

Rural Policy Centre



# Community asset ownership in Scotland

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7<sup>th</sup> December 2015



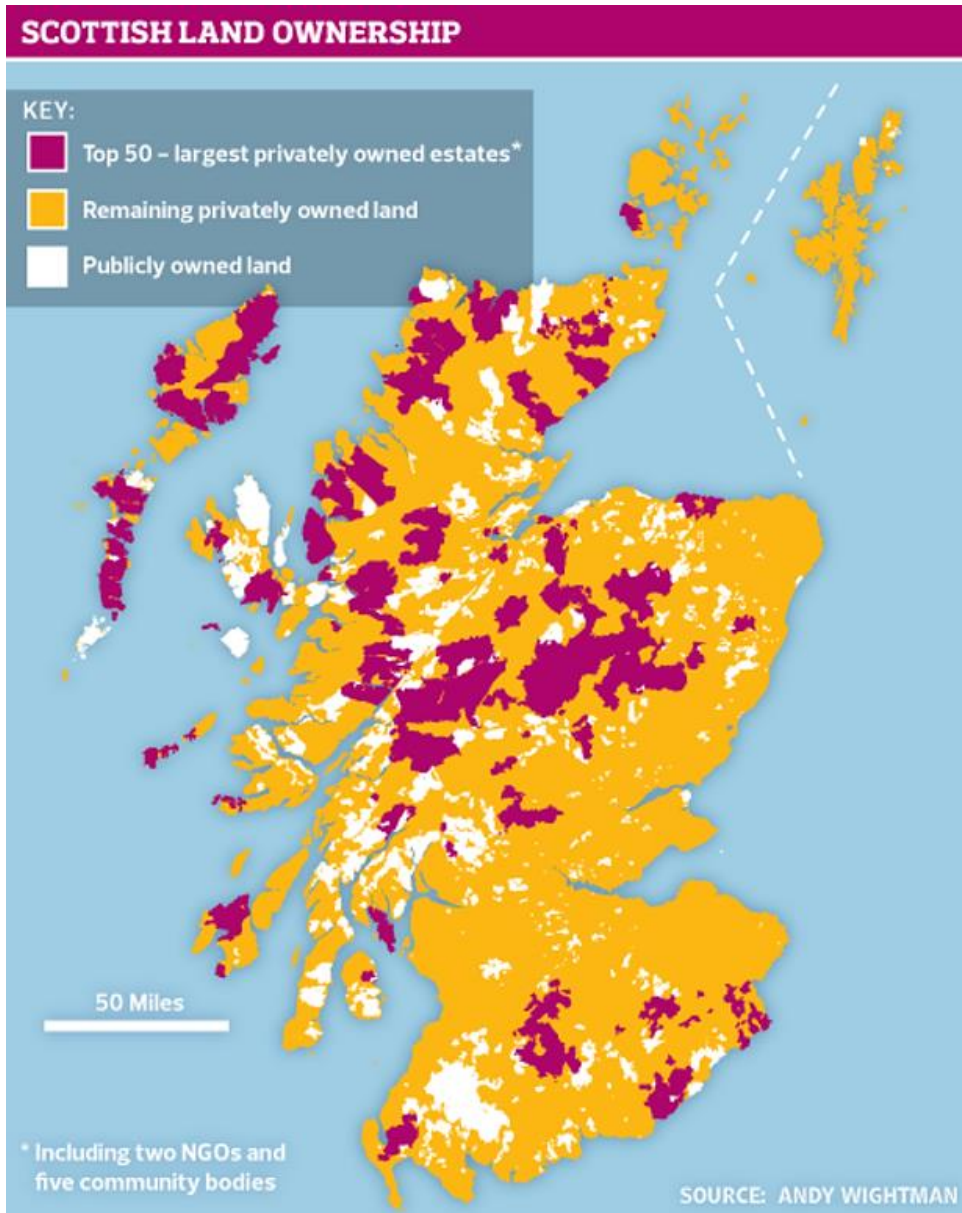
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# Overview



- Land ownership in Scotland: background
- Drivers for land reform
- Evaluation of the Community Right to Buy
  - Aim
  - Methods
  - Key findings
- Questions and discussion

# Land in Scotland

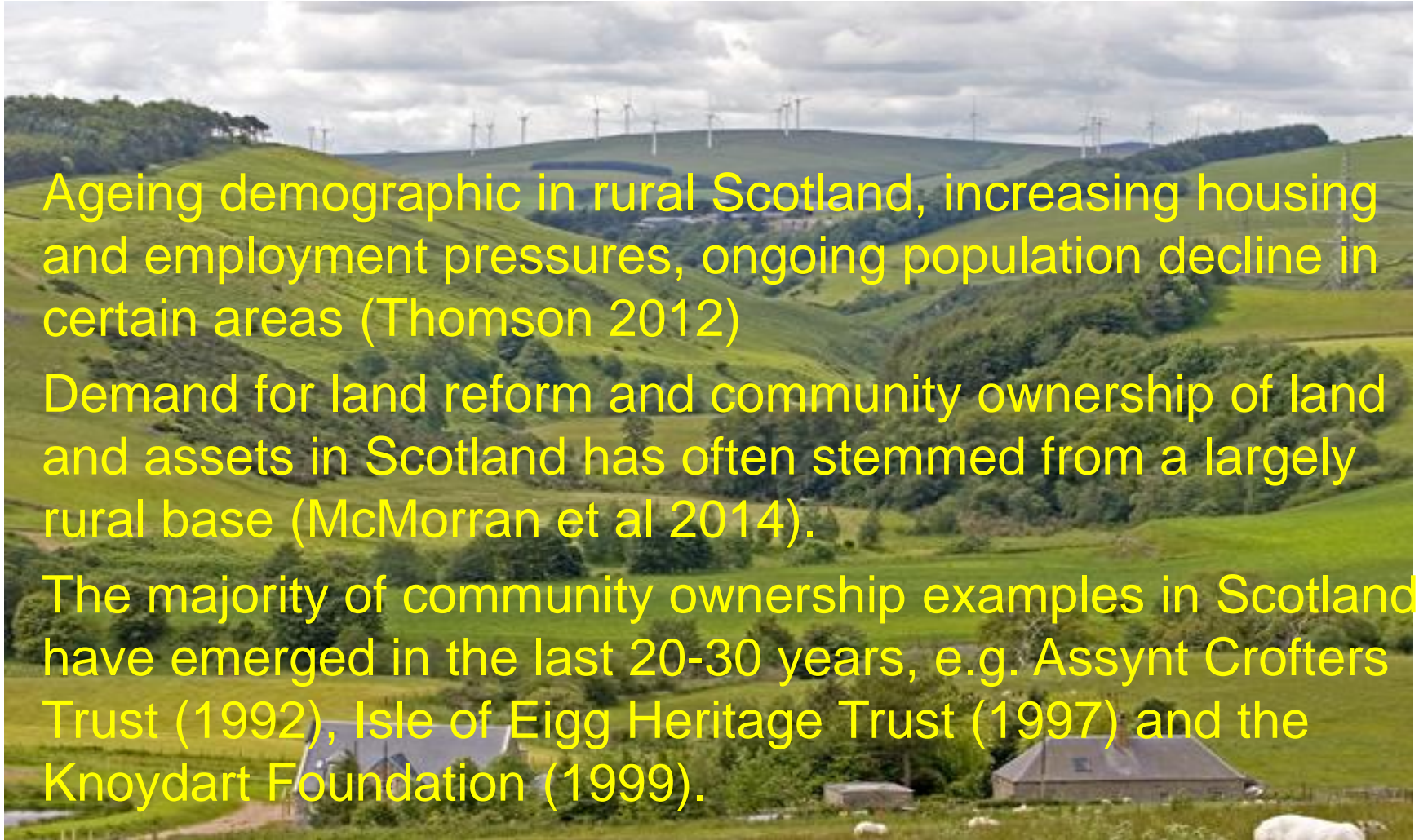


- More than half of Scotland is owned by fewer than 500 people
- A highly concentrated pattern of private landownership exists (Wightman, 1996, 2013; Lorimer, 2000; Cahill, 2001; Warren, 2009)
- This impacts on most sectors of rural society influencing social, economic and environmental outcomes

# Domestic drivers for land reform



- Ageing demographic in rural Scotland, increasing housing and employment pressures, ongoing population decline in certain areas (Thomson 2012)
- Demand for land reform and community ownership of land and assets in Scotland has often stemmed from a largely rural base (McMorran et al 2014).
- The majority of community ownership examples in Scotland have emerged in the last 20-30 years, e.g. Assynt Crofters Trust (1992), Isle of Eigg Heritage Trust (1997) and the Knoydart Foundation (1999).



# Legislative reform



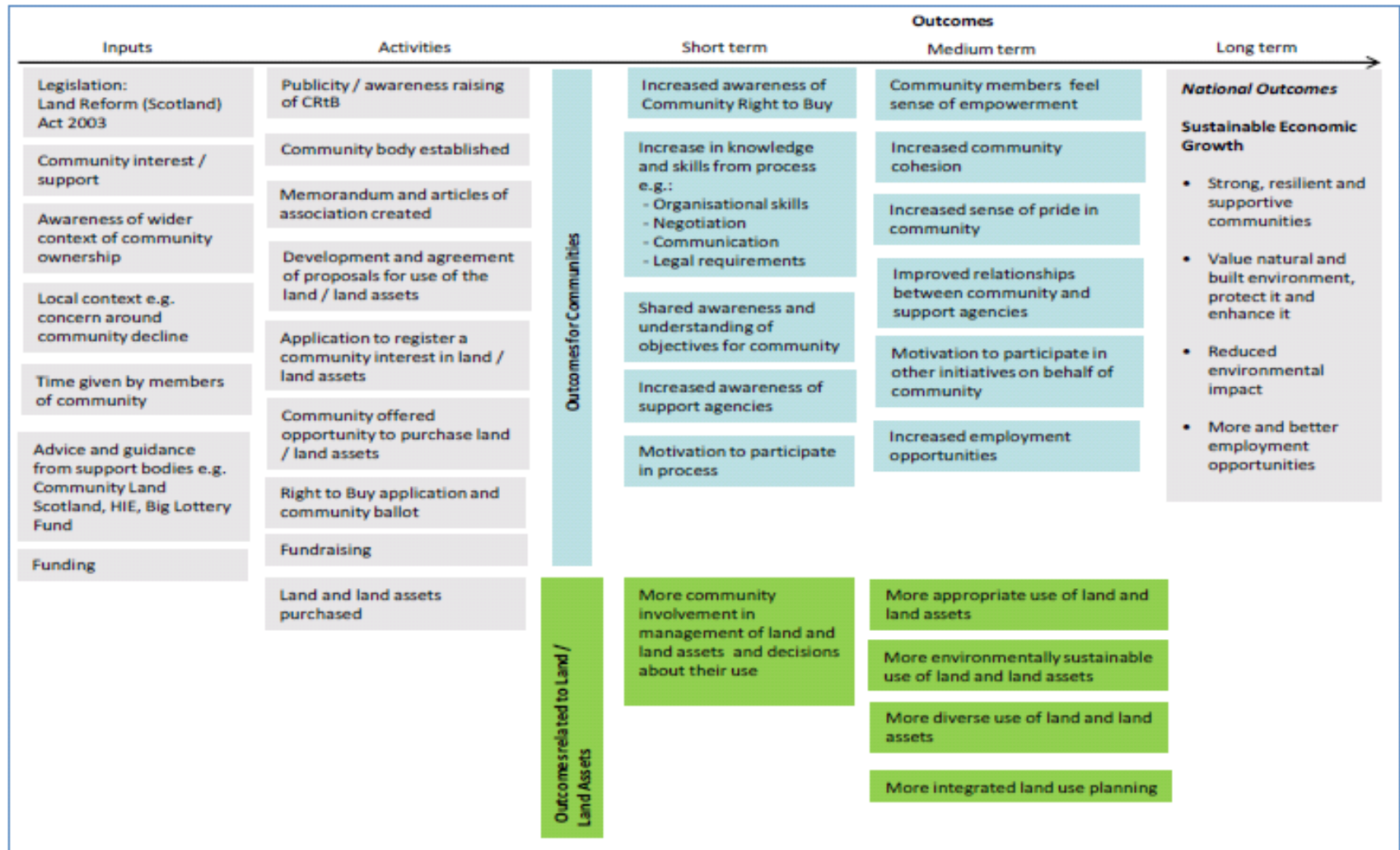
- The Land Reform Policy Group (LRPG) established in 1997
- The LRPG (1999) identified that their objectives could only be achieved by:
  - Increasing diversity in landownership – between private, public, partnership, not-for-profit and community sectors.
  - Increasing community involvement in local decision-making about how land is owned and managed.
- Land Reform (Scotland) Act 2003 (Part 2) introduced measures aimed at addressing greater diversity in ownership through the community right to buy.

# Impact evaluation of CRtB



- SRUC and Ipsos Mori evaluated the impact of Part 2 of the Land Reform (Scotland) Act 2003 (The Community Right to Buy) on local communities over the ten year period 2004-2014
- Desk based research
- Development of logic model
- Online survey with community bodies involved at each stage of the CRtB process
- 16 case studies (8 “full” 8 “light”)

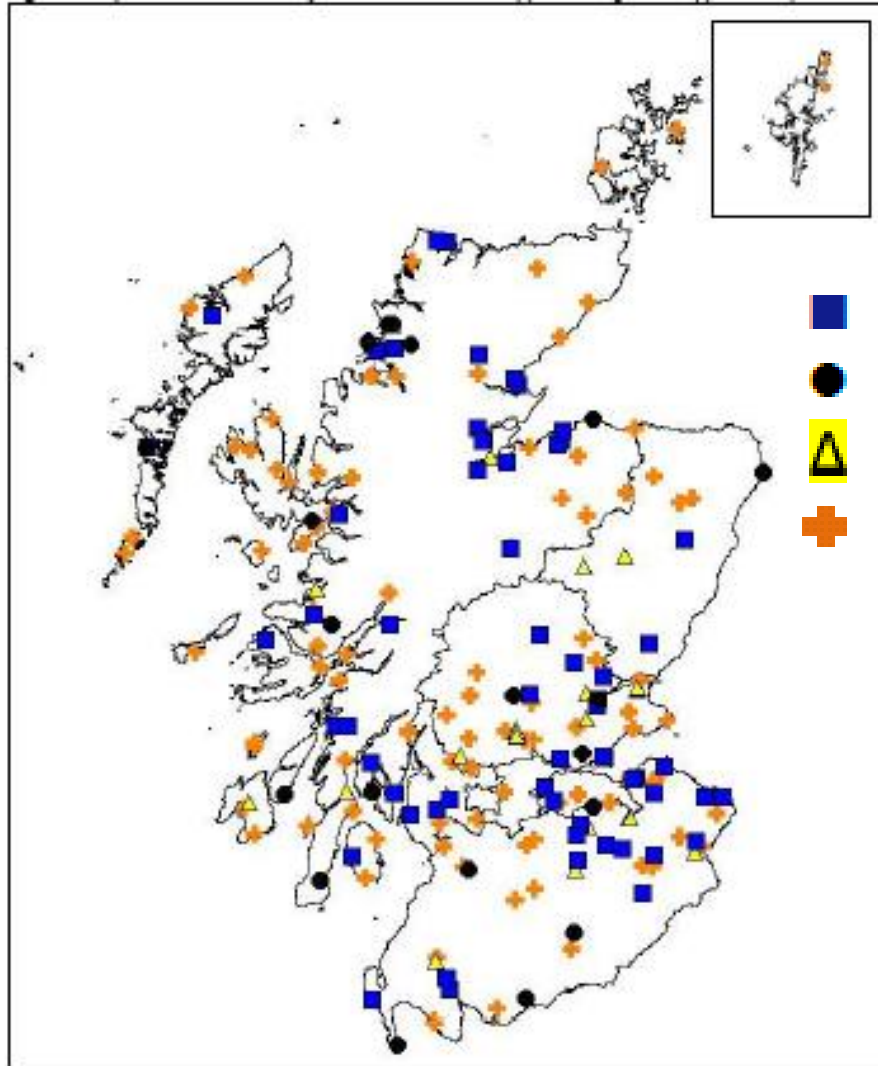
# Logic model



# Key findings

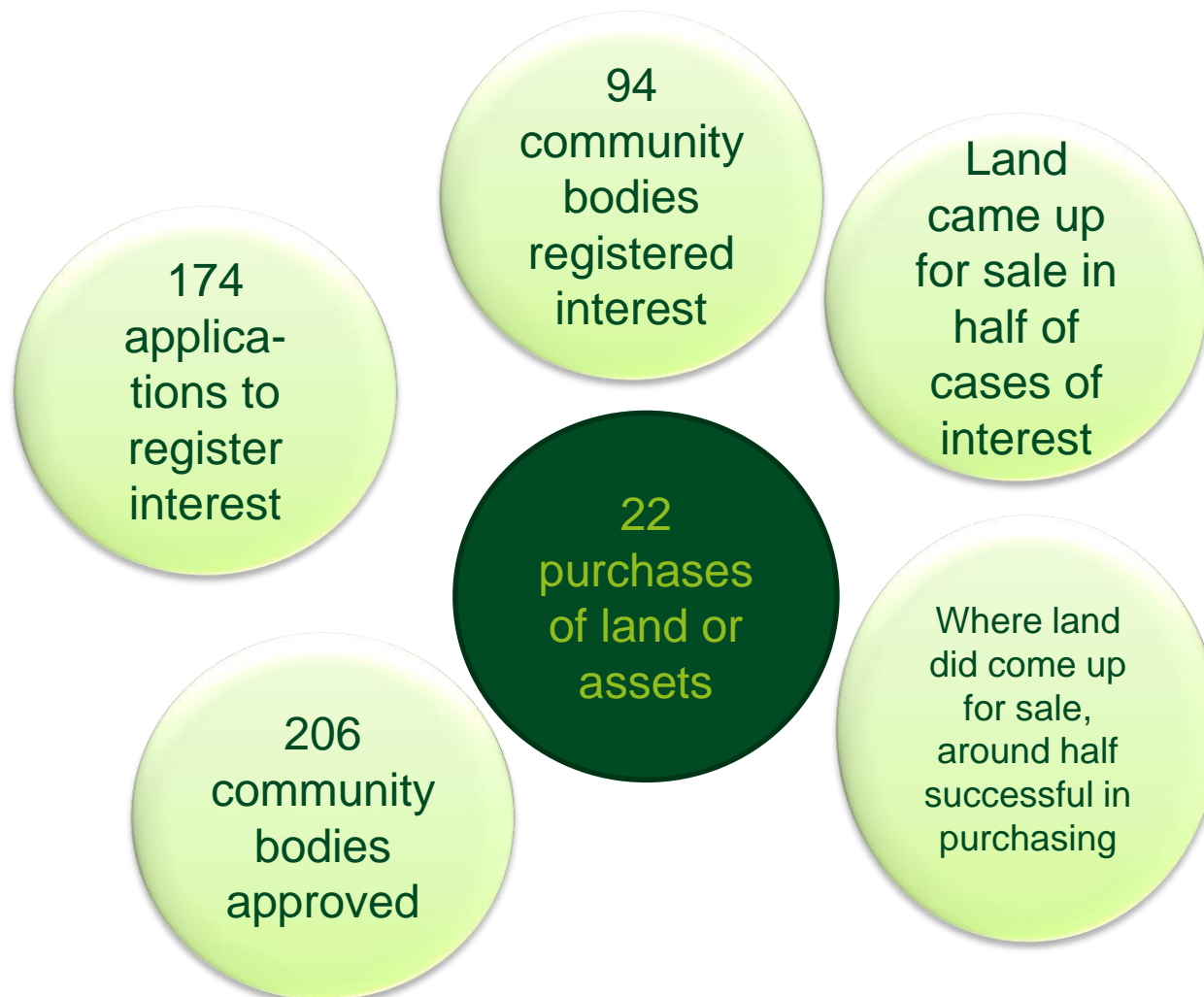


# Map of community bodies at different stages of CRtB

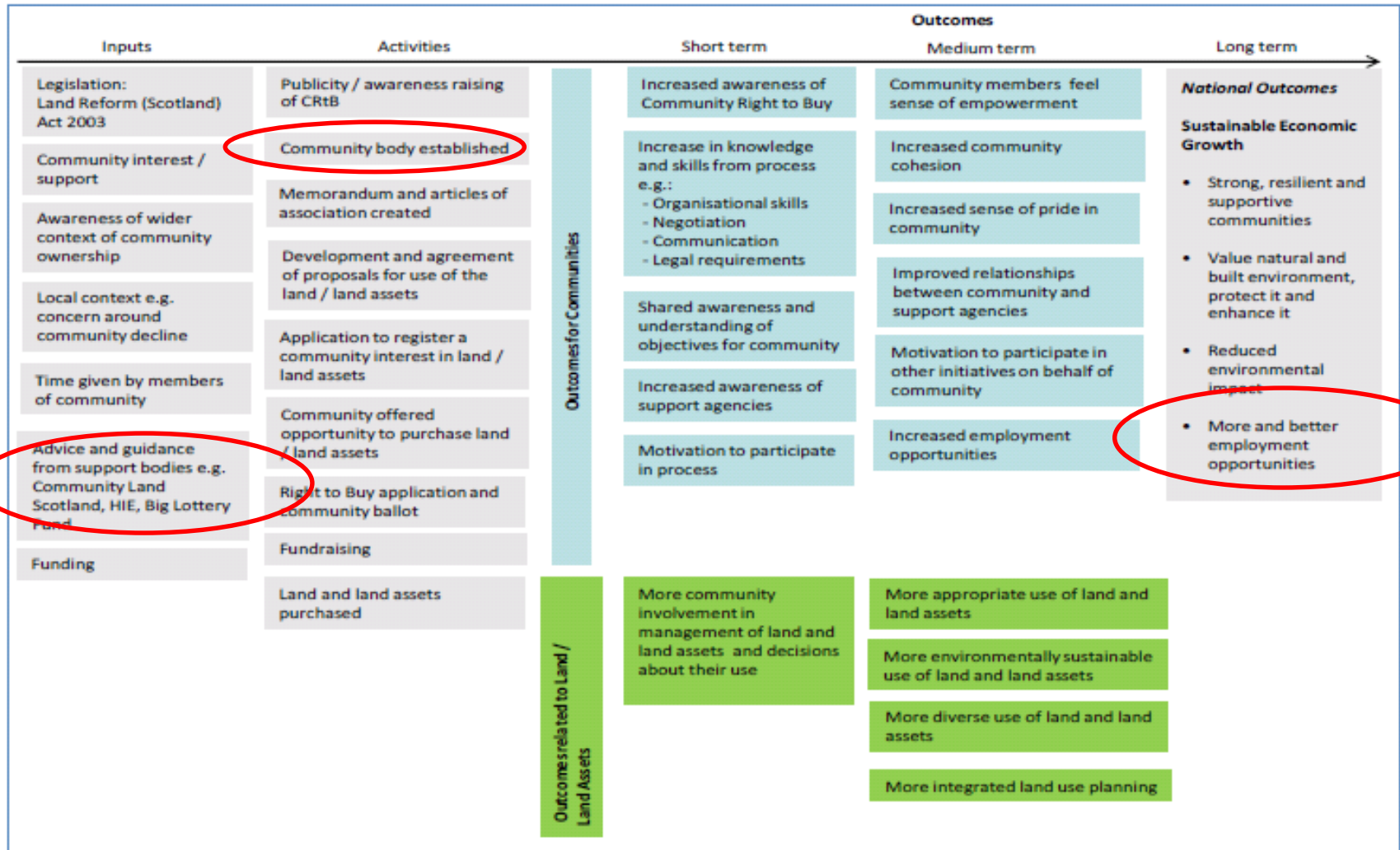


- Bought (not necessarily through legislation)
- Successfully registered an interest in land (though may not be currently on Register of Community Interests in Land)
- ▲ Applied to register an interest but failed/withdrew
- ✚ Community body received 34(4) letter but haven't applied to register an interest in land

# Extent of usage of CRtB



# Outcomes (1)



# Outcomes (2)



Increased knowledge and skills

Community cohesion

Motivation to develop initiatives

Involvement in land-based decisions



# Factors enabling outcomes



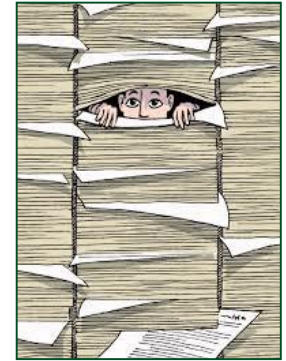
- Formation of **community bodies** key to providing a focal point for communities and giving communities a voice that they may not have otherwise had.
- Presence of key **individuals**



- Advice and guidance from **support agencies** played an important role in the process.
- Where land/assets have been purchased, a **willing seller** has helped make the process easier and has helped make a successful purchase more likely.

# Barriers to achieving outcomes

- Sustaining interest of community/volunteers over the long term
- Lack of specialist knowledge and expertise
- Securing funding for the valuation figure
- Concerns about community-landowner relations

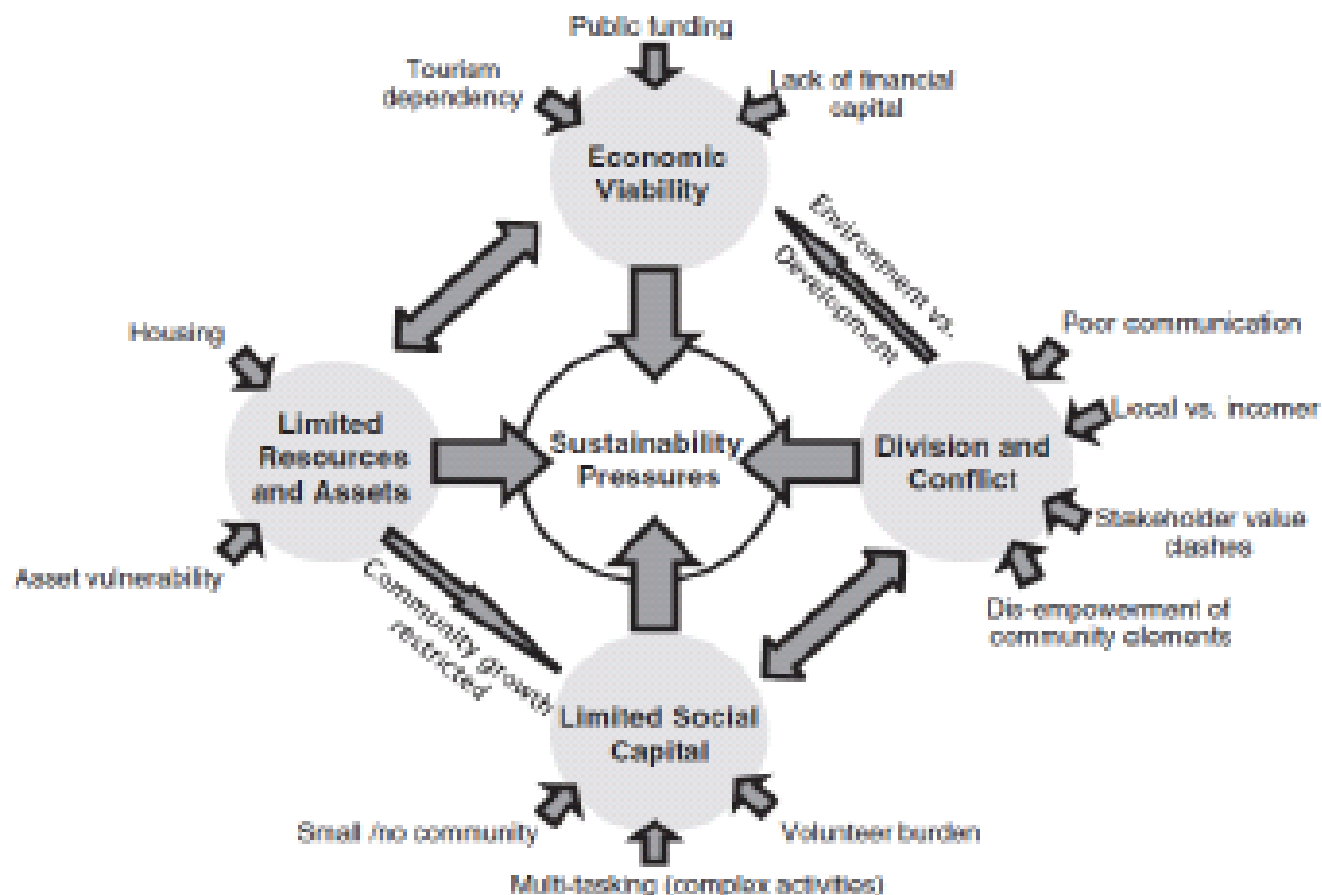


- Some barriers likely to be partly addressed through new legislation, i.e. Community Empowerment (Scotland) Act 2015 and development of a Community Land Agency.

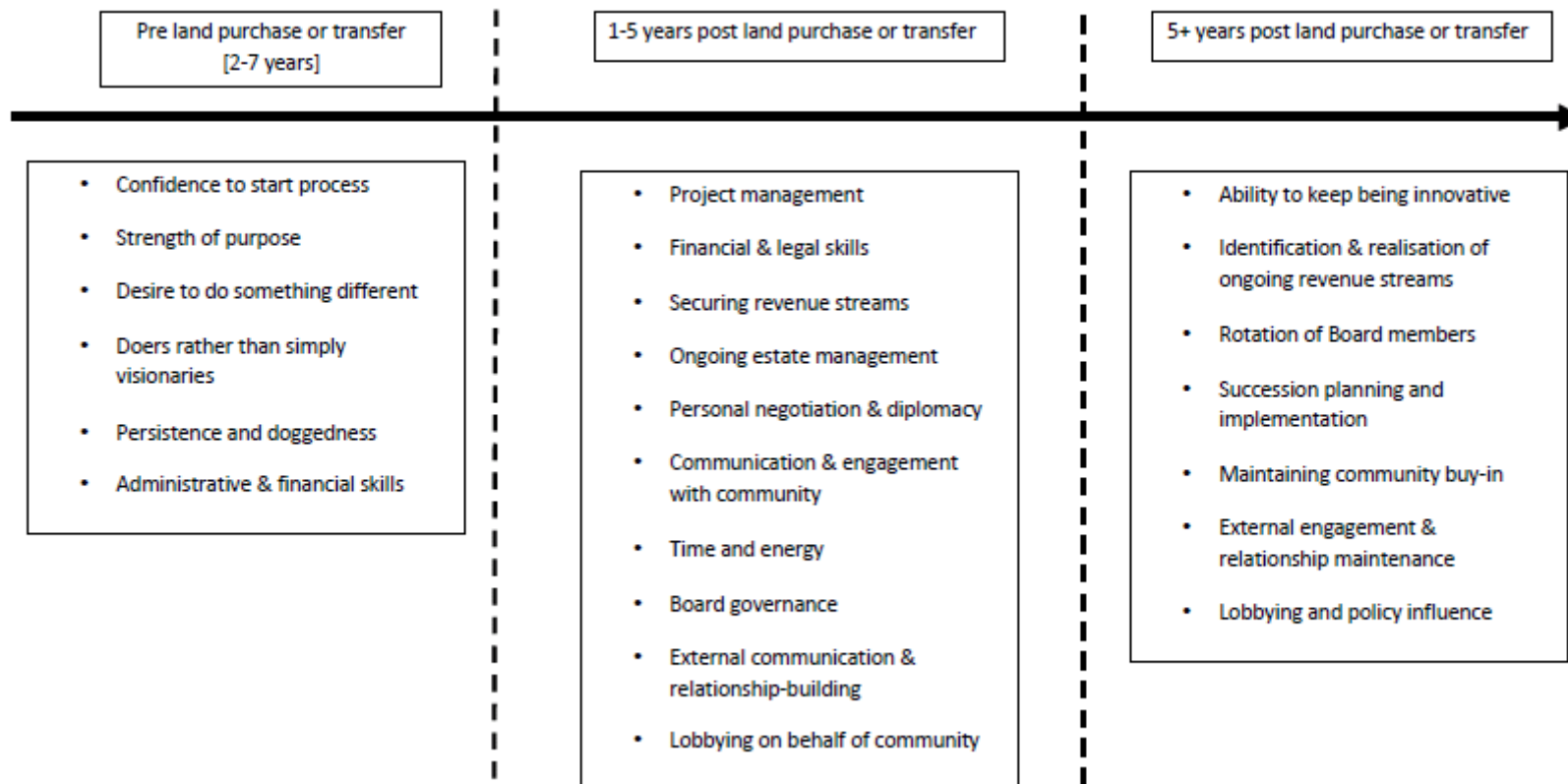
# Reflections & broader conclusions

(1)

Figure 2.2: A summary of 'sustainability pressures' faced by case study community buyout communities (McMoran and Scott 2014)



# Reflections and broader conclusions (2)



Source Skerratt, S. *Community land ownership and rural resilience*. Research report, Rural Policy Centre, 2011.





Comments,  
questions?

Report link - <http://www.gov.scot/Publications/2015/10/8581>  
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