

A network on High Nature Value
farming
Learning, Innovation, Knowledge



The HNV Link project – an example of an innovation that benefits HNV farmers

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*This project has received funding from the European
Union Horizon 2020 research and innovations
program under Grant Agreement No. 696391*

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Dartmoor Farming Futures

An outcome focused agri-environment scheme

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Project initiated and supported by Dartmoor National Park Authority, Dartmoor Commoners' Council and Natural England.



Why?



- Agri-environment essential to farmers in the uplands (LFA)
- Agreements on common land failing = lack of ownership of agreement.
- 401,200 ha common land in England and 59% of notified as SSSI (national importance for wildlife) and 49% as Natura 2000 (internationally important).
- Farmers in AE schemes for over 20 years but still unclear what the scheme/payments were for.
- Farmers want to be part of the solution and offer experience/skills.

The Forest of Dartmoor (common)
11,400 ha. moorland dominated by
blanket bog and deep peat. Notified
as an SSSI/Natura 2000 and includes
several important water
catchments. 78 active farmers.



The Haytor and Bagtor commons.
Managed as one unit (c700 ha.)
well used for recreation and
public access. It is rich in historical
sites and includes a geological
SSSI.
9 active farmers.



New scheme design



- Designed by farmers on 2 commons + independent facilitator
- Designs merged = new scheme trial/pilot (started in 2012)
- Outcome focused – outcomes agreed following consultation between farmers and agencies
- No prescriptions – farmers decide land management to deliver outcomes
- Address array of ecosystem services (biodiversity, water, carbon, archaeology, public access)
- Monitoring programme essential – give confidence to farmers and agencies.

Forest of Dartmoor: Ecosystem services / natural resources

Natural resources	relevant to location	further information
Public access	limited	open public access + tracks
Archaeology and historic environment	yes	national & international importance
nature or biodiversity	yes	national & international designations
Landscape	yes	national and international importance
water - quality and quantity	yes	also reduce flood risk down stream
carbon	yes	mapped and measured
food production	yes	livestock - sheep & cattle.

An example of outcomes: Haytor

Access

The main access routes and paths, identified by DNPA, are widened by the removal of vegetation.

Nature/biodiversity/ecological

The areas of Western Heath, mires and areas of bracken are managed to prevent an increase in area and to create a mosaic for specific species (no SSSI).

Historical/archaeological

Selected archaeological sites (6), including the Tramway and boundary stones are kept free of encroaching vegetation

Water

No actions by the commoners will result in reducing the water quality

Landscape

Grazing cattle, sheep and ponies remain in the landscape.

The tors remain visible and connecting paths are not visually intrusive.

Food production (farming)

There is no decline in the number of grazing livestock days (number of cattle and sheep x days grazing).



- New scheme improves understanding of aim of agreement – what it is hoping to achieve.
- Enables traditional/local farming practice to continue.
- Farmers have more ownership & responsibility.
- Improved relevance of land management to local conditions.

Lessons learnt – so far



Further information from Dartmoor National Park
www.dartmoor-npa.gov.uk