

Actions

- [REDACTED], to review scheduling of these meetings and confirm the revised series and forward look of next dates
- [REDACTED], to work with [REDACTED] to plan a session on comms and engagement with the Pathways group
- The **working group** to consider how we can support effective communications – what is the right way of doing this with upland farmers?

Notes

- Jonathan Baker provided an **update on where we are with the 2024 analysis – we are not in a position to share economic analysis for the foreseeable, nor are we able to commit to a particular date where we can share the information**
- There has not been a decision regarding the content of the information (that the information is not shareable) rather – it's a case of scheduling the analysis across the piece, with the range of other information we are working on for the new Ministers and getting it into a position where it is shareable. It's about resource but also allowing the right time for quality assurance which will enable confidence in using the data.
- **We want to carry on the conversation, this group, to ensure our transition works for upland farmers.** We have ringfenced £60K funding for this group to do something and remain committed to exploring what else we can usefully do as a group to carry this conversation on and think about pathways to success. **We need to decide relatively soon whether there is a useful purpose for this funding so it can be assigned/spent elsewhere if not**
- [REDACTED] – Thinking about this in line with the farming resilience fund and programme as well? going to be a large scale communications and analysis exercise going on.
- [REDACTED] – One concern is around the ageing demographic of hill farmers, steeper than the national average. A lot are not addressing issues of the transition at all, potentially the most affected – trying to find a way to take this forward that will help them even without the analysis
- [REDACTED] – would like to be able to continue what we're doing – valuable opportunity to share developing thinking as we hear it. Exmoor age demographic going down. It's now about how can we use what we've done to provide some more directed information on a broader basis to hill farmers? NFU/CLA/Defra – upland farmers very often feel second class citizens, that policy is developed for them after everyone else. It's about signposting them to it – advice is fine, but it's all it can ever be – series of scenario planning. Always shy of suggesting advice of this is how you can survive – needs to be done on an individual basis. Generic type advice that's targeted towards upland farmers. Established networks and contacts with trust to deliver that message
- JB – how do we facilitate those conversations? A product or something to catalyse conversations with upland farmers
- [REDACTED] – sheep events, auction marts, Exmoor Hill Farming Group, Farmer Network
- [REDACTED] – This work often gets sucked into Common land – huge amount outside common land, potential that common land has been over supported in the past – how does that get rebalanced? Message still not got through about the scale of change. General increase in the understanding about the changes and changes to come – still significant number that doesn't change, through conversations there's a high level understanding but not detailed

- [REDACTED] – we previously spoke about creating a series of decision trees – is that something that would be useful to look into?
- [REDACTED] – not sure what's available. Paper that says these are the options available each year, from an upland perspective. What are the options for an upland? Something that sets that out – gives people clarity on what they look at – then compare with this is what you're BPS looks like over that time
- [REDACTED] – upland farmers difficult to engage with on that level (blogs etc.) would need to get it to Local auction marts as that's where they talk
- [REDACTED] – 20+ people last few days, "what shall I do? Rollover CS/HLS? Or look at SFI? Can I then look at SFI if I rollover?" vast majority of people have no idea
- JB noted pre-existing materials of a similar nature, e.g. Evidence compendiums. AHDB – characteristics of top performing farms. Where or how could we get information to people that they would access and pay attention to?
- [REDACTED] - Upland farmers disengaged with AHDB just as much as they are Defra. So many messages not seen as relevant to upland farmers
- Farmers Network trusted – but it's about getting a few right people that are respected and liked in that farming communities
- JB - Keep money on the table whilst we think. AHDB, Auction Marts, Farm Resilience Programme. How can we supported effective communications?
- [REDACTED] – targeted signposting of information. Issues really going to come to a head this year, BPS first payment spent over summer, gone through Autumn sales, costs rocketing – usually bailed out by the BPS cheque in January (which is now 40% of what it normally is)
- JB - Focus on how we can cut through to get that engagement right with upland farmers