

**Additional text: How to re-connect landscapes – a government agency perspective.**

**D. Appleton & R. Evans, Natural England.**

**Slide 2**

David – will start with an overview of what we mean by landscape and the drivers for NE to work at a landscape scale, will move on to explain how Natural England is applying the landscape scale approach to its Biodiversity work

Ross – will continue outlining our approach addressing resource protection and the use of incentive schemes to help reconnect landscapes

**Slide 3**

Key driver at the international level is the European Landscape directive and NE is leading the implementation of the directive in England

Created by the Council of Europe, the convention promotes landscape protection, management and planning, and European co-operation on landscape issues.

Signed by the UK Government in February 2006, the ELC became binding from March 2007. It applies to all landscapes, towns and villages, as well as open countryside; the coast and inland areas; and ordinary or even degraded landscapes, as well as those that are afforded protection.

**Slide 4**

Another important driver for NE: The UK Government's Sustainable Development Strategy in which Landscape cuts across all 4 priority areas:

[Natural resource protection and environmental enhancement](#) - protecting the natural resources on which we depend

[Other considered - Sustainable consumption and production](#) - working towards achieving more with less.

[From local to global: building sustainable communities](#) creating places where people want to live and work, now and in the future.

[Climate change and energy](#) - confronting the greatest threat

**Slide 5**

So ELD and the UK Sustainable Development Strategy set the context for our work on Landscape

NE has developed a high level policy on why landscape matters:

- Landscapes are a key resource for the nation
- Landscapes embrace all elements of the environment – natural (geology, landform, soils, climate, biodiversity) and cultural (historical and current land use, settlement patterns, enclosure and other human intervention)

- Landscapes are continuously evolving under the influence of both global drivers (climate change) and local pressures
- Landscapes – multifunctional, providing a range of ecosystem services

#### **Slide 6**

So the fact that landscapes can be viewed as multifunctional, providing a range of ecosystem services is the key integrating concept for Natural England's work at the landscape scale bringing together protection, management (including enhancement) and planning using a range of tools

#### **Slide 7**

So looking first at Biodiversity it is probably worth outlining the recent changes in approach to the system – key is change to Accountability and Delivery! – Targets set at the Landscape scale.

#### **Slide 8**

Tools to support delivery - 9 Sectoral Workstreams – 5 theme and 4 cross cutting - responsible for national policy and un blocking national issues

9 BIG groups – National partnerships of Statutory Agencies, NGO's, Utilities and Business, the attendees are those with delivery experience – based on themes i.e. Upland, Lowland Farmland, Coastal... (similar to previous Habitat action groups). - tasked with developing accountabilities for the targets and promoting landscape scale projects within core BAP areas to ensure that 2015 target is met... – currently developing .. Priority areas

9 Regional Partnerships – work with regional and local BAP's to deliver national and regional priorities and provide a regional voice for BAP etc – currently working on developing 'regional opportunities' map that will refine the detail from the BIG implementation maps

#### **Slide 9**

Rough edged habitats with species niches incorporated

#### **Slide 10**

Move on to Ross to talk about RP and incentives

#### **Slide 11**

What do we mean by diffuse water pollution?

#### **Slide 12**

Translated to the catchment scale

#### **Slide 13**

Coverage – England wide

#### **Slide 14**

Large number of catchments within South West/East. Fair distribution across the country apart from Midlands.

### **Slide 15**

How does it operate

**Soil management** (e.g. alleviating compaction) soil testing

**Fertiliser management** (e.g. reduce fertiliser application rates, avoid high risk areas) spreader calibration

**Farm infrastructure** (e.g. fence off rivers, establish buffer strips clean and dirty water separation)

**Land use** (e.g. Convert arable land to extensive grassland)

Livestock mgt - (e.g. reduce stocking rates, reduce dietary N and P)

**Manure management** (e.g. do not spread at high risk times, rapid incorporation)

Advice –using in house staff but also specialist contractors

### **Slide 16**

In 2009 – 1556 applications

Grants of up to £8000

### **Slide 17**

We provide funding for farmers for managing land in ways that improve and conserve the environment. We offer advice and information to support farm businesses with this scheme and improving their farm environment assets.

Funding available:

The total budget for ES approx £400 million year (09/10) rising to £430 million per year until 2013.

In excess of £1 million per day.

Range of full time staff based in the regions, recruited for their strong farm knowledge and background – we provide easily accessible targeted free advice – on farm face to face or group events, clinics, workshops.

In terms of events, we are not about duplication and wherever possible, we work with partners such as NFU, CLA, ADAS, levy bodies, RDA's etc – to reduce need for attendance of too many events.

Targets:

70% UAA in Agri-Environment Scheme by Mar 2011 – currently around 65% but many farmers will be making a decision as to whether renew their schemes over the next two years so it is important we not only find new farmers to enter these schemes but also retain the current farmers by

demonstrating the real business benefits of these schemes. Confident that we will reach this target due to increased advice, promotion of the benefits and scheme changes.

### **Slide 18**

We have three elements to ES:

ELS and HLS I will go into in more detail over the next few slides and information on Organic ELS is available from this stand.

Currently have all sectors represented –demonstrating that ES can fit into any farm business.

Six monthly payments with minimum paper work provides a regular and reliable income stream - avoids volatility of commodity markets – example of milk prices.

Over 35,000 farmers and over 6 million hectares of land

### **Slide 19**

Approximately 65% of dairy farmers in England are in some form of agri-environment scheme whether that is ES or our classic schemes with approx 45% in an Entry Level Scheme. This demonstrates a 10% rise from 35% in 2007.

We estimate there are approximately 1m hectares of pure dairy farmland of which 630,000 hectares are in some form of agri-environment scheme. With your help, we would like to increase membership of ES within the dairy sector.

### **Slide 20**

Well over 50% of England's agricultural land is now in Entry Level Stewardship.

This is a straightforward 5 year scheme open to all farmers using your existing environmental features on farm to best effect. You will receive £30 per hectare, each year for all land you enter into the scheme. A farm of 100 ha would receive £15,000 over the five year agreement with regular six monthly payments. Providing you meet a points target and agree to carry out simple and effective management options on your farm you will be automatically accepted into the scheme - 99% of applications are approved.

The scheme has a simple application process with minimal paperwork and over 50 different management options for you to choose from.

Average farm in England in ELS receives £4,000/year

Online application available – next slide

Need 200 new agreements per month for ELS – so far so good

### **Slide 21**

% age of scheme points scored by these options

EK2 - Permanent grassland with low inputs: outside SDA & ML 12.4

EK3 - Permanent grassland with very low inputs: outside SDA & ML 7.36

EF6 - Over-wintered stubbles 4.95

EF1 - Field corner management 3.92

EE3 - 6m buffer strips on cultivated land 3.73

## **Slide 22**

EB1 - Hedgerow management (on both sides of hedge) 9.67

EB3 - Enhanced hedgerow management 7.2

EB2 - Hedgerow management (on one side of hedge) 5.26

EB6 - Ditch management 2.94

EB8 - Combined hedge and ditch management (incorporating EB1) 2.59

## **Slide 23**

Higher Level Stewardship is a 10 year agreement providing higher payments for specific management and a range of capital works linked to features on your holding. It builds on Entry Level Stewardship to achieve the best outcome for your farm. Tailored advice is available to develop a detailed farm environment plan. Unlike Entry Level, your payments will depend upon the number and type of options you are able to deliver. We are currently targeting funding on priority areas and issues within your Region for example historic restoration projects or helping farmland birds such as lapwing.

YOU DO NOT NEED TO HAVE SSSI ON YOUR FARM AND WE WILL ACCEPT APPLICATIONS OUTSIDE TARGET AREA IF FALL WITHIN PRIORITY THEMES IN YOUR REGION.

Average farm receives £200/ha for the area entered into the scheme.

### **Most popular Higher Level options and capital items include:**

Restoration & maintenance of species-rich, semi-natural/wet grassland

Enhanced wild bird seed mix plots

Maintenance of woodland

Take archaeological features out of cultivation

Hedgerow/tree restoration and planting

Wooden field/river gate and boundary fencing

Access payments – such as educational access -**Further info available from our advisers and stand**

## Slide 24

These statements may cover historic buildings, educational access and traditional orchards

On educational access £500 per annum base payment plus £100 per visit – lifting of restrictions of visits so no maximum – encourage more visitors to learn about farming

## Slide 25

*The South West Farmland Bird Initiative is an exciting, pioneering partnership which is working with the farming community and other key partners to deliver positive habitat management for farmland birds across Gloucestershire, Wiltshire and Dorset.* These areas are recognised as being nationally important for farmland birds and other wildlife found within the wider countryside, and in particular for those bird species associated with arable farmland – Corn bunting, Lapwing, Grey partridge, Yellow wagtail, Turtle dove, Tree sparrow – and rarer arable plants like Corn marigold and Shepherd's-needle. The initiative consists of four projects, targeting the **Cotswolds, North Wessex Downs, South Wiltshire and Dorset**. Using Environmental Stewardship schemes, each project will deliver a combination of workshops, tailored advice and 1:1 farm visits to help farmers put the right package of management measures in place for farmland birds and other wildlife, thereby helping contribute to delivery of the Government's objective to reverse the decline in farmland birds by 2020.

### **The South West Farmland Bird Initiative is funded and supported by**

Natural England, Defra, RSPB, FWAG, Cotswolds Conservation Board, North Wessex Downs AONB, Cranborne Chase and West Wiltshire Downs AONB, Dorset AONB, Dorset Biodiversity Partnership, Game & Wildlife Conservation Trust, National Farmers Union, Plantlife International, The Wildlife Trusts, National Trust and Defence Estates.

## Slide 26

Over 250,000 ha of permanent grassland managed

Over 200,000km of hedgerow has been restored or replanted - enough to stretch three quarters of the way around the world.

Offering educational visits to more than 100,000 visitors and schoolchildren per year on 800 farms

Options supporting wide range of farmland birds – skylark, lapwing, yellow hammer.

Natural England is really proud of these achievements but it is farmers & their agents that have made this happen and without the hard work of the farming community -these wouldn't have happened.

## Slide 27

Type in postcode of farm/area – lists all farms in every agri environment scheme

Find out where Higher Level Environmental Stewardship Scheme applications are being targeted

See how much farmland in your area is attracting payment for environmental improvements

View information about individual scheme agreements

### **Slide 28**

Ross to continue with outlining other advice and incentives tools to reconnect landscapes

### **Cross Compliance**

We provide advice on the basic environmental and other standards that farmers must meet to comply with the Single Payment Scheme. This part of the service is currently delivered by Momenta under contract to Natural England. Understand this is a key regulatory pressure on dairy businesses and advice/events offered including helpline and on farm events.

### **Climate change**

We provide advice on subjects such as climate change adaptation and mitigation,. This is delivered mainly through partner organisations with topics including increased clover in grass swards, resource efficiency. Also involvement with the carbon accounting on farm tool - CALM (Carbon Accounting for Land Managers) - first step towards a benchmarking approach to improving awareness and management of carbon footprint/energy use on UK farms.

### **Re-connecting farmers with public**

Involvement in projects such as LEAF's Open Farm Sunday – provide sponsorship and presence at 30 farms linked to educational access and sponsoring 'Countryside Farmer' award category with Farmers Weekly. Other project topics include public access, forging better links with local communities and connecting with schools.

### **OCIS**

Free advice service to help farmers and land managers in England consider the practical implications of converting their business to organic production. Contracted to Elm Farm Research Centre