



Update on Wales Land Management Forum & its Sub Group on Agricultural Pollution.

1. Wales Land Management Forum Update

The Wales Land Management Forum (WLMF) is an NRW group established to enable regular dialogue with representatives of the land sector on land management issues.

Membership includes NFU Cymru, FUW, Tenant Farmers Association, Confor, CLA, Young Farmers Association and Welsh Water. It meets three times a year.

At its February 2019 meeting the following issues were tabled and discussed:

- **Area Statements.** NRW staff outlined the ambition for Area Statements and progress to date. The group explored how the WLMF could best support this work and ensure the strategic and local issues faced by land managers could be identified and solved in the most effective way. One area of current concern was the limited land manager membership and influence over the Public-Sector Boards. NRW will investigate this. Further discussion explored the opportunities that Area Statements may provide for new woodlands.
- **NRW Structural Change:** NRW provided an update on its organisational change and the implications for land management engagement.
- **Water Update:** A Wales Water Management Forum held its first meeting in December 2018 and an update was verbally provided to the group. This covered progress on the Water Framework Directive Cycle 2 Interim Classification which has reported a small increase in the number of water bodies meeting good or better status. The progress with Cycle 3 was also outlined. An update was provided on the plans submitted by Welsh Water to Ofwat to address environmental impacts over the period 2020 to 2024. Updates were also provided on the LIFE project bid on the River Dee, Welsh Government and NRW plans for future Water Use management and progress with the implementation of the amended abstraction licencing system.
- **Feedback from the WLMF Sub Group on Agricultural Pollution:** the group was informed of the progress made against the sub-groups action plan (see below).
- **Brexit and Our Land:** NRW staff provided an update on progress with this Welsh Government programme and how the land management sector was feeding into the development of the replacement for the current Glastir scheme.
- **NRW woodland Creation Programme.** Proposals around Centenary celebration (commemorating 100 years of British Forestry), Plant! and NRW's roles in verification for the Glastir woodland schemes were outlined.

Full minutes of the group meetings are published on the NRW website.

2. Wales Land Management Forum Sub-Group on Agricultural Pollution

This group was established in late 2017 by the members of the WLMF with NRW administrative support. It is chaired by the NRW Board member Zoe Henderson. Membership initially included WLMF members and Welsh Government, and has subsequently expanded with further members representing Carmarthen Fishermen's Federation, WEL and United Utilities. It meets monthly and has developed a comprehensive programme of projects focussed on delivering major change to the number and impact of agricultural water pollution incidents as well as improving water quality overall. A report on the work underway is available at:

<https://naturalresources.wales/guidance-and-advice/business-sectors/farming/wales-land-management-forum-sub-group-on-agricultural-pollution/?lang=en>.

This explains how the group has developed a progressive programme based on an integrated regulatory framework. This is divided into five interlinked core themes. Each are fundamental to the success of the framework and all need to progress to achieve the desired outcomes. They are:

1. Ensuring better clearer advice and guidance is provided and taken up by farmers;
2. Improving the existing range of investment incentives;
3. Developing a voluntary, farmer-led approach to nutrient management;
4. Ensuring the formal regulatory regime is sufficiently robust to achieve the outcomes required;
5. Identifying and promoting innovation.

Minutes of the group are also available at the above address.

At the April meeting the following items were discussed:

- Liaising and advising Welsh Government on their proposed agricultural regulations and their interaction with future land management schemes;
- Progress on the groups input to Brexit and our Land development;
- The outcomes of farm visits carried out by United Utilities in North East Wales;
- Update on the progress made with the Farming Connect catchment work. This included the potential for new Farming Connect demonstration farms and discussion over additional priority catchments to add to those already progressed;
- Welsh Government proposals for future capital grants for land managers;
- Review of a "Root Cause" of agricultural pollution analysis commissioned by the group;
- Feedback on the NRW-led dairy farm visit programme and discussion on the parallel work undertaken through Afonydd Cymru and Welsh Water. A request was also made to draw together knowledge on all programmes across Wales;
- Update on the NFU Cymru-led project on the role of assurance schemes;
- Progress on developing a programme of site visits both across Wales and possibly to other sites further afield;
- Development of specific Guidance and best practice to share to the sector. This will include case studies;
- Publishing the WLMF sub group progress report;
- Considering the impact of agricultural developments and the land use planning system.