



Wales Land Management Forum (WLMF)

Minutes

Title of meeting: Wales Land Management Forum (WLMF)

Location: Microsoft Teams Meeting

Date of Meeting: 22nd November 2021

Present:

Zoe Henderson, NRW (Chair)

Ruth Jenkins, NRW

Marc Williams, NRW

Sarah Hetherington, NRW

Dennis Matheson, TFA

Rachel Lewis-Davies, NFU Cymru

Hedd Pugh, NFU Cymru

Anthony Geddes, Confor

Martyn Evans, NRW

Bernard Griffiths, FUW

Fraser McAuley, CLA

Spencer Conlon, Welsh Government

Phil Ellis, Wales YFC

Additional Attendees Present:

Sarah Williams, NRW (Item 3 only)

Patrick Cowdry, Welsh Government (Item 4 only)

Ken Bevan, NRW (Item 9 only)

Secretariat(s):

Bronwen Martin, NRW

Apologies:

Bob Vaughan, NRW

Vicky Jones, Welsh Government

Ceri Davies, NRW

John Browne, NRW

Tim Kirk, Confor

Item 1 Introductions, Apologies and Declaration of Interest

1. The Chair welcomed all to the Microsoft Teams meeting noting apologies.
2. No declarations of interest were raised in respect of Agenda items to be considered.
3. The group were reminded that the meeting was being recorded for the purpose of capturing the minutes and the digital file will be deleted once the meeting minutes have been compiled.
4. Zoe introduced some guests to the meeting, including:
 - Phil Ellis the new Chief Executive, YFC Wales
 - Sarah Williams, NRW to discuss Green Recovery
 - Patrick Cowdy, Welsh Government to provide an update on Woodland Creation and the Deep Dive
 - Ken Bevan, NRW to discuss stakeholder engagement with the farmers for a project in North East Wales.

Item 2 Minutes from the last meeting and any matters arising

5. The Group reviewed the minutes from the September 2021 meeting and approved as a true record. Once the meeting minutes have been reviewed and formally agreed they will be translated and published on the NRW website.
6. Fraser McAuley, CLA asked what the timetable was regarding the deep dive into biodiversity. Ruth Jenkins, NRW said that a date has not been set for the biodiversity sessions, but the renewable energy deep dive is currently ongoing.
7. Bronwen Martin, NRW shared her screen and the group reviewed the Action Log, the following comments were of note:

- September AP02: Ruth and Martyn to provide an update relating to the reported incidents of illegal felling to understand the scale of the problem, how NRW have responded and the level of resources on enforcement and operational teams.
 - Ruth said she has not received the figures yet in relation to illegal felling. At the same time Ruth asked about resourcing as NRW have much the same resourcing dealing with illegal felling and felling licence applications and would be interesting to have a look at these two things. Increased felling licences are unsurprising in a year where timber prices have risen quite significantly, and foresters are also dealing with quite a lot of issues in relation to things like larch. Ruth said NRW have seen a 9% increase on last year and thought it actually might be higher. NRW have had about 387 applications during 2021 so far, which is an increase of nine percent, but it might be more by the end of the year. Ruth said she expects there is quite a lot of pressure on those operational teams, as they are involved in supporting felling license applications as well as having to investigate illegal felling's. Ruth is aware that there was an increase in NRW having to deal with illegal felling's certainly during last year but does not yet have the figures for this year.
 - Anthony Geddes, Confor said he had raised this during the September meeting and the background to it was that Confor have significantly seen an increase in alleged illegal felling. Anthony said they have also seen a huge extension to the amount of time it takes to process felling licences. Anthony also mentioned the level of skills and experience has changed within NRW and there is a real opportunity to train and support some of those staff so that they can go out to site and actually recognize what is intentional or illegal felling very quickly. Knowledge, training, and support is important.
 - Ruth explained that there are improvements to be made on both sides, so say that out of the 447 applications that have been registered, maybe 140 have been returned because they were missing the relevant information or included really poor maps or missing information. So that does also slow the process down for felling licences but there are issues on both sides.
 - Anthony acknowledged Ruth's point about operational issues but the issues regarding resourcing remain.
 - Ruth discussed the work looking at the sort of baseline service NRW provide with the resources available across the business.
 - Hedd Pugh, NFU Cymru asked whether these illegal felling sites are large areas. Ruth said she did not have data but would suggest perhaps a mixture.
 - Phil Ellis, Wales YFC said he and Carol (Wales YFC Chair) met with the Minister for Climate Change and made the point about skills. From the perspective of young people, one of the things that Welsh Government is looking to do, is to invest into that skill set. Phil suggested that maybe this is something this group could discuss a bit more broadly.

- Ruth mentioned that NRW have done some work developing apprenticeship opportunities in the forestry side of the business and are offering some 'kickstart opportunities' for young people in the organization.
- Fraser said there are some issues around NRW such as staff shortages or expertise and asked if there is a plan from Welsh Government to look at that those issues and see whether they can be addressed.
- Ruth said NRW are obviously in conversation with Welsh Government regarding many things across the business, including affordability and budgets. We recognize that it is important, NRW manage a forestry business and it is important to be able to bring people in and train them up. Also using the experienced and skilled people within the business to help train others up, whilst also bringing in training providers to support staff.
- Anthony mentioned that the ICF, Lantra and Confor have been doing a joint piece of work regarding a skills study and survey. The skills shortage survey results are published on the Lantra website and there is a national challenge for forestry.
- Sept AP05: Ruth Jenkins, NRW and Martyn Evans, NRW to feedback Anthony's comments regarding the consultation on NRW's review of Area Statements.
 - Ruth said the comments have been fed back and will be taken on board in the work NRW are doing through the consultation and the responses to that consultation.

Item 3 Green Recovery Discussion

8. Sarah Williams, NRW reminded the group where the Green Recovery Task and Finish group came from and the context behind it.
9. Sarah outlined what is meant by 'Green Recovery':

'Green':

- Reversing the decline in nature (nature emergency)
- Addressing climate emergency & increasing resilience to the impacts of climate change
- Tackling unsustainable patterns of production and consumption (the circular economy)

Must focus on ALL three, not single elements in isolation

'Recovery':

- Economic – investment that supports job creation and new markets

- Social –target action to those groups, communities and places that are most vulnerable/ have been hit hardest to address underlying inequalities and deprivation.

10. Sarah mentioned the prioritized actions for a green recovery which were focused on the practical side of things, making sure that it linked through to the Well-being and Future Generations Act and was very much focused on locking in positive attitudes and behaviours.

11. The Green Recovery Group is an independent group, not a sector representative group. It fed back through to Lesley Griffiths' Round Table Group. It is a group of experienced people from across Wales with a different views and perspectives representing a range of businesses, local authorities and organisations who work with communities and are focused on social justice.

12. The Group issued a call for good ideas with 168 proposals received. These proposals formed the basis for the Green Recovery Priorities for Action Report. Delivering against Priorities for Action:

- Nature Based Solutions
- Transforming socio-economic systems
- Enablers of the GR

13. Sarah mentioned that the Wales Green Recovery Group commissioned a report examining the stability and resilience of the environmental sector during the pandemic which made recommendations over the short, medium, and longer term:

[Green Recovery: Supporting the Environment Sector in Wales Report](#)

- Facilitated circa £900k to the sector
- Now setting up an eNGO group to enable further actioning of the recommendations

14. Sarah outlined some of the proposals moving forward through the Wales Green and Just Recovery/Transition Group:

- Building on energy, momentum, and collective power
- Increasing connections with the business sector and anchor organisations
- Focussed on unblocking barriers that are stopping progress and accelerating innovation.
- Mapping delivery for each Government portfolio – supporting all ministers to deliver specific commitments.
- Working with spatial tools to enable targeting of work to areas and communities of most need.

15. Zoe thanked Sarah for her presentation and asked what a 'national nature service' is and what it might do. Sarah clarified that a national nature service is about providing opportunities for young people to connect with nature through a range of opportunities, such as volunteering, paid employment, placements through kickstart or apprenticeships. It is a pathway for an individual to start to get involved with nature and abide by the word 'nature'. Possibly working in or on a national nature centre or reserves, but equally working on or in a farming environment or in a forestry environment.
16. Dennis Matheson, TFA said farmer representatives were not included within the original Green Recovery Group. Dennis asked whether there are any actual farmer representatives currently on any of the groups mentioned in the presentation. Sarah said it was never intended to be a sectoral representative group. Sue Pritchard was on the group from the outset and has a very broad perspective and understanding of food and farming. Sarah said that Sue is a farmer from mid Wales, so they felt that through her knowledge and network she had the ability to reach out to farmers, land managers and to food people and bring that perspective into the discussions.
17. Rachel Lewis-Davies, NFU Cymru said that Sue was not democratically elected, and the group does not have a membership representative of organisations, unlike the organisations around the table in the meeting today.

Rachel mentioned that alongside the green recovery report there was the NGO report. Rachel said that she was concerned with some of the comments around core funding and asked what analysis sits behind that report regarding scale. Rachel mentioned that there is a lot of involvement from the environment sector in political lobbying and the prospect of providing core funding to organisations which then go on and lobby would raise some eyebrows. Rachel explained that from a farming union perspective, they would not go to government for core funding to fund their activity. Rachel queried what sort of analysis has taken place to underpin the report and asked whether any others have also made that observation. Sarah said that was an independent report that was reported into the group and the funding centre did a series of interviews with a whole cross section of environmental organisations operating across Wales. Regarding core funding, Sarah explained that from an NRW and Welsh Government perspective, this is something that they have moved away from. So, in the discussions between NRW and Welsh Government and taking forward those recommendations, they are very clear that core funding is not on the table. It is looking at a suite of other options which are set out in that report, but at the current time, NRW and Welsh Government will not be providing core funding to the environment sector organisations.

18. Anthony asked whether there is a summary of the projects that are being taken forward. Anthony mentioned that the Climate Change Minister announced a new project, the Curlew protect in mid Wales. Sarah said they have not got a summary report but would be looking to consolidate something in the future. Sarah confirmed that the Curlew Project is separate and is independent of the Green Recovery Task and Finish Group.

AP November 01: Bronwen Martin, NRW to ask Sarah Williams, NRW for a summary of the Green Recovery Project work.

Item 4 Woodland Creation & Deep Dive Update

19. Patrick Cowdy, Welsh Government joined the group to provide an update on Woodland Creation progress and the Deep Dive.
20. Patrick gave a background to the Woodland Creation Deep Dive and shared a summary diagram - [Trees & Timber Task Force Recommendations](#)
21. The deep dive was called for by the Deputy Minister for Climate Change, Lee Walters. The main aim was to identify a set of actions to increase tree planting and overcome barriers related to woodland creation and consider the government targets and especially those of UK CCC. A group of experts were handpicked from a variety of organisations to be a part of this.
22. One of the aims was to look at what has happened in the past regarding woodland creation and learn lessons from it. They also looked into what has been happening in other countries, like the tree planting scheme in Africa, as they have been quite successful getting community planting.
23. There were eight meetings and three round tables to bring in the wider farming sector. The initial 39 recommendations have now become actions with some being shorter term and others longer term.
24. Patrick described the community tree planting scheme which has been developed to help people get funding for planting trees in community areas. This scheme is due to be launched soon. Creating culture change around tree planting is also important and a user-friendly guide on tree planting is needed.
25. Patrick said they are also looking at nurseries both in terms of funding and also to secure future supplies. There is a Confor Nursery Group which Fiona McFarlane has been involved with to look at tree supply across the three countries. There is massive increase in demand with the increased targets.
26. Patrick mentioned that they are also working with colleagues on Glastir Woodland Creation. Glastir Woodland Creation (window 11) opened in September 2021 - [Glastir Woodland Creation \(window 11, September 2021\)](#). They looked at improvements to the scheme like fast tracking verification for low-risk woodland plans on small areas where they are not sensitive.
27. Patrick said they are now looking at what is going to be the successor to Glastir, with a scheme that can be launched in April which will hopefully address some of the problems which were identified by the working group.
28. Going forward, there are two working groups. One looking at developing a timber industrial strategy which Anthony Geddes is very active in. There is another working group looking at financing and bringing in private sector finance to help fund woodland creation.

29. There is also a lot of concern around potential negative impacts of Woodland Creation such as damaging local communities, but these challenges are being looked at very carefully by the working groups.
30. The Deputy Minister for Climate Change, Lee Waters will be attending the [Ystadau Cymru Annual Conference](#) on 2nd December 2021 and will discuss amongst other things, woodland creation and planting on public sector land. There will also be a presentation about the [Belfast One Million Trees Project](#) which has been successful in terms of units of urban tree planting and getting the community involved.
31. Going forward, the working group meetings will continue. The Finance Group are planning to report at the end of 2021 with the Industrial Strategy Group carrying on.
32. Zoe thanked Patrick for his update and welcomed questions.
33. Dennis Matheson, TFA mentioned that the very real concerns and threats to the tenancy sector have not been addressed properly and TFA Cymru have unsuccessfully been trying to arrange a meeting since the deep dive. Dennis suggested that it could eventually mean the end of the landlord tenant system in Wales, so this must be addressed. Dennis confirmed that all of these concerns were in fact contained in the report from the Woodland Creation Task and Finish Group set up by the Wales Land Management Forum (WLMF) which went to the Welsh Government.

Patrick said one of the starting points for the deep dive was the Wales Land Management Forum report on Woodland Creation and they were very grateful for that. The group looked at ways to break down these barriers in order to progress. Increased levels of woodland creation are only a small proportion of what is needed. The issue of tenanted farms was discussed during the deep dive and also within the working groups but especially the finance working group, which has been looking at how to make it fair for tenant farmers to avoid some of the risks.

Anthony said that there has been a great deal of focus and input to ensure that the role of tenant farmers is supported and engaged with to make sure their voice is being heard.

Zoe suggested Patrick could contact Dennis to follow up on this discussion.

AP November 02: Bronwen Martin, NRW to share Dennis Matheson's details with Patrick Cowdy, Welsh Government.

34. Phil Ellis, YFC Wales discussed extraction planning in his community where land owners are planning to extract timber that was planted in the 1970s. Unfortunately, they are trying to access the timber through lanes which have not grown with the size of the harvesting machinery and is causing issues in local communities. Phil suggested perhaps this is something to consider. Zoe agreed that these are unintended consequences and impacts which need to be considered.

Ruth Jenkins, NRW mentioned that there is a Timber Transport Forum and this issue might be something to be raised and discussed through that group - [Timber Transport Forum - Wales](#).

35. Bernard Griffiths, FUW recalled that the work of the second working group was described as ‘finance from the private sector trying to not damage communities’. Bernard asked how much discussion there has been around the ‘land grab’ issue, with people from other sectors buying land in order to plant trees and offset their own carbon footprint, generally from polluting sectors – has this been considered within the working group.

Patrick said yes, this is being considered and is at the core of the discussions at the moment because there are a lot of questions around this, however, it is a very complicated area. There are around 11 or 12 options on the table in terms of different ways things can work, but no decisions have been made yet. Patrick said they are also open to suggestions and welcome any suggestions as it is a challenging area.

Bernard asked, of the 11 or 12 options, are some of those legal options looking at legislation. Patrick said not specifically on the finance side but maybe that is something to be considered as well.

Item 5 NFU Cymru ‘Growing Together’ Policy Paper Overview

36. Rachel thanked Zoe for the opportunity to provide a short update on the [NFU Cymru - Growing Together Strategy](#). Rachel had previously mentioned this report ahead of its publication in the last meeting and a link was circulated to the group when it was first published.

37. Rachel gave a brief background to this NFU Cymru policy paper. The paper was developed by the NFU Cymru Rural Affairs Board under the chairmanship of Hedd. This work is being taken forward in the context of the very ambitious tree planting targets for Wales (180,000 hectares by 2050). Rachel explained that if you put that at a farm scale, you are talking of a quite considerable number of farms (3750 average sized farms). This report allows farming to be a part of the solution and is also in line with [NFU Achieving Net Zero 2040](#), the second pillar of which is around in enhancing levels of carbon sequestration on Welsh farms.

38. Rachel discussed some challenges including tree planting targets as well as the ‘land grab’ in rural communities. Rachel recalled that the last three farms that have been sold in her local community have gone to external investors for complete afforestation. This is a situation which is happening on the ground and is a key concern to NFU Cymru members.

39. The context of the report is around:

- taking forward these targets in a way that can safeguard rural communities
- ensuring that the transition to Net Zero is one that is sustainable and fair for everybody in society
- tree planting targets in Wales are taken forward in a way that is globally responsible and does not result in the offshoring of food production and climate change impacts to other parts of the world, where often environmental standards and animal health and welfare standards are lower.

40. Rachel mentioned the [Hybu Cig Cymru Report: The Welsh Way](#) which demonstrates that Wales has got a good track record of the sustainable production of red meat and so it seems illogical that we offshore food production to elsewhere in the world.
41. Rachel outlined that the Rural Affairs Board identified what they currently saw as the key barriers to tree planting. This touches on economics and the fact that some farmers cannot wait 40 years for a crop of timber. The report also discusses some of the policy enablers and some of the difficulties that farmers experience at a farm scale when planting, including the problems relating to Glastir Woodland Creation. Particularly the fact that it is currently based on cost incurred, income forgone, and that those payment rates have not kept pace with increasing costs. Rachel also reminded the group that nearly 30% of land in Wales is actually under some sort of tenancy agreement, which precludes a huge area of land from increasing tree cover.
42. Rachel mentioned that NFU Cymru members are also concerned about the levels of risk. There are risks that some of the planted trees do not live or the conditions may not suit, so success might not be achieved in the anticipated way. There are also risks associated with emerging tree diseases like Ash Die Back. Carbon markets are also a new evolving market with uncertainty and risk.
43. Rachel reiterated that this report is about positioning farming as the solution to deliver the tree planting targets whilst outlining a number of key opportunities. Many farmers in Wales are willing to increase tree cover on their farms if they are awarded to do so, but it needs to be at the appropriate scale and in the appropriate location. Farmers are willing to plant shelterbelts, hedges, stream side corridors, gullies, field corners and even up to field parcel scale with a of mixture native trees and shrubs and also conifer species. Farmers are also not averse to the idea of planting commercial timber crops, but they want to do it at the appropriate scale and in a right place.
44. Rachel recognized that society wants to see tree planting for multiple benefits, but those benefits need to be properly rewarded and the rates need to be competitive.
45. The report concludes with a number of keys asks that reflect the analysis. Rachel said they want to see:
- The establishment of a just Transition Commission to ensure that the burden of decarbonisation does not fall unequally on rural communities.
 - A decision-making framework established to guide significant land use decisions and consider economic, environmental, social, and cultural impacts.
 - The Environment Bill should also include mechanisms to ensure that our food security and our agricultural productive capacity are also monitored, maintained, and enhanced, alongside other strategic targets.
 - Appropriate funding mechanisms that move beyond cost incurred income forgone calculations and that allows for a regular income to be derived from farm woodland.
 - The tenancy issue is also very important to NFU Cymru and they want to see reforms to tenancies that allow tenant farmers to be able to plant trees at the

appropriate scale on their land. But we also need those safeguards in place to ensure that tenants and commoners are not removed from their land as tree planting schemes are progressed.

46. Hedd agreed that farmers are keen to plant trees, but it must be the right tree, in the right place. Getting the right financial reward is also important, especially in the long term as not everyone can wait 40 years for the return. Agroforestry could be the way forward, but it is not always appropriate for producing food. However, Hedd confirmed that they do not want to see largescale afforestation because this will impact Welsh culture.
47. Phil Ellis, YFC Wales said his main concern is the impact it will have on young people, particularly regarding economic security. Phil explained that a managed field takes more time and more labour than it does to manage a woodland, over a 40-year period. Therefore, in a woodland context over that 40 years, there is a lot less work and there would be less opportunities for younger people to work. Phil reminded the group that we need to make sure that we consider the economic impact to our local and rural Wales. There are also two sides to this; there is the immediate impact for farmers and work opportunities and then there a secondary impact of less money being spent directly in rural communities. Phil gave an example with the difference of taking lambs to a local market compared to taking timber to a sawmill which is possibly located over the border or possibly in another part of Wales. It is about how we make sure that we keep as much of that activity within rural Wales.
48. Anthony recalled the role of farmers in decarbonization. The 180,000-hectare target is the target released by the Climate Change Committee; it is not a Welsh target; it is an independently derived figure. That figure includes what is needed for decarbonization across Wales, including what is needed to decarbonize the farm sector where it cannot reduce its emissions to zero. Anthony asked Rachel whether NFU Cymru have developed their thoughts further on that next step of the carbon responsibility that farmers hold? Because those figures of 180,000 hectares of afforestation is a part of the tool for all of the industries, all of the communities and all of the businesses in Wales to reach their target. Anthony said NFU Cymru have got a really crucial role there. Rachel mentioned that perhaps it is not touched on in in the Growing Together Strategy because it may be in the NFU Net Zero vision. The NFU Net Zero Vision by 2040 is net zero across England and Wales, it is not an expectation that individual farms will reach net zero individually. It outlines the potential across the three pillars of improving agricultural efficiency, enhancing sequestration and the role of renewables. It also provides figures across those three pillars and the level of action that would be needed to get us to Net Zero by 2040 across England and Wales.
49. Ruth said each farmer has to understand what is right for their farm business and what is valuable to the farm both now and in a future context. There is an opportunity to think about the impact on rural jobs, understand what that resource might be in the future if we do act or change now. Supporting net zero is going to be really important to understand what that resource can therefore be used both on the farm and more broadly, in a context of the rural economy. To get there, support will be required for agriculture, including training, understanding the timber market, and also understanding the sort of economy that might create in relation to a farm business.

In terms of creating 180,000 hectares of woodland in Wales, Ruth suggested that how this has been presented seemed a bit negative. It looked like loads of farms would be bought to create 100% woodlands to achieve that target. Ruth said that what it is really saying is that small shifts on every woodland (depending on affordability and farm scale) is actually how it will be achieved and not by creating lots of woodland on just a few farms.

Rachel said those figures are in the report and this is a message to government. This is a piece of lobbying work and it is absolutely clear that there are two ways you can do this. We are already seeing the land grab in Welsh communities. Alternatively, we can put together policies and measures that do it in a way that fits into farming systems. Rachel said this is a choice for policy makers and we have to grab their attention because some of the narrative is a little bit dismissive of the concerns of rural communities already.

Item 6 NRW Updates

50. The Chair mentioned that an Update Paper was circulated to members prior to the meeting which included links to further information. Zoe asked if there were any feedback or comments regarding the items in the document.

51. Ruth Jenkins, NRW had the following additional updates:

- Source apportionment: WLMF Sub Group received an update on the source apportionment work which DCWW are doing in relation to the SAC rivers. Ruth said NRW are currently looking at this work, particularly regarding the data and modelling.
- Grants Scheme: Updated so that there is the ability to issue grants on a two-year period from next year. NRW have done some work around the themes for those grants. Further information can be shared once more work has been done on defining those themes.

52. No further comments or questions received regarding NRW Updates.

Item 5 Update from FUW / NFU Cymru / Wales YFC / Confor / CLA / TFA / Welsh Government

53. **FUW:** Bernard Griffiths, FUW mentioned that colleagues have responded to several recent consultations including the local taxes for second homes consultation, oral and written evidence to Net Zero Wales plan, responded to the shooting and trapping consultation and provided written evidence to the House of Laws on the New Zealand trade deal. The land grab issue is also a very big topic for the FUW currently.

54. **NFU Cymru:** Rachel Lewis-Davies echoed much of Bernard's update regarding responses to consultations. Rachel mentioned that there is an ongoing campaign as part of the Growing Together Strategy, and they are in the process of welcoming MS's to farms across Wales to plant a tree.

55. **Wales YFC:** no further updates.

56. **Confor:** Anthony Geddes provided an update on the deep dive regarding an industrial strategy for timber and fibre. Anthony highlighted that the skills study response has been published. Confor are also coordinating first meeting of the Cross-Party Parliamentary group on forestry for the New Year and this group is seeking a new Chair.
57. **CLA:** Fraser McAuley needed to leave the meeting but briefly mentioned the CLA Rural Business Conference which will be held in London on Thursday 2 December.
58. **TFA:** Dennis Matheson mentioned that TFA Cymru mentioned he attended a recent meeting as an RPW stakeholder and for the second time raised the question regarding excluding land with trees from the basic payment scheme. Dennis suggested that now we are out of the EU, they should consider revisiting the rules because it goes completely against government policy.

Item 8 WLMF & Area Statement Workshop

59. Bronwen Martin, NRW confirmed that there will be a series of five themed 2-hour virtual workshops over the next few months, which include Natural Flood Management, farm woodland trees and hedgerows, common land, healthy hillsides, and food networks.
60. The overall theme is 'sustainable land and water management', and the aims are to achieve a joint agreement and understanding of how sustainable food and fibre production can meet the national and local challenges and to help deliver multiple benefits to farmers, land managers and the environment.
61. The first of the five themed workshops is scheduled for this Wednesday the 24th November 2021 which is the farm woodland trees and hedgerows session. This will consist of project talks from guest presenters, a video and feedback and discussion.
62. The Common Land workshop is also scheduled for Wednesday 8th December, 1.30pm-3.30pm. Bronwen confirmed that further information and invites for this session will be circulated this week.
63. Bronwen mentioned that in terms of the primary audience for the workshops, they are for the WLMF member organisations, but it would be great if the workshop invitations could be extended to colleagues including county advisors and committee members who are going to be interested in engaging in each of these themes. Bronwen offered to contact these possible additional attendees if members forward contact details, alternatively WLMF members could forward the meeting details directly to them. Bronwen encouraged members to draw on their own networks to provide the key support and add value to these conversations.
64. Bernard asked if there is a cap on numbers attending these virtual sessions. Bronwen confirmed that NRW do not want to prevent anybody from attending the sessions so as long as people have the meeting information and link it is possible to join.

Item 9 Any Other Business

65. Ken Bevan, NRW joined the meeting to discuss a project in North East Wales and stakeholder engagement.

66. Zoe mentioned the WLMF meeting dates for 2022 will be circulated shortly.

67. Dennis Matheson, TFA said in Friday's Daily Telegraph it was reported that NRW decided to ban trail hunting on their woodland estate. The article said it was as a result of a consultation and Dominic Driver was quoted. Dennis asked whether trail hunting comes under sporting rights or not, because, if it is sporting rights, he did not think NRW would be able to ban trail hunting on any land where those rights were retained by an original owner. However, if trail hunting is not sporting and is, say, recreation, they could ban it even though somebody else has the sporting rights. If it is still a sport and the original owner retains those rights, this is a barrier to NRW acquiring more land for tree planting. Dennis asked what was this consultation and what is the definition of trail hunting regarding sporting rights?

AP November 03: Ruth Jenkins, NRW to clarify Dennis Matheson's TFA, query regarding trail hunting and sporting rights.

Close meeting