diverse roles of the land agent between the eighteenth and late twentieth centuries. We welcome proposals for papers which, through general surveys or particular case studies of individuals/estates, address topics such as

- Relationships between landowner, agent and tenant
- The socio-cultural role of land agents, both on individual estates and the wider rural community
- Professionalisation of the role
- Matters of estates management, including development of cropping and drainage systems, animal breeding, technology, diversification and preservation
- The effect of exogenous events such as two world wars on estates and land agents
- The political activities of land agents
- Life histories or collective biography

- The relationship between estate finances and land agents

These topics are for guidance only and we will consider any topic that falls within this broad chronological sweep.

The second day of our conference will focus on the modern land agent and examine how the role has evolved at different estates and in light of modern concerns such as commercialisation, economic diversification, house building, government policies and new generations of owners. We will also focus on the future of the role and more widely the future of the estate as issues such as taxation, conservation, climate change, food price inflation, rising land values and changing cultural expectations come to bear. For this part of the conference we welcome contributions from owners, land agents, estate archivists and others. These might deal with practical issues such as green energy schemes and other diversification, management of in-hand and tenanted acreage, conservation or tourism. Alternatively, contributions might be more reflective, taking an overview of the modern land agent and estate and speculating on future challenges.

Suggestions for papers or themed sessions should be sent (by 17 January 2013) to any one of the organisers: Professor Steven King (sak28@le.ac.uk); Carol Beardmore (cb309@le.ac.uk); and Geoff Monks (glm15@le.ac.uk). We expect to publish the papers and to cover travel and accommodation costs for speakers.