

## **In support of the Ecological Land Cooperative**

I am writing from Sustain in support of the Ecological Land Cooperative's work. As the alliance for better food and farming, Sustain advocates food and agriculture policies and practices that enhance the health and welfare of people and animals, improve the working and living environment, enrich society and culture and promote equity. The Ecological Land Cooperative embody these principles and have put them into practice at the Greenham Reach site. We support the expansion of organisations like this, for the following reasons:

- They use ecological agricultural techniques which are better for the environment: By having no chemical inputs it is beneficial to biodiversity – important in itself but key for pollination and balance within the food chain; reduced water usage and water management helps control shortage, flooding and surface water run-off; minimising greenhouse gases through cultivation techniques that are lower impact. This in turn is healthier for people, whether through reducing the risk of direct contact with chemicals being sprayed, or through the risks through consumption.
- Smaller scale farming is the glue of rural communities, as it provides higher employment per acre, supporting livelihoods and rural populations. Small scale farming also promotes local consumption and with it keeps money in local economies.
- Across the UK we are facing a shortage of opportunities for people to move into farming. The Ecological Land Cooperative address this by supporting new entrants to organic horticulture and small-scale mixed farming.

The presence of the kind of farming that the ELC supports would be an asset to any community. It would reflect well on the area, as one that shows leadership and vision, which in turn will attract interest and plaudits from far and wide.

Yours,



Ben Reynolds  
Deputy Chief Executive  
Sustain