













The Kruger Report – final outcomes




This brings together Danny Kruger’s recommendations, ACRE Network comments on them, a RAG rating summary of our view in 2020 of the Government’s published response on 2nd February 2022 alongside the Levelling Up white Paper




Kruger recommendation	Priority for rural civil society – from 2020	RAG	Government response summary – 02/02/2022
1. New official measures to understand and track the economic and social contribution of civil society	Strongly welcome, very relevant in rural areas. ACRE keen to be involved in defining and implementing.		The Department for Digital, Culture, Media & Sport (DCMS) is undertaking a project to improve evidence and data . We are working with the sector to explore how to accurately estimate the economic, social and wellbeing contribution of non-profit activity. DCMS will work with the Office for National Statistics (ONS) to bring together economic data on the value of the social economy - a civil society 'satellite account' - so that our estimates more fully reflect the scope of the sector.
2. Comprehensive and comparable data from government and civil society about what funding goes where, and what outcomes are delivered	Possibly valuable. Could be very resource intensive and danger of trying to create a one size fits all template. Will always be out of date.		DCMS is supporting the Charity Commission to revise how charities are classified and displayed on the charity register , focussing in particular on what charities deliver and how they deliver it. At present, data about the sector is held by multiple departments. In line with our National Data Strategy , the government is committed to improving the sharing and linkage of data between departments in order to develop a deeper and more comprehensive view of the work being done by civil society. By working with a range of government departments, sector stakeholders and public sector partners, we are developing routes to support long term improvements and intelligence across the sector, and exploring options to close any remaining data gaps.
3. Negotiation with Big Tech firms to finance and co-design new, non-proprietary digital infrastructure for communities	Is this necessary or desirable? Will only the largest 'brand name' charities have the resources to engage?		We recognise the opportunity for a broad range of industry stakeholders to work with government to overcome the data challenges mentioned in the Kruger report. Government is committed to collaborating across sectors to explore what more can be done collaboratively to support participation in the data economy, and harness the power of data to support all parts of the UK to level up, in particular through positive civil society outcomes. Conversations should not stop at data sharing, and must also explore wider opportunities to put in place the data infrastructure of the future.



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<p>4. A new commitment to social value commissioning, considering the whole of government accounts rather than a single budget</p>	<p>Strongly welcome, very relevant in rural areas. ACRE keen to be involved in defining and implementing.</p>		<p>The public sector spends around £290 billion per year and the government wants to send a clear message to public sector commercial teams that this must both support government priorities and achieve broader social value. To achieve this, central government must explicitly evaluate social value in all procurement using the Social Value Model with effect from January 2021.</p> <p>In addition, from June 2021 contracting authorities must consider three national strategic priorities for public procurement, alongside local priorities, within their procurement activity as set out in the National Procurement Policy Statement. These are:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • creating new businesses, new jobs and new skills • tackling climate change and reducing waste • improving supplier diversity, innovation and resilience <p>Furthermore, the government proposes taking a broad view of value for money to include the improvement of social welfare or wellbeing, this is captured in the “Transforming Public Procurement” green paper, and reflected in changes to Her Majesty’s Treasury’s Green Book.</p>
<p>5. A Community Power Act, creating the Community Right to Serve by which community groups can challenge for a role in the design and delivery of public services</p>	<p>Strongly welcome, very relevant in rural areas. ACRE keen to be involved in defining and implementing.</p>		<p>The Levelling Up White Paper outlines the government’s plan for community empowerment including a commitment to pilot new models for community partnership that can help make local power a reality. Government will pilot new models for partnerships to empower local people to shape the place they live, influence local services and take control of community spaces. Government will learn through experimentation and doing, rigorously evaluating the impact of these pilots. If successful, these initiatives could be scaled nationally.</p> <p>One model the Government will test is Community Covenants. This would be an agreement between councils, public bodies and the communities they serve. They will undertake an evaluation of local community life and needs, set out key local priorities to meet these needs, and then co-create a shared approach to address local challenges, enhance places and improve public services. A Covenant approach would see local authorities and communities work together to take a holistic look at the health of local civic and community life, set out a driving ambition for their area, and share power and resources to achieve this.</p>
<p>6. Community Improvement Districts or pop-up parishes with time-limited freedoms and flexibilities to deliver community-led change</p>	<p>Not sure if this relevant to rural areas. Why time limited, contrary to the need for long term engagement and local control.</p>		<p>The Levelling Up White Paper outlines the UK Government’s plans to support the strengthening of local institutions and empower local communities to organise and build local structures and businesses. This includes removing barriers to community organisation, reviewing the neighbourhood governance needed to help community leadership take root and thrive, including the role and functions of parish councils.</p>

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			We will consider what can be done to make it easier for local people and community bodies to come together to set local priorities. This will include a further exploration of the models of pop-up parishes and community improvement districts which have been recommended by the Kruger Review.
7. A new national institution to help local places and organisations improve performance and exercise greater responsibility; and to build an index of social infrastructure that can inform both national and local policy making	Is a new national structure required? If this is needed should it not be driven by the sector itself and its current institutions?		We recognise the importance of appropriate evidence to target local community-led intervention and believe research at a hyper local level will be central to informing policy work within levelling up areas including on volunteering and social infrastructure. We will outline what we know about what works to help communities get stronger, so that communities and the organisations that support them can make informed decisions about where to focus their efforts. DCMS will partner with the Department for Levelling Up, Housing and Communities (DLUHC) to shape this work.
8. A Volunteer Passport system to match the supply of and demand for volunteers, with options to: join a new National Volunteer Reserve to help with future emergencies and with environmental projects; deliver ongoing mutual aid to people in crisis; fulfil formal public service roles such as magistrates or charity trustees	Simplifying and streamlining risk management of engagement by volunteers may be valuable. The need for a national volunteering scheme flies in the face of all the experience in rural areas during the CV-19 crisis and is diametrically opposed to the reasons people tend to get involved in rural communities.		DCMS is also funding the Voluntary and Community Sector Emergencies Partnership (VCSEP) to coordinate the voluntary sector’s COVID-19 response and preparedness for other emergencies. This partnership will help ensure volunteers are deployed appropriately from over 200 organisations in future emergencies. DCMS research shows there is limited need or demand from the VCSE sector for a national volunteering passport system. It found that many organisations had reservations about the value of a national passport, suggesting this would not be a solution to current barriers to volunteering such as work commitments, caring commitments, and people doing other things in their spare time.
9. Service opportunities for young people, funded through the Kickstart programme, to work on a variety of social and environmental projects	Potentially valuable. Must be designed and driven by the sector itself and potential beneficiaries.		The National Citizen Service (NCS) Trust, a DCMS Arm’s Length Body, is currently piloting a ‘Year of Service’ programme. This is an employability initiative offering young people a nine to 12 month paid service placement in the UK’s local communities wherever the need is greatest (for example, delivering COVID-19 vaccinations, helping pupils catch up on missed education or tackling climate change through home insulation). The pilot of this new programme has supported almost 300 young people into socially impactful jobs. The pilot has drawn funding from the government’s Kickstart programme to contribute to wages for six months of the placement. As of the end of

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			January 2022, 278 young people had started roles through the programme. DCMS and NCS Trust will use the evidence around impact and value for money when considering further policy options.
10. A new deal with faith communities, by which government supports a greater role for faith groups in meeting social challenges	ACRE is a secular network and although we value our links with faith communities we are not qualified to comment.		Colin Bloom, the independent Faith Engagement Adviser, has been appointed to lead a review into how the government should engage with faith groups in England. We look forward to seeing his recommendations on how we can further enhance government engagement with our faith groups.
11. An annual Neighbour Day bank holiday to celebrate communities work together; and greater use of the honours system to recognise the work of communities as well as individuals	This feels patronising and risks giving the incorrect impression that people get involved in community life for recognition or kudos.		While we appreciate the importance of celebrating communities working together, we do not have any plans to introduce a new annual 'Neighbour Day' bank holiday.
12. Planning rules to promote the creation of social capital through good design, the recognition of the need for gathering places, and community ownership of public assets	Strongly welcome, very relevant in rural areas. ACRE keen to be involved in defining and implementing.		<p>The government has made available £34.5m of support for neighbourhood planning groups and aims to increase the take up of neighbourhood planning in urban and deprived areas. This includes providing communities in these areas with direct additional support for neighbourhood planning, increasing the grant available to neighbourhood planning groups in urban and deprived areas from £10,000 to £18,000 and giving them increased access to additional technical planning support packages. We are committed to retaining neighbourhood plans in the reformed planning system, and propose that they will play an important role in bringing forward design guides and codes to ensure development reflects the needs of communities.</p> <p>The government recognises that community ownership of assets can boost local connections, participation and pride of place, and bolster community resilience. In July 2021, the £150m Community Ownership Fund opened for applications. Through the fund, the government is supporting communities across the United Kingdom to own and manage the local facilities, community assets and amenities that are most important to them. Community groups can bid for up to £250,000 of matched-funding to help them buy or take over local community assets or amenities at risk of being lost, to run as community-owned businesses. In exceptional cases, up to £1m of matched-funding is available to help establish a community-owned sports club or help buy a sports ground at risk of loss to the community.</p>

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			<p>The government will enhance the offer in the Community Ownership Fund, learning lessons from the first bidding round, considering how to build capacity in communities to develop sustainable businesses, and targeting this to maximise the impact of the fund. The government will also consider how the existing Community Asset Transfer and Asset of Community Value Schemes can be enhanced, and consult on options to further support community ownership.</p>
<p>13. Policy to support independent social infrastructure, including professional connectors charged with linking local services together, and physical hubs to co-locate services and enable gathering</p>	<p>The ACRE Network has been active in developing Village Agents and promoting the principles of social prescribing. The NHS has sought to define the role of “Community Link Workers” Further national initiatives and a new lexicon to go with them would not be helpful.</p>		<p>The body of the Kruger Report recommends that the government considers further investment in Community Organisers. We have a long history of supporting Community Organisers, having funded the training of over 10,000 during the past two spending review periods. There is now a well established network of Community Organisers. The programme covers a £4.5 million investment for local partnerships to develop social action approaches that address issues and priorities which matter to people in their community. We will continue to support some networks of Community Organisers through the Place-Based Social Action programme. In line with the direction of the department following its strategic review, we will not be funding further expansion of this but will ensure that past investment is leveraged in future policy development.</p>
<p>14. A new focus on the modern local library, often community-managed, delivering business start-up support and digital inclusion for local communities</p>	<p>Welcome, very relevant in rural areas especially if integrated with Village Halls. ACRE keen to be involved in defining and implementing.</p>		<p>We are pleased that the Kruger report supported the Libraries Deliver: Ambition recommendation that public service commissioners should think “libraries first” when commissioning local services. This encourages those running public services to regard libraries as their first choice when considering how to deliver information and services into communities. For example, libraries have a long-standing role in supporting digital inclusion. This has been highlighted during COVID-19 when exemptions under national restrictions recognised libraries as an essential local service. This meant the public continued to have access to digital resources; and that library staff and volunteers were designated as critical workers delivering essential services. DCMS will continue to work across government to explore further opportunities for libraries to support wider digital inclusion initiatives</p>
<p>15. Policy to make it easier to start and run a charity, and create a modern version of the local Council for Voluntary Service (CVS)</p>	<p>Possibly relevant in urban areas. All of rural England is served by the ACRE Network and investment should be targeted on ensuring a strong consistent offer to communities.</p>		<p>There is little evidence to show that there are significant barriers to starting a charity. There are already over 170,000 registered charities in England and Wales and in 2019/20, the Charity Commission received over 8,300 applications to register a new charity. Establishing a charity is relatively straightforward, and there is no charge for registering with the Charity Commission. We recognise that working with an existing charity can be a more effective way of helping people than setting up a new one, for example, by ensuring similar charities are not competing for limited resources. We acknowledge the role of local civil society infrastructure organisations like the Council for Voluntary Services. As announced in the Levelling Up White Paper, the</p>

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			government will develop a Strategy for Community Spaces and Relationships. This will consider how to build strong local support systems, including the representative community leadership and the institutions that support front line civil society groups.
16. A match trade scheme to support social enterprises, which play a crucial role in economic and social development in disadvantaged communities	Strongly welcome, very relevant in rural areas. ACRE keen to be involved in defining and implementing in partnership with organisations such as Plunkett.		As referenced in the Levelling Up White Paper, the Government will consider how best to encourage social organisations and entrepreneurship to flourish in left-behind places across the UK, building on existing support, building evidence on what social enterprises need to do to thrive in disadvantaged places, and encouraging the next generation of social entrepreneurs The option for a 'match trade' scheme - grant funding that matches an increase in trading income pound-for-pound - will be further explored , more specifically how it could be deployed in disadvantaged places.
17. Options to boost philanthropy, including civic crowdfunding, and social investment	Welcome with caution. Experience in recent years is that some of these initiative tend to replace local government funding rather than supplementing it and re-allocate resources only to 'popular' causes. ACRE keen to be involved in defining and implementing in rural areas.		Focusing on unlocking the potential for institutional investors to explore place-based impact investing, the Institute is partnering with DCMS on its Place-Based Impact Investing programme. The programme has gained traction among other types of major investors, including Lloyds Banking Group, who are working with the Institute to explore how UK financial institutions can apply a place-based lens to investment and their role in promoting regional regeneration. Whilst not all proposals from the report are being implemented at this time, there is scope for further innovation, and so the government continues to consider opportunities for philanthropy, civic crowdfunding and social investment to play a greater role in delivering levelling up.
18. A new £500m Community Recovery Fund, financed by the allocation of the dormant National Fund, for charities and community groups supporting the transition from the response to the recovery phase	Strongly welcome, very relevant in rural areas. ACRE keen to be involved in defining and implementing.		The High Court has determined that the National Fund be applied in reduction of the National Debt through a cy prè scheme. The National Fund's original charitable purpose of entirely paying off the National Debt cannot realistically be achieved. Under charity law, where a charity's purpose cannot be met, it can be varied by the Charity Commission or the court under a cy prè scheme to a similar charitable purpose, taking into account the original donor's intentions. In this case, the Attorney General argued that the National Fund should be paid towards the National Debt, as being the closest purpose to Fund's original purpose, and taking into account the donor's original intention. The High Court considered the arguments and published its decision in January 2022, concluding that it was appropriate for the National Fund to be applied in reduction of the National Debt in accordance with the cy-près scheme put forward by the Attorney General.

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<p>19. Consult on the use of the £2bn+ which will shortly be available from new dormant assets: options include a new endowment, the Levelling Up Communities (LUC) Fund, for perpetual investment in long-term, transformational, community-led local projects in left-behind areas</p>	<p>Strongly welcome, very relevant in rural areas as long as the means of defining 'left behind' does not, at a definitional level, exclude rural areas. ACRE keen to be involved in defining and implementing</p>		<p>We agree that dormant assets are a unique form of public money, and that their use should be properly consulted on with the public. Our industry stakeholders estimate that £880 million could be unlocked for good causes over the course of several years through the scheme's expansion. This will be achieved through the Dormant Assets Bill, which is currently making its way through Parliament. Additionally, the Bill introduces a measure that, if passed, will enable us to launch a full public consultation on the social or environmental focus of the English portion of the funds, which could be as soon as this summer. As the Kruger report recognises, the current beneficiaries of the scheme - young people, financial inclusion and social investment - remain critical priorities for the government, but we will welcome views on this from the public and industry participants.</p>
<p>20. Review the National Lottery Community Fund, which is now 25 years old, with a view to a more local and community-led distribution model.</p>	<p>The 'devil is in the detail!' As above distribution to a more local level will still need to have a sound and not excessively urban oriented methodology</p>		<p>We expect to consult publicly on new government policy directions for the National Lottery Community Fund in 2022, to explore how to bring an even sharper focus on investments in the places and people most in need.</p>

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 ACRE Policy Advisor, February 2022