

*These notes refer to the Natural Environment and Rural Communities Act 2006 (c.16) which received Royal Assent on 30 March 2006*

# NATURAL ENVIRONMENT AND RURAL COMMUNITIES ACT 2006

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## EXPLANATORY NOTES

### THE ACT

#### **Part 1: Natural England and the Commission for Rural Communities**

22. **Part 1** and Schedules 1 to 3 establish two new independent non-departmental public bodies (“NDPBs”), Natural England and the Commission for Rural Communities (“the Commission”). They also provide for the dissolution of two existing NDPBs, namely, English Nature and the Countryside Agency.
23. As mentioned in the summary, Natural England brings together the functions of the two existing NDPBs and the Rural Development Service (“RDS”). RDS’s mainly regional staff of about 1500 will become employees of Natural England (and so will be public sector employees instead of being civil servants). Most of the functions that RDS staff have performed on behalf of the Secretary of State will still be carried out by them, but as employees of Natural England. This is because the intention is that any RDS functions that derive from legislation will be the subject of long term service delivery agreements made between the Secretary of State and Natural England under Chapter 1 of Part 8 of this Act.
24. **Part 1** provides for the transfer of property, rights and liabilities in connection with the dissolution of English Nature and the Countryside Agency. This Part also confers power to make transfers in the future between Natural England, the Commission and a Minister of the Crown. This power is exercisable for the efficient management of property, rights and liabilities.