



© Panoramic Images

# Becoming A Rural Beacon

## NACRE

“Working with rural communities to improve the quality of life for all”

# Agenda

Welcome and introductions

About Northamptonshire ACRE – Elaine O’Leary

- Who we are, our work
- The Hunsbury Hill Farm
- Why are we doing this project?

The future of the Hunsbury Hill Farm – Richard Hollingum and Elaine O’Leary

- Results from early workshops and working group
- Our Mission Statement for the project
- Aspirations for the site
- Our vision for 2030
- A phased approach to the work – what , why, where
- Q&A

Site tour

Feedback from tour

How you can support us in this project



We are an independent charity formed in 1956

We work with rural communities across the county

Provide support and advice to help them to be sustainable

A Rural Community Council, one of 38 in England

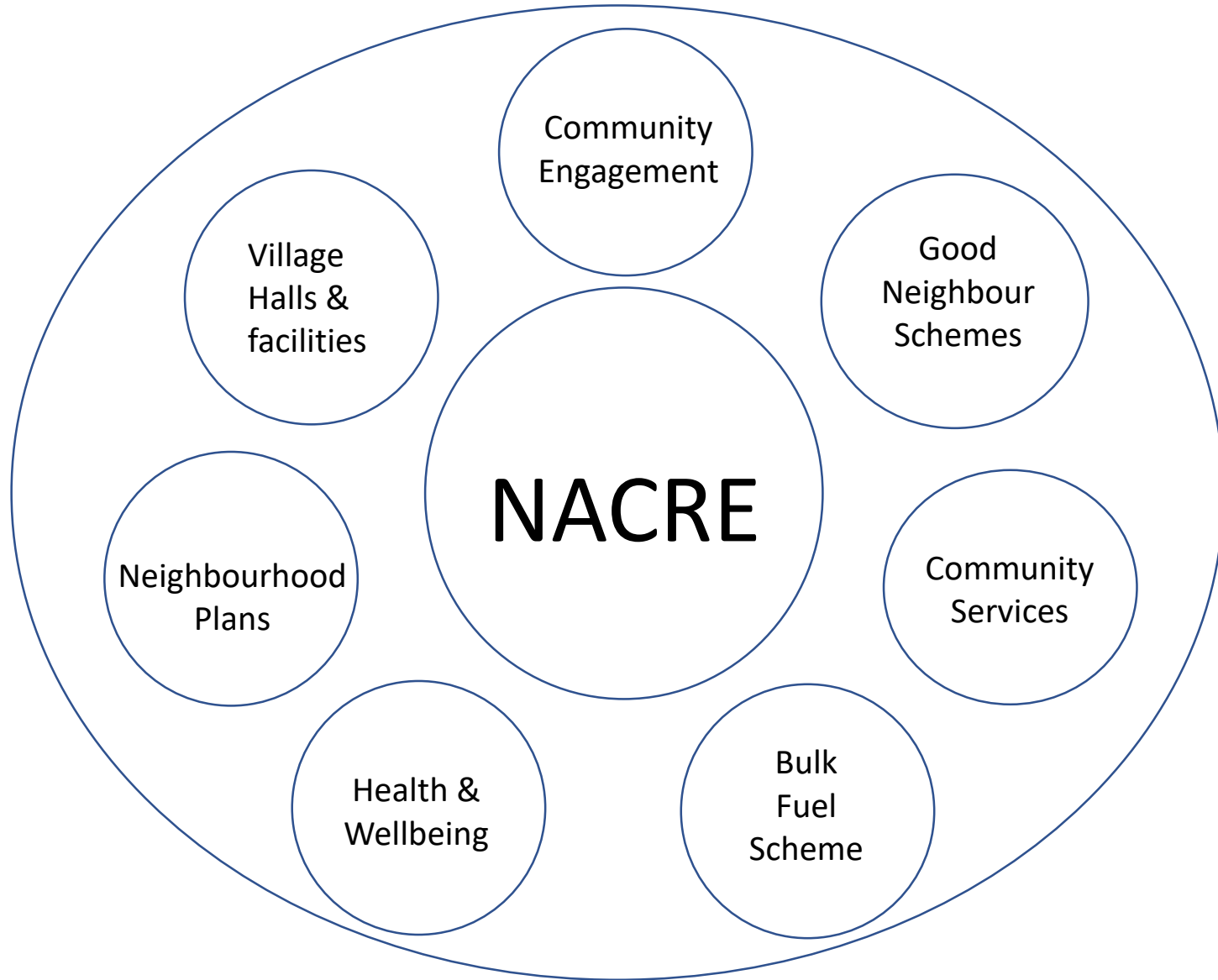
Along with national ACRE we form the ACRE Network

Run a successful trading arm The Barns at Hunsbury Hill.

Runs events, mainly weddings

Surplus income supports the charity

Who are we?



Our areas of work

- We work with local communities to reduce rural isolation and vulnerability.
- We help make life more affordable for those living in rural areas
- We help to deliver improved services for these communities through better communications links, strong community facilities or more accessible education and health services
- We support and advise rural community groups on a wide range of issues and encourage local action and participation in decision-making
- We campaign to ensure that the interests of people living in rural Northamptonshire are taken into account in policy making and strategic planning affecting the County

- A Grade II listed farmhouse and outbuildings on 13 acres
- Built by Edward Bouverie about 1776
- Supplying Delapré Abbey
- Believed to be a rare extant version of an early 'model farm'

Taken on by Northamptonshire Rural Community Council in 1977,  
now Northamptonshire ACRE



**Richard Hollingum, Trustee**

**Northamptonshire ACRE**



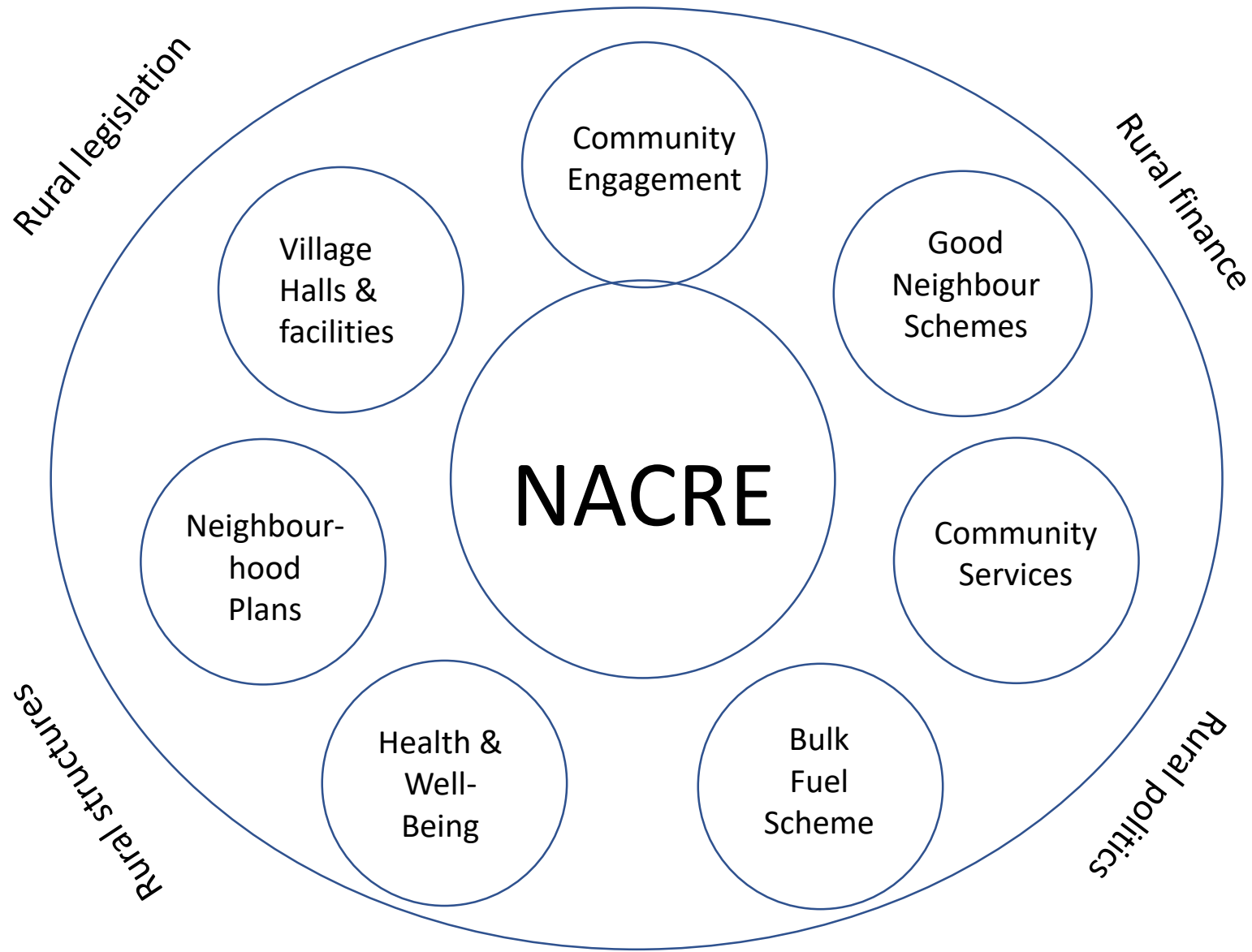
Now and in the future, we see ourselves working with rural communities to help them become

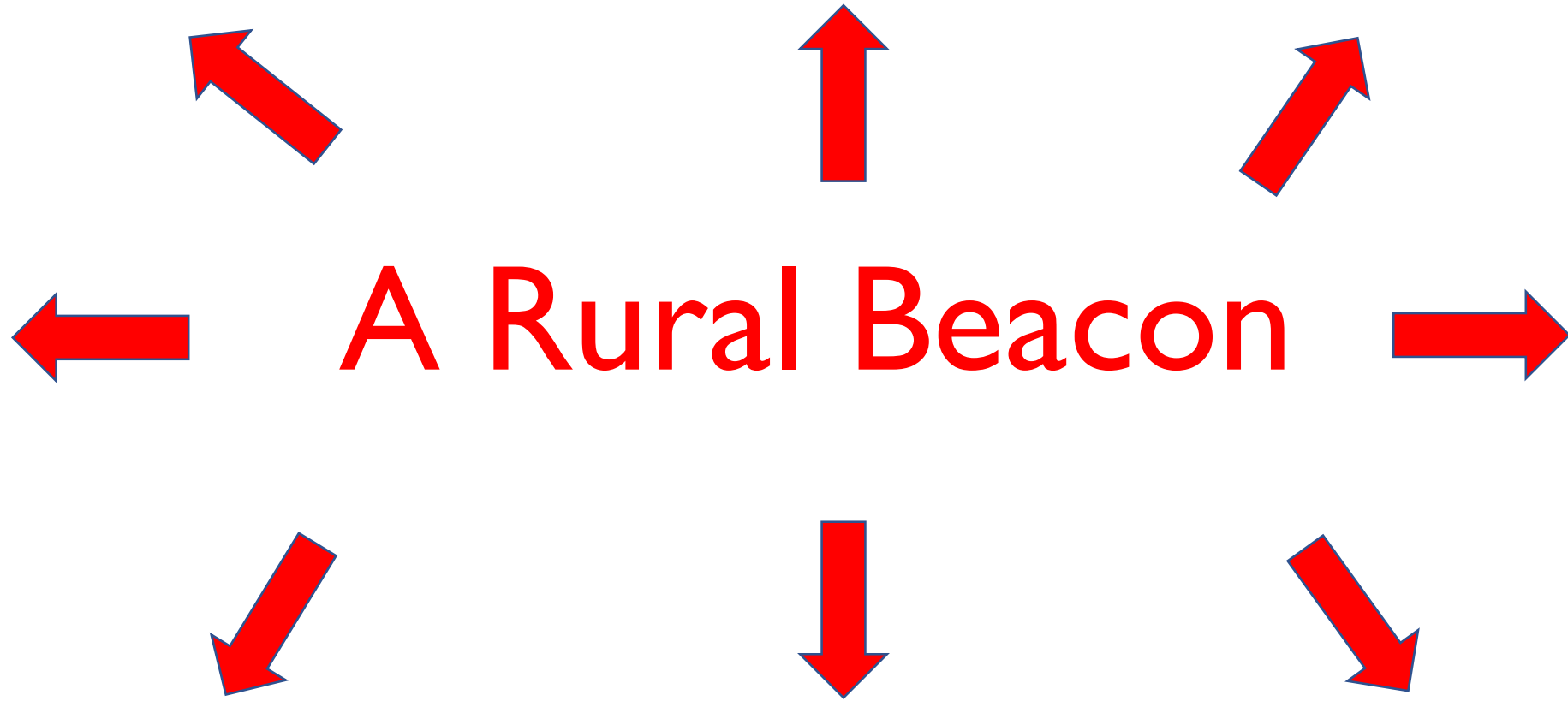
- more sustainable
- more resilient

So that they will thrive

Including

- bringing rural communities together
- not just to share information but to offer practical activities







- Based at Hunsbury Hill Farm on the outskirts of Northampton
- Owns the buildings and land totalling 3.2 hectares
- Property valued at £1,262,000 for accounts purposes
- Number of farm buildings, many of which are in a state of great disrepair
- 2 areas of woodland and a patch of scrub land between
- Runs a very successful wedding and conference business



Good rural networks  
Wide variety of engagement  
Central for members  
Own our own site  
Good financial support from The Barns

Rural charity based in an urban setting  
Small team  
Profile not high enough  
Condition of buildings/land  
Responsibility of buildings and land detract from core work  
Grade 2 Listed – restrictions

Use of the site as a showcase of rural activities  
Based in an urban setting  
Buildings and land to expand value of NACRE  
Buildings to bring in extra income to support their upkeep  
Become a rural beacon

Cost of upkeep of buildings  
Losing Defra funding  
Securing grants and loans for development  
Rival organisations  
Local agendas eg unitary authority  
National agendas – eg housing, planning, rural, environment...

## Our aspirations, our intentions....

The Charity is now preparing to meet the challenge of retaining the site, a site that has a number of important historical links as well as great potential to expand its work with rural communities across the County. As with any project on this scale, there are a number of interweaving strands that have to be taken into account:

- to support and showcase the work that the Charity carries out with rural communities
- to develop the use of the green space to bring in the community from both the town and the rural areas
- to enhance the wedding business to supply a sustainable income generation to support the work of the Charity

In addition all three strands will embrace green technology, environmental sustainability and effective recycling.

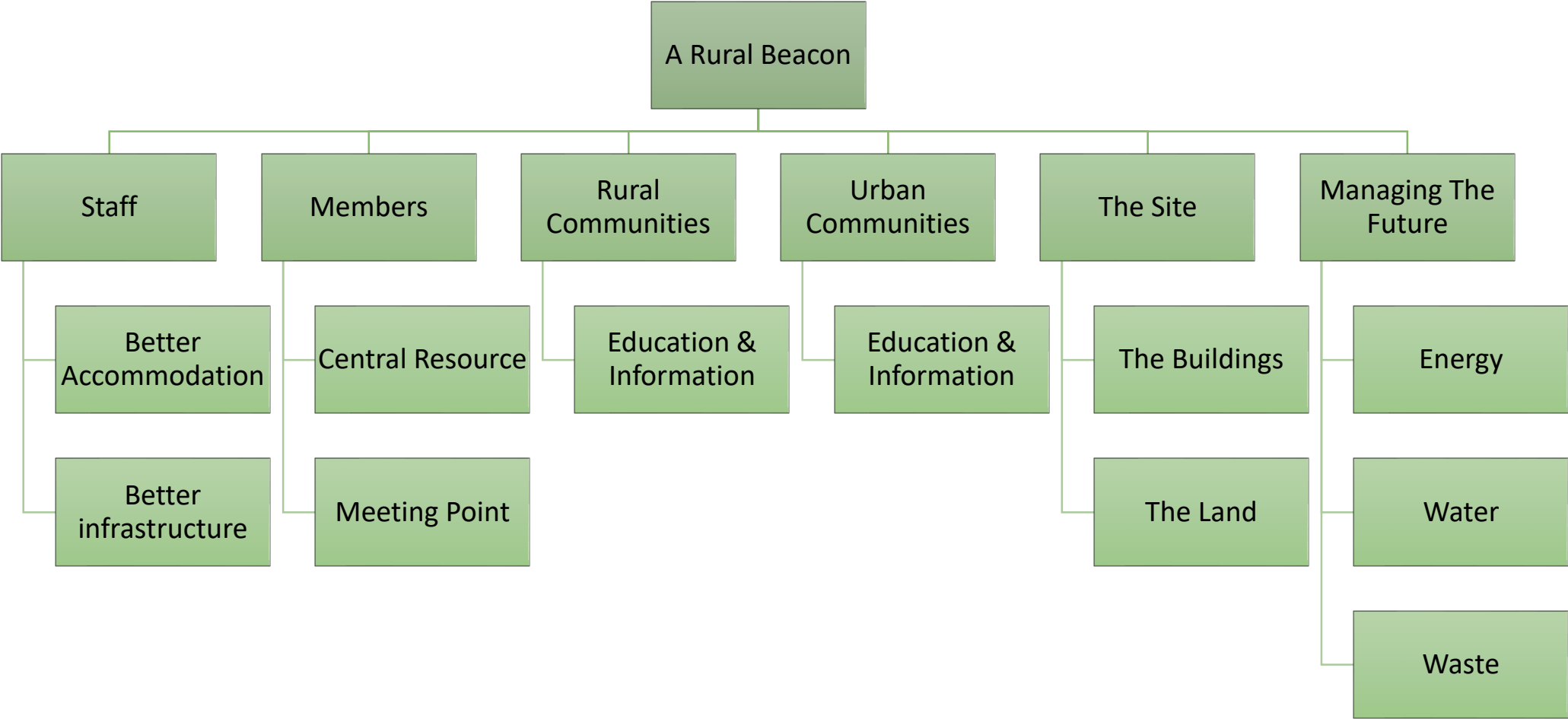


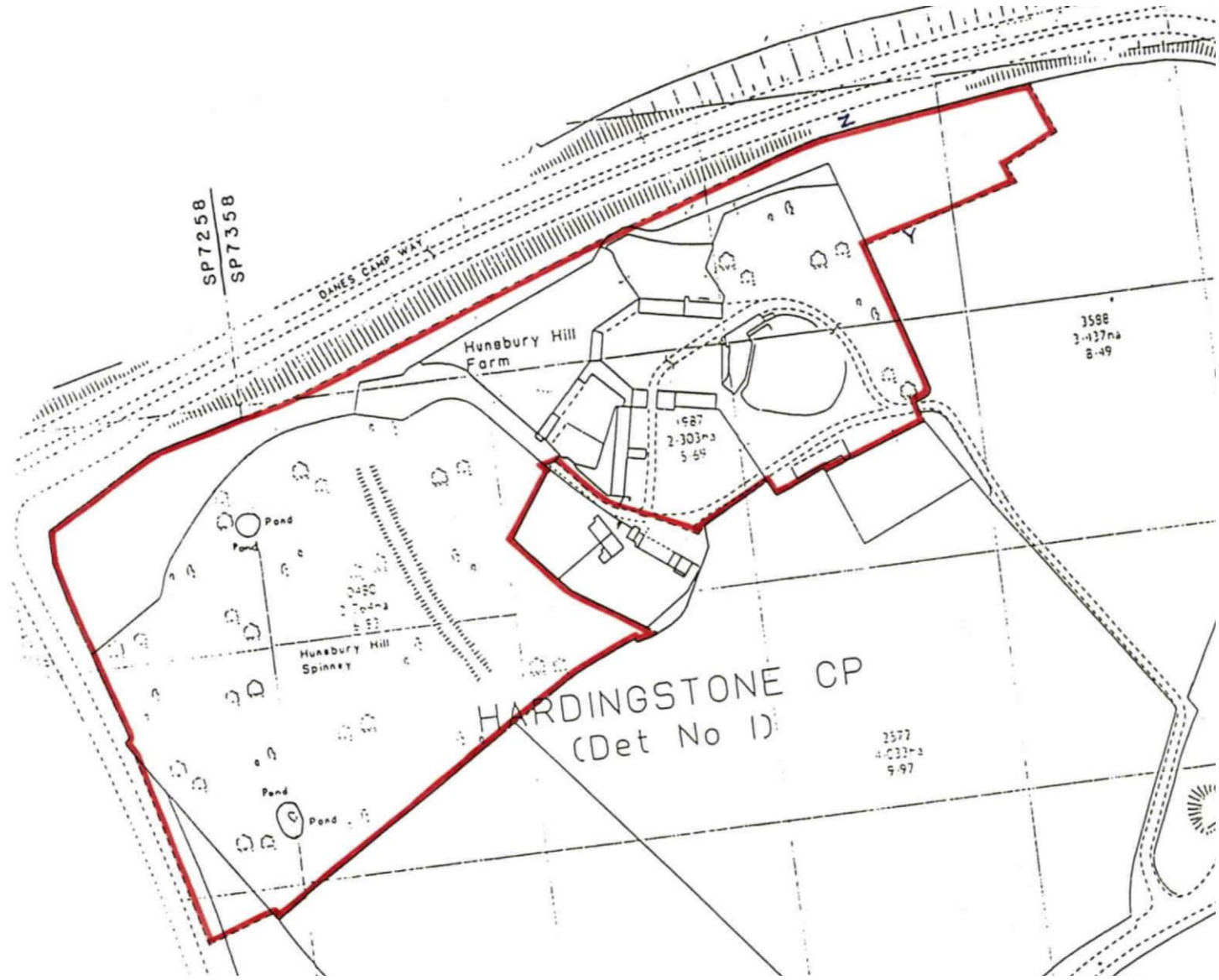
How the site can assist in the funding of the charity as other streams dry up or become harder to access.

If we do nothing....the charity has agreed this is not an option

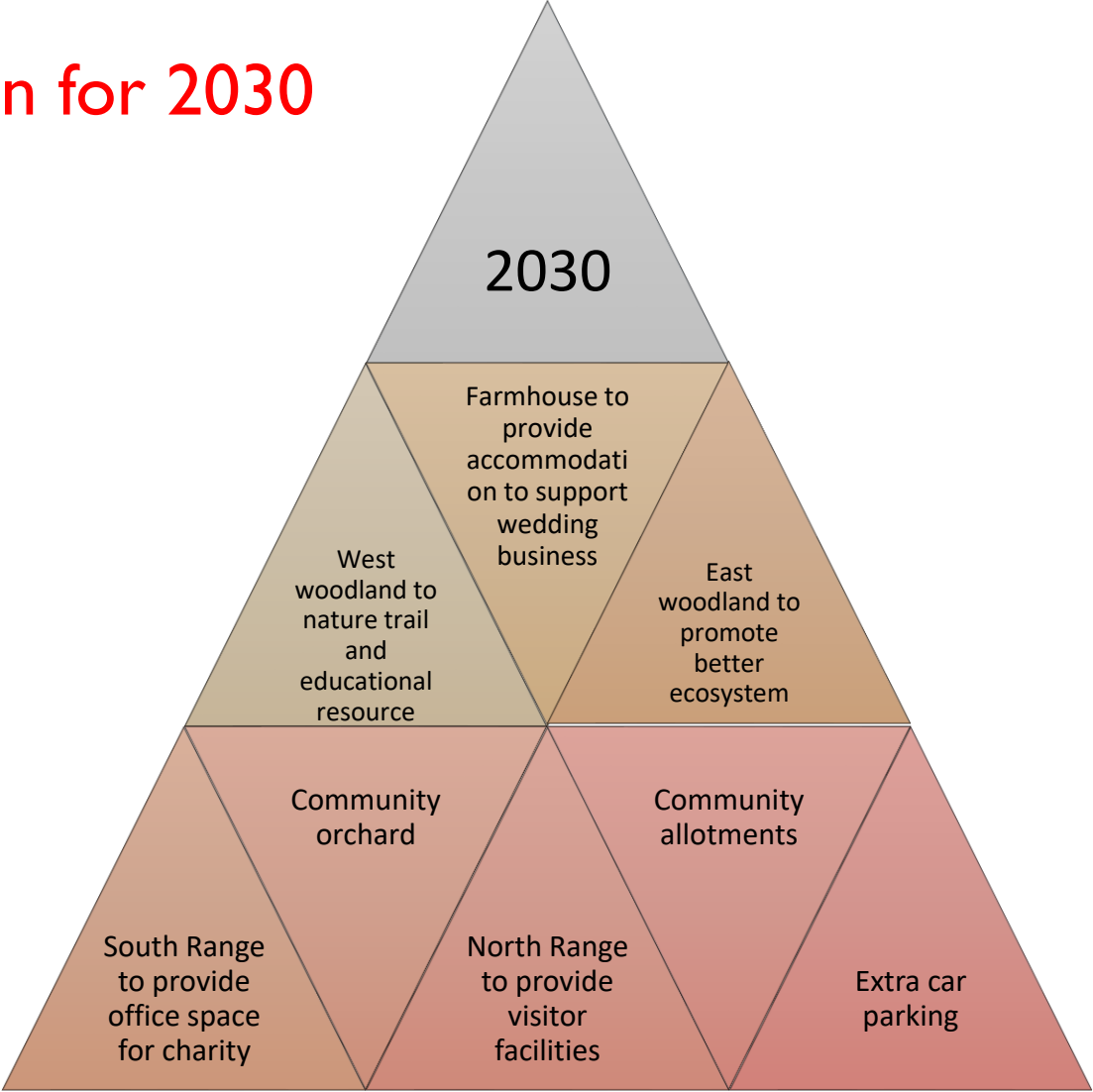


# The impact of developing Hunsbury Hill Farm on the work of NACRE





# A Vision for 2030



Improved income from The Barns

Improved ecosystems

Local Community engagement  
“Bringing the Rural to the Town”

Improved facilities & Restored buildings

## Our next steps...

- Apply for funding for the buildings
- Detail architectural survey/plan
- Draw up a business plan for the next 10 years
- Create a community support group
- Look for financial support for the green spaces



