



Dartmoor
Hill Farm Project

Newsletter April 2017
Upcoming Events

<p>ATV Training Apr 27th or 28th, May 9th or 10th 9.30 – 4.30pm</p>	<p>Attendees must have some experience of handling a quad bike for this course. Full cost: £145pp +VAT. Discounted cost to DHFP Contributors: £100 + VAT. Ideal training for Commons Fire Party. Please contact DHFP to register interest.</p>
<p>Free Health Checks 23rd May From 9.30am</p>	<p>Access Health Care setting up medical screening sessions for the over 40s at DHFP, Princetown. Book a half hour free confidential personal MOT with the DHFP office.</p>
<p>Telehandler Provisional dates: Apr 26th, May 11th, 22th or 25th 9.30 – 4.00pm</p>	<p>1 day training for operators with experience. Full cost: £185pp + VAT. Discounted cost for DHFP Contributors £150pp + VAT. Venue: Brimpts Farm. Please call the office or email to register your interest.</p>
<p>First Aid Fri June 2nd 9.30-4.30pm</p>	<p>£25pp for refresher course + £8 for certificate, £40pp for first training + £20 for books & Certificate. Ideal training for Commons Fire Party. Please bring packed lunch. Venue: DHFP Office, Old Duchy Hotel, Princetown. Booking essential.</p>
<p>IT Training with Learn Devon. 15th June every Thurs for 5 weeks 10.30-12.30pm</p>	<p>Free I.T sessions for the over 50s at the Dartmoor Prison IT Suite. This is a 5 session course starting 15th June, 10.30-12.30pm and then at the same time for the 4 weeks following. Please contact the office to book a place.</p>
<p>Introduction to Health & Safety on the Farm - 23 Jun 12.00 – 4.00pm</p>	<p>Half day training course. Classroom session at DHFP Office, Princetown. Full cost £80pp + VAT. Discounted cost for DHFP contributors: £50pp + VAT. Please call the office to book your place. <i>See inside for more info</i></p>
<p>Sheep Dipping 5th June Time TBC</p>	<p>Course taking attendees through the ins and outs of sheep dipping. Glen Iris, Sheepstor. £145 - £215pp + VAT depending on how many take part, £40 discount for DHFP Contributors. Please contact the office for further details and to book your place.</p>
<p>On-Farm Health & Safety – 6th July 8.30am – 12.30pm</p>	<p>Only for those who have completed the Introduction to Health & Safety course. Make a start on your farm risk assessments on this practical course which presents the huge task in bite size pieces. Feedback from the last course we ran was excellent! Full Cost £80+ VAT, DHFP Contributors £35 + VAT.</p>



DUCHY of CORNWALL



Contents

Page 1	Dates for your Diary
Page 2	Contents and Contacts
Page 3	Paperwork Pile/Recent Arrivals
Page 4	What's in the Name/Cross Compliance 2017
Page 5	Live Stock Movements are to be Simplified
Page 6	Changes to TB Policy
Page 9	Healthy Livestock BVD/Fly Season
Page 10	Commoners Fire Party
Page 11	DHFP Funding 2017-20/Call to DHFP Steering Group
Page 12	Drones on Dartmoor
Page 13	Greater Dartmoor Leaf Funding
Page 15	HotSW Growth Hub/National Countryside Week/ Hint of New agricultural Policy
Page 17	Hush Farm: Training
Page 19	Free NHS Health Check Appointment
Page 20	FecPak Hire
Page 21	Soil Aerator/Agri-environment Schemes
Page 22	Disease Diagnosis Event
Page 23	'Just in Case' Contacts

Dartmoor Hill Farm Project Contacts

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Web: www.dartmoor.gov.uk/hillfarmproject

Find us on Facebook

After three years as administrator for the DHFP, Angela has left the project. As you will appreciate her role was much wider than an administrator; her support and enthusiasm for the project and for farming on Dartmoor will be missed. Angela is going to work with Hush farms.

Whilst every care has been taken to ensure accuracy, Dartmoor Hill Farm Project cannot accept responsibility for any inaccurate, incomplete or out of date information, or any loss or damage that may result from reliance on it. Inclusion of information should not be taken to imply recommendation or accreditation.

The Paperwork Pile and Key Dates

BPS 2017 - Applications now open. Please follow this link for latest news, scheme rules, guidance, how to apply online and rural payments service and drop-in centre details: <https://www.gov.uk/guidance/bps-2017>

April 13th – Closing date for requesting Higher-Tier application packs for Countryside Stewardship 2018

April 30th – Applications for DHFP Steering Group Close (see page 11)

May 5th – Closing date for submitting initial Higher-Tier applications

May 15th – Deadline for BPS applications is midnight 15 May 2017

May 18th – 20th – **Devon County Show**

June 8th – 10th – **Royal Cornwall Show**

June 20th – **NSA Sheep SW, Ayshford, Westleigh, Tiverton** – DHFP sharing a stand with the Exmoor Farming Network. Do come and visit us!

July 31st – Closing date for requesting Mid -Tier application packs for Countryside Stewardship 2018

Sept 30th – Closing date for submitting initial Mid -Tier applications

DHFP Computer & Printer

The farmer drop-in computer is available at our Princetown office for any farmers who would like to use it for their BPS applications or for any other farm business related purposes. Please book a time slot with DHFP as the office is not manned every day.

Recent Arrivals

Many of you may already have met two new faces who joined the DNPA at the end of last year whose roles directly concern farming on the moor. Chris Giles is Head of Conservation and Land Management and James Rogers is the Farming and Wildlife Advisor.



Chris Giles



James Rogers

WHAT'S IN A NAME?

There appears to be a little uncertainty over the meanings of some of the groups that we work with, so to try and unravel this we offer the following....

Moorskills; An apprenticeship provider whose aims are to support and maintain the skills and traditions of Dartmoor farming for the future generation. Working closely with Duchy College.

The Next Generation Group; Set up to bring the farmers of the future on Dartmoor together. Although no hard rule, usually assumed the person is under 40. But more importantly that they have a passion for farming and are wanting to progress in their management of the farm business.

Healthy Livestock; A project started last year, working with the many vets who serve Dartmoor. It provides funding to investigate herd /flock status in various identified health issues through active work with the farmers.

Dartmoor Women in Farming; A group open to all women involved in farming on Dartmoor.

Contribution scheme; As part of the DHFP farmers have had the option to financially contribute towards the project, in return discounts on training/workshops, along with discounts secured from industry, are received.

Cross Compliance 2017 update

The cross compliance rules must be followed if you are claiming for the Basic Payment Scheme (BPS), a stewardship scheme or the English Woodland Grant Scheme (EWGS) in 2017.

Defra and the Rural Payments Agency published the 2017 cross compliance rules in December 2016. The guidance is only available electronically and hard copies of the publication will not be sent out this year. This is because the policy has not changed since the 2016 version of the guide was issued, so those with a paper copy can continue to use it for the 2017 scheme year. Follow this link for more information: https://www.gov.uk/government/uploads/system/uploads/attachment_data/file/579836/Cross_Compliance_2017_rules_FINAL.pdf

Anyone claiming the BPS payment is subject to a cross compliance inspection. The RPA is obligated to undertake inspections on a proportion of claimants to ensure that the cross compliance rules are being adhered to.

So it is always good to be prepared.....

Livestock movements are to be simplified!

However, if you graze common land then nothing has changed as that has not yet been dealt with, as the livestock graze together from different herds and flocks. So common land grazing and recording requirements remain. The advice from BCMS is that the links to common land will remain in place until 5th May and these can be extended to 15th June. The links will then be rolled onward until the issue of common land is dealt with.

If you take grass keep or have grazing that is less than ten miles away (measured from the business address or the gathering area for livestock, dependent upon the site stipulated when the holding was registered with the RPA) to the fields in which the livestock graze, then a Temporary Land Association (TLA) can be requested from the APHA.

If one of a group of fields is further than the stipulated 10 miles, then this must either be excluded from the TLA or a temporary CPH (tCPH) can be applied for. The specific fields utilised within a tCPH need to be notified to APHA, not the whole holding.

With a TLA, the area is considered part of your holding and movements of livestock must be recorded in the holding register, but movements of cattle and sheep do not need to be reported to BCMS or ARAMS and movements from the home farm to the TLA do not trigger a standstill.

If the grazed area exceeds the ten mile limit, then a tCPH must be applied for from the APHA. Movements between the home holding and the tCPH will need to be reported to BCMS and ARAMS. A separate holding register will need to be kept for the different holdings. Movements between the tCPH and CPH will trigger a standstill.

Some useful web pages:

<https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/livestock-movements-simpler-rules-from-2016-to-2017/livestock-movements-simpler-rules-from-2016-to-2017>

<https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/apply-to-register-temporary-use-of-land-to-keep-livestock>



TB POLICY CHANGES - 1st April 2017

Policy change 1: Wider use of interferon-gamma testing in TB breakdown herds in the HRA

From April this year, the gamma test will be applied alongside the skin test to help resolve TB breakdowns with lesion and/or culture positive animals in the HRA where any of the following three criteria are met:

- **Criterion 1:** The APHA veterinary investigation concludes that the most likely bTB transmission route for the affected herd was contact with infected cattle (e.g. via cattle movements, residual cattle infection from a previous TB breakdown, or contact with a contiguous infected herd) and measures are in place to prevent further spread of the disease from this source.
- **Criterion 2:** The infected herd is located in one of the areas where at least two years of effective licensed badger population control have been completed.
- **Criterion 3:** There is clear evidence that repeat skin testing of the herd has failed to resolve a TB breakdown.

Note from Defra: A substantial proportion of new TB breakdowns in the HRA (where approximately 90% of all new TB breakdowns are detected each year) are triggered by direct or indirect contact between badgers and cattle. And that is why we have not adopted a blanket approach to gamma testing across the HRA.

Effectively this is what they intend to do in the first instance - Wider use of gamma testing in the HRA will be implemented from 1st April 2017 using a phased approach. Implementation under the second criterion will be prioritised, i.e. new TB breakdown herds with lesion and/or culture positive animals located in areas where **at least two years** of effective licensed badger control have been completed. More info can be found on the TB hub website via this link. [TBhub - Gamma Testing](#)

Policy change 2: Increasing the sensitivity of skin testing of cattle traced from infected herds by using the 'severe' interpretation

- The new measure requires all trace tests to be read at severe interpretation. If trace tested animals are included in a herd test and submitted on the same test chart, APHA will retrospectively apply severe interpretation to the individual traced animals when the test chart is reviewed.

Background: Initial skin tests of cattle on TB breakdown holdings are read using severe interpretation, but cattle traced from these herds are normally tested using standard interpretation. It is inconsistent to apply the standard interpretation to cattle traced from a herd that is undergoing breakdown testing at severe interpretation. By using severe interpretation, the 'cut off point' for a positive result is lowered, thereby increasing the likelihood of detecting infected animals and reducing the risk of infection spread via cattle movements.

More information can be found on the [TBhub - Cattle tracer tests](#)

Policy change 3: More effective control of the movement of cattle from one TB breakdown herd to another

Movements of cattle between two TB restricted herds generally will only be considered where the destination herd is due to have **at least two SITs at severe interpretation.**

Cattle keepers applying to APHA for a licence to move animals from a TB restricted holding on to another TB restricted holding must be able to satisfy the following requirements;

- The destination holding must be due at least two SITs at severe interpretation at the time of the move

- The date of the next SIT for the animals to be moved at the origin herd must fall within the existing testing window of the destination herd
- The animals moving on must have a minimum of two clear SITs at severe interpretation before achieving OTF status (unless they are under 42 days of age at the time of the initial SIT, in which case they would only need to be included in a single SIT i.e. the herd's second)
- The 'clearing test' (last test prior to TB restrictions being lifted) at the destination holding must include all the animals that moved on, and must be a minimum of 120 days from the date of the last movement of TB restricted animals onto the holding.

For Info - APHA will normally only approve a licence request if all of the above requirements are met. **Remember that APHA will assess each individual case and carry out a VRA.** If the conclusion of the VRA is that the risk is acceptable and all conditions are met, a licence will be issued. **This measure will not apply to cattle moving from TB restricted holdings to Approved Finishing Units (AFUs).**

More information can be found via this link [TBhub - Cattle Movements](#)

Policy change 4: Harmonising the scheduling of Short Interval Tests (SITs) in TB Breakdown herds

To ensure a consistent approach and manage the disease risk appropriately, when reactors are identified in a herd the next SIT must take place at least 60 days after removal (rather than detection) of all the reactors. This is already being applied by APHA to some TB breakdown herds; however implementation of the new measure will ensure that it is applied consistently *across the whole of England*.

Cattle keepers also have the option to request delayed reactor removal in limited situations (e.g. to allow heavily in-calf reactor cows or heifers to calve). Each request is considered individually and decisions are informed by a Veterinary Risk Assessment (VRA) completed by an APHA vet. If the risk of spread of bTB is considered to be high, then the request will be refused. It is important to note that in cases of delayed reactor removal, regardless of the reason, subsequent testing of the herd must take place a minimum of 60 days after the removal of the last reactor from the affected holding. There would be a delay with scheduling the next test and an increase in the length of time the herd is under bTB restrictions.

More detail can be found via this link [TBhub - Harmonising SIT intervals](#)

Edward Humber - Assistant Devon County Adviser, NFU



HEALTHY LIVESTOCK BVD – blood tests

There has been a good uptake of the free blood tests available through your vets. Working with the vets, most farms have used the TB test result day to have bloods taken from up to 10 cattle. This is available to farms across Dartmoor. The report back from Boehringer-Ingelheim (the company who has sponsored the testing) has shown so far slightly lower cases of PI's compared to clear herds. The vets have several more reports submit and when complete there will be an opportunity to discuss.

FLY SEASON

If your grazing stock are bothered by flies it can have a significant effect. Using small steps now to reduce fly numbers can have a big impact in the stocks welfare later in the season reducing incidences of summer mastitis, New Forest Eye, blowfly strike, head fly problems and others. Apart from medical prevention, removing fly breeding grounds such as stagnant water and stacked manure can assist...

The following is from an article by Richard Wall of Bristol Veterinary School which describes the trapping of blow flies early on in the season. If these bottles are hung in hedges they will trap emerging flies at the start of the season.

Despite the relatively high rates of reproduction achieved by species of *Lucilia* (greenbottles) odour-baited catching devices for the control of blowfly strike may make an effective contribution to strike control. In early studies, carrion-baited targets were used to suppress fly populations ([Smith and Wall 1998](#)). More recently, non-return insecticide-free sticky-traps for *L. sericata* baited with rehydrated freeze-dried liver were shown to reduce the incidence of strike for ewes and lambs on farms in south west England to a fifth of that seen in untreated control flocks ([Broughan and Wall 2006](#)). Simulation modelling has suggested that, in seasonal environments, early deployment of traps, at a time of year when fly densities are low, may be the most effective approach to their use.

Making a home-made trap is a relatively simple procedure, using two 2-litre plastic drinks bottles, one clear and one brown ([Fig 6](#)). A 1 cm² hole is cut in the lid of the brown bottle and three cross-shaped cuts are made equally spaced around this bottle, about 4 cm above the base. Each cut of the cross should be 1.5 cm long and the triangular flaps pushed inwards. A bait of chopped offal is poked through these holes to lie at the bottom of the brown bottle. The base is cut off the clear bottle so that the top can be fixed over the top of the brown bottle and fastened with tape. Flies enter the brown bottle through the cross-shaped holes, attracted by the bait (which must be kept moist). They leave through the hole in the lid, to be trapped in the clear bottle. Trapped flies can be emptied through the lid of the clear bottle.



COMMONER'S FIRE PARTY

Over 55 commoners attended two training evenings lead by DSFRS. Following the distribution of tally's to those who attended, the Commoner's are able to attend wild fires. The DSFRS will provide insurance cover when in attendance and to commoners who have undertaken the annual training, wearing correct PPE and have any additional certification for equipment being used (ie; ATV training, first aid etc). See front cover for courses available.

For future correspondence regarding fire plans and wild fires contact Rob Steemson at DNPA email; rsteemson@dartmoor.gov.uk

Telephone: 01626 831052 **Mobile:** 07711 856206.

DHFP Funding 2017/2020

At the end of January 2017 the DHFP received the great news that it had been awarded another round of Prince's Countryside Funding over the next 3 years. With continuing support from Duchy of Cornwall and DNPA, together with additional revenue via the Heritage Lottery Fund, achieved by running complimentary training initiatives with MTMTE, the Project will remain funded until end of January 2020.

Although greatly appreciated by the DHFP, the funding now in place for the three years, from January 2017 to January 2020, equates to the same level of funding awarded over the previous 2 years, so it is likely there will need to be a proportional reduction in certain services. However the DHFP will continue to investigate further avenues of support.

The DHFP Contribution scheme was introduced last September and is gaining new contributors every month. The contributors are taking advantage of the reduced fees charged for some DHFP training courses and events and also of discounts that have been negotiated with several suppliers.

Call for DHFP Steering Group Members

The existing DHFP Steering Group farmer members who have been involved for the past 2 years have now stepped-down from their roles. We are immensely grateful to them all for their time and the contribution they have made to the Project over the years.

The Steering Group is made up of the DNPA CEO and other DNPA representatives, a member of the Dartmoor Commoners' Council, a member of the Duchy of Cornwall estate, a representative from Duchy College, a farmer representative on the board of GD LEAF in addition to 6 representatives of the Dartmoor Farming Community.

The Steering Group provides strategic direction for the DHFP, discussing, monitoring and advising on the work the Project does.

The Steering Group meet at least 3 times a year and Steering Group members are expected to attend these meetings. Remuneration is paid for travel activities and parking fees related to Steering Group activities. The new Steering Group Members will be appointed for 2 years.

If you would like the opportunity to **be a part of the Dartmoor Hill Farm Project Steering Group** please contact the office for an application form by calling on 01822 890916 or email hfp@dartmoor.gov.uk. (The office is not manned every day of the week so if you can't get through please leave a message and we will get back to you as soon as possible.) Closing date for applications is Midnight on 30th April 2017.

Drones on Dartmoor

There has been a steady rise in complaints regarding public use of these aircraft operating in close proximity to livestock, horse riders and others enjoying the commons of Dartmoor. The use of unmanned aerial vehicles (UAVs), sometimes known as drones by the general public, is not permitted on Dartmoor common land under National Park bylaws - specifically bylaw 18(3) (<http://www.dartmoor.gov.uk/aboutus/au-theauthority/au-whatwedo/au-legislation/au-byelaws>). The use of the Dartmoor Commons Act Bylaws in connection with the use of drones in the National Park has enabled some degree of control of this new technology which other parts of the country are still struggling with.

Whilst public use of drones is not permitted in the National Park, drones are becoming a frequently used alternative for film companies wishing to obtain aerial shots. They are also potentially useful research tools. On the commons the National Park works with landowners where there is a request for commercial activity (covered by National Park bylaw 16) relating to drone footage capture. As a commercial activity these users must have a formal UAS (Unmanned Aircraft Systems) qualification accredited by the CAA (Civil Aviation Authority).



When film companies seek permission to film on National Park commons they are asked about any planned use of drones at their chosen location. They are then provided with relevant landowner contacts should they possess the required CAA certification and insurances. The landowner will then make the decision to give permission to film or not. In all commercial operations the landowner may also wish to make a charge for filming on their land.

On land, which is not common land, within the National Park, the landowner reserves the right to give permission for drone operations, be that commercial or otherwise.

This is the situation at present, where we have some legislation which can be applied to regulate these activities on the commons of Dartmoor. For more information <https://www.caa.co.uk/Consumers/Model-aircraft-and-drones/Flying-drones/>

by Michael Nendick Communications Officer (External Relations)



Greater Dartmoor LEAF Funding

Just a reminder that the DR Company are there to help those within the Greater Dartmoor LEAF area to submit projects requiring funding. There is an available pot of around £2,000,000. The focus of this rural programme is to create jobs and boost the rural economy, with the main areas of support for capital projects being:

Farming: support for farm diversification/increasing productivity
Forestry: support for increasing productivity & processing
Enterprise: Creation or development of micro & small businesses
Tourism: Rural services/Cultural & heritage activity

In the first instance download an initial enquiry form here:

<http://drcompany.co.uk/wp-content/uploads/2015/01/RDPE-LAG-Project-Ideas-Revised-2015-2020-Jan-17.pdf>

Complete, outlining your initiative and send through to
The DR Company, Okehampton Business Centre, Higher Stockley
Mead, Okehampton, Devon EX20 1FJ

Or Attach to an email and send to admin@drcompany.co.uk

The full Greater Dartmoor LEAF strategy can be viewed here:

<http://drcompany.co.uk/wp-content/uploads/2014/06/Greater-Dartmoor-LEAF-Local-Development-Strategy-Full-Submission-03092014.pdf>

For further information call: 01837 658643

There are new opportunities for rural businesses to access EU funding: grants are available through the Rural Development Programme for England (RDPE) for food processing, rural tourism infrastructure and business development.

The funding is intended for projects that create jobs and help businesses to grow, innovate and reach new markets. The grants are for capital projects and can cover up to 40% of eligible costs – the remainder needs to be private-sector 'match funding' eg. savings, bank loan. The minimum grant is £35,000. *(For rural tourism infrastructure there are*

100% grants available for projects which do not generate income, see below)

The details have been published at national level with a prospectus for each of the three themes but there are ring-fenced allocations for each participating Local Enterprise Partnership (LEP) and some local priorities for the funding. Applicants should read the relevant prospectus carefully for full details of the national and local priorities.

Food processing: £7,540,000 across the Heart of the South West (HotSW) LEP area for food and drink businesses processing agricultural and horticultural products. For the HotSW LEP, particular consideration will be given to projects relating to recognised food clusters/assets in the area eg. Bath & West Showground, Holsworthy agri-business centre.

Rural tourism infrastructure: £2,088,555 in the HotSW area for capital investments in new or enhanced rural tourism assets and infrastructure to encourage tourist spend in the rural economy. If the project is commercial and intended to make a profit, only small businesses and farmers who want to diversify can apply. If the project is not expected to make a profit, a wide range of organisations can apply, including businesses, farmers, groups representing rural communities, charities and public bodies: for non-profit projects, grants can cover up to 100% of costs.

In the Heart of the South West LEP area, the aim is to expand the tourism offer based on food and drink tourism, culture and heritage, and the distinctive natural landscape of the LEP area, including Areas of Outstanding Natural Beauty and National Parks.

Business development: £2,784,740 in the HotSW area to support the development of small rural businesses (including social enterprises) and farmers diversifying into non-agricultural activities. The focus is on increasing business productivity, creating higher-skilled jobs, innovating and reaching new markets, particularly export markets.

Further information:

<https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/rdpe-growth-programme>

Do you know about the HotSW Growth Hub?

There might be business support available to you as someone running a business in Devon. The Heart of the South West Growth Hub provides access to all local and national business support services and is offered completely free at point of access for all businesses seeking advice. Contact the Growth Hub team to find out about support available locally by calling 03456 047 047 or see the website at: www.heartofswgrowthhub.co.uk

Devon Communities Together is a charity providing advice and support to members of the rural community. It offers training and events on a range of topics from business start-up and growth to how to be an effective councillor; a membership scheme which includes a support line, member discounts on training, events and insurance as well as supplies and regular communications on policy changes and funding opportunities. Contact: info@devoncommunities.org.uk or call: 01392 248919

National Countryside Week 2017

National Countryside Week is The Prince's Countryside Fund's annual awareness week and will take place from Monday 31st July to Sunday 6th August 2017. Every year the campaign aims to raise awareness and celebrate the values of the countryside.

We have been asked to use the week to highlight the work that the PCF has enabled the DHFP to do. We would like to showcase some of the opportunities that farmers and their businesses have had as well as engaging with the wider audience of visitors and locals. If you would like to be involved either hosting on farm or similar, please contact the office.

Did we witness the first hint of the new Agricultural Policy?

About forty people gathered on the 31st March for a meeting arranged by the Upland Alliance and the SW Upland Network (SWUN) and hosted by the NFU in Exeter. Originally the meeting was intended to provide an opportunity to discuss Defra's 25 year plan for agriculture, but as we

soon learnt the plan is unlikely to ever appear although the guiding principles will be promoted by Defra as it prepares a new UK agricultural policy, post Brexit.

With agriculture, including hill farming, facing an uncertain future Julia Aglionby, Chair of the Upland Alliance, explained that whilst the Alliance has few resources and no funding it could still provide a useful role in promoting the uplands to Defra. A role it has already ably demonstrated by providing the catalyst for similar events around the country. There appeared to be a consensus amongst the audience that the Alliance's work is valued and that a formal link with the region, probably with SWUN that already has an established network within the south-west of England, would be worthwhile.

The key note speaker was Dieter Helm, Chairman of the Government's Natural Capital Committee. Professor Helm's view on the future of agriculture was presented as the probable route that future agricultural policy will take and it made hard listening. He suggested a complete loss of the subsidy support currently provided by the Basic Payment Scheme (pillar 1) and a massive reduction in all other payments (to about a third of the current expenditure). However the glimmer of hope lay in the acknowledgement that hill farming provides an impressive array of public benefits (including Natural Capital) and might well continue to receive support in recognition of this role, especially inside a National Park. However Professor Helm's response to questions from the audience suggested the emerging UK agricultural policy is still in a very early stage of development or is still to be conceived.

After this thought provoking presentation the day was divided into a series of workshops designed to develop the theme of the benefits provided by hill farming. The consensus amongst the gathering was impressive with most championing the value of hill farming and the need to reward the public benefits it provides. However when we started to explore the potential delivery mechanisms and the emerging focus on local delivery divisions began to show. Both the NFU and the Upland Alliance have indicated that a report of the workshops' findings will be available soon and will be presented to Defra. Anyone wishing to see the findings should contact Paul Cottingham at the NFU.

by John Waldon,
Chairman of
Dartmoor
Commoners' Council.



Training - Saving time, money and, most importantly, lives...

“I’ve always done it this way and it’s never hurt me before” is a frequent reaction to an instructor when they start a course on a farm. Tragically, accidents do happen, it’s a fact of life, and when accidents involve exceedingly heavy machinery, some with rapidly moving-parts, they may even end by tearing lives apart – whether it’s an injury or a fatality, family and personal lives are damaged forever. What’s more, accidents do just as easily occur with the experienced or inexperienced alike, because it’s easy to get set in your ways, forget safe-handling, become complacent.

One common theme that appears amongst the many hazardous incidents on farms is that the people involved were either doing a job in a hurry, or as a favour. They are often the result of a last-minute job, or even situations where that person wasn’t supposed to be doing the work, but there wasn’t anyone else to help.

Safe practices involve EVERYONE on the farm – and starting with small steps in the right direction means that bigger steps will follow. Training plays an extremely valuable role to improve safety and avoid accidents. It can take an outside person to let people know that the way they are working has to stop because it’s dangerous. Training with Hush Farms is a very hands-on experience, far more than just sitting in a classroom – the best part of your day is spent out on the land. There are hundreds of people who leave the training saying, **“I’ve learnt so much” and “I didn’t expect to, but I’ve really enjoyed the course”**.

The aim of a course organised for the Dartmoor Hill Farm Project by Hush Farms is to encourage farm families to take the time to realise how simple it is to create, or review, their Farm Safety Risk Assessment documents and to make farm safety their top priority. It does this by breaking the process down into very simple and practical steps.

‘An Introduction to Risk Assessments’, delivered by Hush Farms, involves two half-day sessions. Jon Bond guides these sessions using his lifetime experience of working at the coal-face of farming. Having managed diverse farm businesses, he knows the reality of being under pressure to finish silaging before the rainclouds break, or coping single-handedly through the night with a difficult calving that leaves you exhausted yet still needing to be up with the first light to crack on with filling the feed wagon, fixing the unpredictable and unwanted breakdowns and always working against the limited hours of daylight in the not always perfect weather conditions.

As a family man, Jon is desperate to help others find the most practical ways possible to protect themselves, their family and anyone working on or visiting the farm.

Farmers on the course have said that the most valuable aspect of the course has been **‘understanding how to write a risk assessment and (knowing) if it is not totally right, it is better than not doing it at all’** HR, March 2017; ‘Making you think about things from different angles and being aware of what is around you which could be a hazard in some shape or form’ JV march 2017.

To start with everyone shares ideas on potential hazards and the various practical ways to eliminate or reduce the risks by spotting and implementing appropriate control measures. They are given the clear facts about the laws affecting work on a farm – all myths and rumours are put to bed. Everything they need to know to complete their own farm risk assessments is then put into practice with a farm visit. This gives them chance to itemise all the factors they face on their own farm. They are inevitably surprised by how much they are already doing towards keeping people and animals safe but have not yet written it down in a formal document. The final step is to record what other action might be useful to improve safety around their farm and for the varied jobs that take place.

Angela at Dartmoor Hill Farm Project explained that *‘feedback from this course has been a resounding 10/10. One of those attending posted on Facebook: ‘Recommend this to all. Was a great course. Lots of info and helpful. Just need to drag farming into the modern world!!!! It’s a step in the correct direction.’ GB. Jan. 2017*

Planning is central to every farm business including what to plant and when, assessing the risks of diseases and other incidents that may spoil the crop or animals. It follows that controls need to be in place to avoid problems, monitor growth, decide when to harvest, and where/when to store products in a way that ensures they stay fresh, safe and valuable. Managing health and safety is no different.

The Health & Safety at Work Act (1974) states that employers must ensure, so far as is reasonably practicable, the *health, safety* and *welfare* of employees and any others who may be affected by what they do. This includes employees, any casual workers, part-timers, trainees, volunteers – *including family members* – customers, or contractors. It will also include those who may be affected by work activities, e.g. neighbours, sales people and members of the public. The main requirement of the Act on employers is to carry out a *risk assessment*. This involves looking at what could cause harm to people, so that you

can decide whether you have taken enough precautions or should do more. The law does not expect you to eliminate risk, but to protect people as far as 'reasonably practicable'. ***Doing the assessment and taking action is what matters.*** 'very well put together, so I have no further comments. Better attendance by farmers, would be a benefit to all.' GB March 2017.

To find out more about Health & Safety practices on your farm, contact: 01404 549515 or info@hushfarms.co.uk, or visit www.hushfarms.co.uk



FREE NHS HEALTH CHECK APPOINTMENT

- Are you 40-74 years of age **without** a diagnosis of stroke, kidney disease, heart disease, vascular dementia, diabetes or hypertension?
- Do you live in Devon?
- Haven't had health checks in the past 5 years?

If you answer yes to the above then you could be eligible for a FREE NHS Health check.

Access Health Care (part of the Devon Doctors organisation) is working together with the Dartmoor Hill Farm Project to provide these non-urgent, but valuable checks to eligible individuals.

Tuesday 23rd May 2017 at the Duchy Hotel

The NHS Health Check is like having a free health MOT. It checks your overall health to tell you whether you're at a higher risk of getting certain health problems, such as:

Heart disease **Diabeties** **Kidney disease** **Stroke** **Dementia**
Hypertension

The checks are 20-30 min appointments that check height, weight, BP, risk factors (smoking and drinking) and Cholesterol. The check will provide you with a highly personalised assessment of your health which will also be electronically transferred to your GP.

How will the NHS Health Check help me?

As well as measuring your risk of developing these health problems, an NHS Health Check gives you [advice on how to prevent them](#).

Your NHS Health Check can detect potential health problems before they do real damage.

Everyone is at risk of developing heart disease, stroke, [type 2 diabetes](#), kidney disease and some types of dementia. The good news is that these illnesses can often be prevented.

For more information and to read Ron's story please check the NHS Health Check website.

<http://www.nhs.uk/Conditions/nhs-health-check/Pages/NHS-Health-Check.aspx>

To make an appointment ring DHFP office ASAP.

FecPak Hire

DHFP have two FecPaks (faecal egg count kits) available to hire for £30 for a 3 month period.

These allow you to test your flock to see if they have a problem with resistant worms and then allow you to make your worming strategy more efficient and cost effective.

We received the following feedback from Farmers who have used FecPaks:

“The amount of wormer used has been reduced since discovering what products the sheep were resistant to and also that they did not require a worm drench before tugging”.

“If the Fecpak was not available to me no doubt it would have been much longer before the worm burden and the resistance to white drenches would have been rectified. The FecPak will have saved me money and improved the welfare of my lambs”.

Please contact the office for more information and to discuss hiring a FecPak.

Soil Aerator

The Upstream Thinking project, which is funded by South West Water and runs until March 2020, is working to improve water quality across the Dart catchment, and as part of this is looking to reduce run off from compacted fields. One of the Upstream Thinking partners, Devon Wildlife Trust, has a soil slitter which is available for use by farmers in the Dart catchment, for free. The machine helps alleviate soil compaction, which in turn reduces the amount of soil, sediment and attached nutrients and pesticides reaching watercourses. The slitter also increases water percolation, promotes root development, helps prevent slurry run off, and improves fertiliser intake.

It should be used when soil is moist, but dry enough not to cause smearing or further compaction through use. The only way to know for sure if you have soil compaction is to dig a soil pit, and look for pores, holes, stones, root growth and biological activity – generally if you have earthworms you don't need to be relieving compaction. The Upstream Thinking farm advisers are able to help you identify areas of compaction on your farm, and make sure the slitter is the right bit of machinery for the job.

The soil slitter will be available in the Dart catchment from mid-August. If you are interested please contact Louise Davis on 07785 622820

Agri-environment schemes

As part of the Upstream Thinking project, DWT are able to offer free, confidential advice on both the new Countryside Stewardship schemes, and on compliance with existing ELS/UELS/HLS schemes.

With RPA inspections and fines becoming more frequent, minor failings on existing Environmental Stewardship schemes can add to cross-compliance breaches and increase the potential scale of RPA fines. Typical problems with existing ELS/UELS/HLS schemes include;

- Boundary maintenance, particularly height of hedges, condition of stone walls/stone-faced banks in ELS/UELS
- Grassland management, particularly sward height prescriptions during growing season
- Earliest cutting dates on fields in agri-environment options
- Scrub within field parcels with ELS/HLS options
- Quality of fencing erected under capital grants

If you have any concerns that you may not be meeting the requirements of existing stewardship schemes, DWT can offer a farm visit to assess land and boundaries within options, to advise on whether they meet the schemes' requirements. All advice is completely confidential. This free service is only available in the Dart catchment. If you are interested please contact Kerry Smith on 07989 662540



Disease Diagnosis Event

Join AHDB Beef and Lamb for this Disease Diagnosis Event on Wednesday 26th April 2017, 11-2pm at the Starcross Veterinary Investigation Centre, Staplake Mount, Starcross, Devon, EX6 8PE.

Full details at: <http://beefandlamb.ahdb.org.uk/event/disease-diagnosis-event-devon/>

To register your FREE place, ring the AHDB KE Events Hub on 01904 771212 or email: ke.events@ahdb.org.uk

The Farming Community Network

Helping farming people through difficult times
Open 7.00am – 11.00pm every day of the year

03000 111 999

Devon contacts: Joanne Jones 07897 540 278

Colin Smallacombe 07999 711 950

chris@fcn.org www.fcn.org.uk

ARC – Addington Fund

Supporting Britain's Farming Communities

02476 690587

enquiries@arc-addingtonfund.org.uk

www.arc-addingtonfund.org.uk

Royal Agricultural Benevolent Institution

Supporting Farming Families

General Enquiries: 01865 724931

Welfare Enquiries: 0300 303 7373

info@rabi.org.uk www.rabi.org.uk

The Samaritans

"Talk to us if things are getting to you"

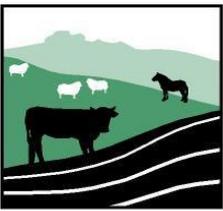
24 hours a day, 365 days a year

UK: 08457 909090

www.samaritans.org

Rural Payments Helpline

03000 200 301



Dartmoor
Hill Farm Project



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