

Looking Forward: Supporting the Uplands

Outcomes from the Upland Alliance Stakeholder Workshop

hosted at DEFRA - London 22nd September 2016

The Upland Alliance workshop was attended by over 80 people including environmental NGOs, farmers, landowners, community groups, academics, and government agencies. Participants shared insights on how to motivate and support upland land management in England after Brexit, and collated recommendations for policy planning and evidence-gathering. This event was recognised as the start of a conversation, not its conclusion.

The day heard on the opportunities for change that leaving the EU offers the uplands from three speakers; Mark Reed (Newcastle University), Minette Batters (NFU) and Sonia Phippard (Defra). Stakeholders were encouraged by Defra to be radical in conception but realistic in implementation. The rest of the day was spent working in small groups.

The Uplands Alliance thanks Defra for hosting the event and to the following organisations for their financial contributions which made this event possible: Defra, Natural England, The National Trust, CLA, NFU, TFA, Moorland Association, University of Exeter, the Foundation for Common Land and the RSPB. We also much appreciate the generous input by facilitators and conveners.

KEY POINTS OF BROAD STAKEHOLDER CONSENSUS

- Recognise and celebrate the Uplands
- Better value and deliver public benefits
- Provide a strong commitment to communities
- Phase change to avoid unintended consequences
- Develop a new, more locally-flexible approach at landscape scale
- Ensure a commitment to co-ownership of policy and schemes

Two over-arching statements repeatedly arose:

1. The uplands are of high value for the public benefits they provide society

These include biodiversity, drinking water, carbon storage, stunning landscapes, places for public recreation and wellbeing, and vibrant rural communities and economies. Over 70% of the uplands are farmed landscapes, however CAP payments to upland farmers and landowners equate to less than £3.30 for each of the 70 million visits annually to upland National Parks.

2. Public money should be focused on delivering and enhancing these public benefits

This broad range of public benefits for the environment, rural economy and communities are not paid for through markets for food, livestock and timber. Future support should be structured to engage farmers and landowners and reward them to create, maintain, and enhance these benefits for society while minimising impacts of land use that imposes costs on society.

LOOKING FORWARD

The participants worked in eight groups exploring alternative scenarios for the uplands. Each group summarised their discussions via the statement; “Looking Forward we need to", which are collated below.

Looking forward we need to:

- ❖ Inform and engage the public
 - Communicate what the uplands provide to local communities, visitors and the wider public
 - Explain the links between management and public benefits and healthy food
 - Articulate and clarify the diversity and value of landscapes
- ❖ Encourage businesses to flourish and deliver public benefits
 - Ensure schemes are attractive and take up high
 - Ensure public and private payments fairly and sufficiently reward businesses
 - Recognise livestock production is at the heart of upland management
 - Encourage the delivery of public goods as a business diversification
 - Ensure join up between land management, the rural economy and communities
- ❖ Encourage locally relevant delivery within a national framework
 - Establish a national framework to ensure national priorities are delivered locally
 - Have properly convened partnerships to decide local outcomes
 - Involve farmers and other landowners in the co-design of schemes to lead to co-delivery and ownership of desired outcomes
 - Keep metrics simple to monitor outcomes
 - Include effective and trusted facilitation services
- ❖ Incorporate good learning from previous initiatives including
 - Schemes e.g. those open to all such as ESA, HFA & UELS
 - Projects e.g. Farmer Networks, North-West Livestock Programme
 - Partnerships that incorporate diverse interests deliver better outcomes

