

03/05 Upland Pathways to Success

Attendees: [REDACTED]

Actions

- All to reflect on 'what if' discussion, to see if there is anything to add for a discussion on and after 17/05 meeting
- [REDACTED] to share [REDACTED] paper on Hill Farming
- [REDACTED] to ensure guide specific discussion is reflected in subsequent work when we start planning content
- [REDACTED] to liaise with [REDACTED] and [REDACTED] on the 'matrix' – possible ways to present
- [REDACTED] to liaise with [REDACTED] and [REDACTED] on exploring the Peatland Code
- [REDACTED] to follow up on CS/HLS analysis

Commons discussion

- [REDACTED] noted the **Commons** meeting last week, didn't touch on the secondary guidance – critical that guidance is right. Does affect what we're doing here, if we can't make it work on Commons – that's 38% of Moorland. Concerning the amount that needs doing to specific levels – no capacity or time to get it out there working for people within the timeframes we have
- [REDACTED] noted the test and trial they are doing, planning to extend to include **SFI Moorland** on 3 Commons – negotiating that. Help understand how this works in practice
- [REDACTED] - Question what it offers people is up for discussion as well (SFI Moorland). We don't know what the future market looks like, how can we collect data now?

'What if' scenarios

- [REDACTED]: When we do the analysis, we look at 'what if' we change certain things. Everything we offer has to be credible and achievable
- [REDACTED]: Key 'what ifs' from an agriculture side. **Livestock, grassland, public goods** income – good to visualise how they interact. Then there is **technology** (better data management investment, for example). How do we frame this in an attractable way, in terms of data and the presentation itself?
- [REDACTED]: If you looked to improve your business, which areas could you look at? Example: Different **breed of sheep, animal welfare, no. of stock**
- [REDACTED]: Start with **Environmental schemes**? Look at the income possible from those. Look at livestock in two ways: 1) working alongside the E.L.M schemes and what you can achieve and 2) look at livestock on its own - reaching intensification. Then look at investment - barns, equipment – infrastructure (Although aware that investment is a struggle for upland farms)
- [REDACTED]: don't want to put things fwd that don't apply to the majority – but we want to highlight we have looked at everything
- [REDACTED]: Did agree to look at it from the angle of **tenants**. Need to remember that when creating the guide
- [REDACTED]: **Productivity** – opp to inc. productivity, by 25% livestock sector to reduce net zero emissions. If that could it be achieved, assuming a 10% productivity/efficiency inc. could be achieved on each farm, assess what impact could that have? Could look at targets to achieve that such as increasing longevity – then apply that to finances and what that could achieve
- [REDACTED]: **Grassland management** – key to this – most farmers want to reduce inputs, want to reduce amount of bought in feed. Grassland management seems to be at the heart

- [REDACTED]: On SSSIs, all of this is going to be virtually impossible. [REDACTED]: **SSSIs – Moorland**. Need to be explicit about that – how to maximise profitability for SSSIs. Could be a separate section?
- [REDACTED]: Flagged SSSIs is also something we have been looking into, we could reflect that in this work but continue what we're doing there is joined up

Private Finance and Diversification

- [REDACTED]: not available to all at scale. Not all upland farmers can enter into private markets. Everything we offer has to be **achievable**
- [REDACTED]: **location** is key. Also about the **people involved/human aspect**, not all capable of diversifying or opening up their current set up to people/new approaches.
- [REDACTED]: Keen we focus on the **land** – what farmers can do to their land. Some diversification unclear – should be separate otherwise muddies the water.
- [REDACTED]: Could have an opening page which recognises these other opportunities, but that they might not be relevant for all, which is why we have focussed on the areas which apply to all upland farmers? We can take this away and discuss at a future meeting, but we do need to reference these other opportunities – but recognise the potential problems in doing so
- [REDACTED]: We can say if you're only making a part-time income, then you can consider on/off-farm working or diversification. Agree to mentioning it – don't want to rule out those other income sources
- [REDACTED]: Worry if you include **land sales** in options – dangerous option to promote. We should be focussing how to keep rural communities there. [REDACTED]– agree, that's a **capital not revenue income** – personal choice. Not a pathway to success
- [REDACTED]: Don't want to ignore 'what if you diversify' – but need to think how we approach that, when the core of the guide is about the upland farm. The farm could be a series of diversified practices, but we should focus on farming first to make as profitable as possible. Approach diversification as a good thing to do, but seek not to cross-subsidise farming
- [REDACTED]: Is there a matrix we can pull together to work out what % diversification would be an opportunity, applying a 'risk factor'?
- [REDACTED]: Page which has 'other options' e.g. **diversification, new livestock buildings, private finance** - suitable for some but not in detail here as they're either immature markets or only apply to a smaller market
- [REDACTED]: Could use that page to highlight what Gov could do to increase those opportunities for people – explain the barriers/limits why might not be relevant for some

How to present this/Content discussion

- [REDACTED]: May want a document that goes out to farmers but also a separate report of barriers to take up in other areas – **could be potentially work that branches from this?**
- [REDACTED]: Did agree to look at it from the angle of **tenants**. Need to remember that when creating the guide
- [REDACTED]: do we go into **Peatland restoration** – the **peatland code**? [REDACTED]: Have to understand this. How many upland farmers will have the freedom to go into the peatland code alone (often being tenant or commoner)? Could look at the peatland code as its already playing out? Not sure on the per hectare payments – but potentially some landowners see a large payment, then deduct capital works (free under CS) – means the payment per hectare is actually quite small. [REDACTED]: **Could we compare the two under peatland code and under CS?** If you could compare, and then put in concerns about landowners and the impacts they have, or choices they can make and the impact that has on the community, could be useful?

- [REDACTED]: good to work out what the peatland code offers. [REDACTED]: We can run this by [REDACTED] and [REDACTED] to see what is possible. Aware there is work looking at **CS/HLS comparisons**
- [REDACTED]: When that comes out, how relevant will it be? Only will have a year left. Will LNR be on time? **CS vs LNR** – will it be on time and can we compare that? Government need to give clarity. [REDACTED]: Would still be interesting to see if people were better off or not in HLS
- [REDACTED]: Matrix or cube, need to present everything at one time. [REDACTED]: For example – Options ABCD in one column and then compare with Options 1234 in another. Look at A on its own, and then A with option 1,2,3,4 etc. start by doing them individually, but then when you combine, how do they interact with each other?
- [REDACTED]: Need to decide in the columns/rows what the elements are/should be. So we would have: livestock improvement, grassland improvement, changes to agri-environment. If we considered 4 options for each of those that we analyse (more options than that, but provides a taster, too many options would make it difficult to digest). Livestock management, land management and schemes. Think of it as a cube, choose different places according to your own situation
- [REDACTED]: 1) Options on livestock - improving the animal welfare, inc/dec numbers, type of animals, increasing longevity and reducing mortality. 2) Options on land management and then 3) options looking at schemes. Need to be careful of the infinite options – need to be realistic. Perhaps have 3 options: 1) status quo, 2) increase and 3) decrease
- [REDACTED]: Look at three axis of change - what if you changed your livestock, your grassland management, and your options in your schemes. Put into an excel, drawn up - what should sit under them?
- [REDACTED]: **Timescales** - can only prepare for what there is now, can only operate within that
- [REDACTED]: Another idea on **accounts**. Noted the Cumbria farmer tool kit –page in the guide to understand accounts better? People need to understand where they are now?
- [REDACTED]: **Viability criteria/profitability aim**: return on labour equivalent to national living wage. [REDACTED]: We can return to this at the meeting at/after 17/05
- [REDACTED] to share the **report on hill farming** – issued by [REDACTED] today. Net FBL after BPS and family labour is -£25,000