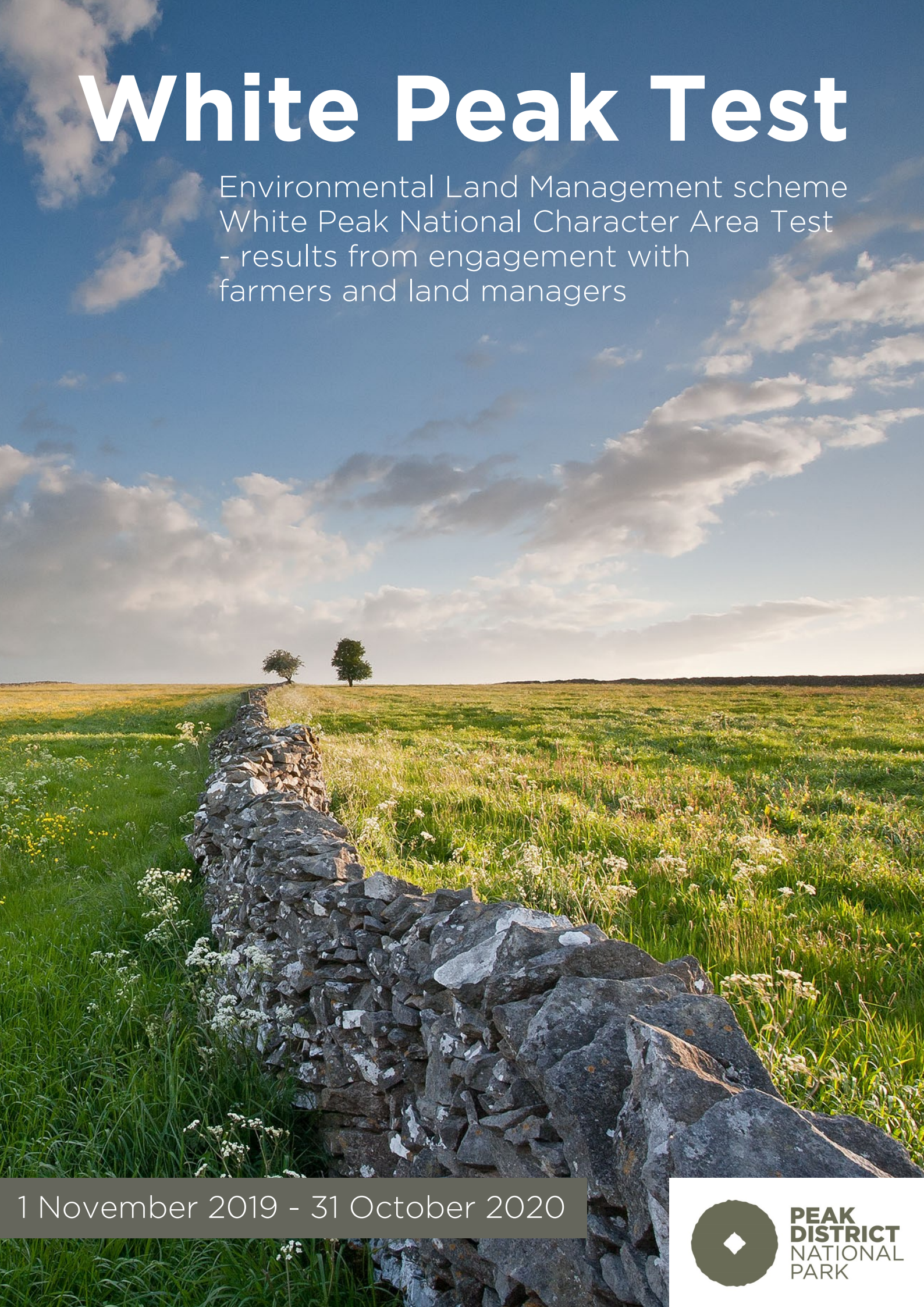
White Peak Test

Environmental Land Management scheme
White Peak National Character Area Test
- results from engagement with
farmers and land managers



1 November 2019 - 31 October 2020

PEAK DISTRICT NATIONAL PARK

Executive summary

The UK's departure from the EU and the associated Common Agricultural Policy is providing a unique opportunity to develop an environmental land management approach to agri-environment schemes that will deliver the environmental ambitions set out in the 25 Year Environment Plan, whilst better supporting the farming and land management sector. The proposed new Environmental Land Management scheme will be based on the principle of 'public money for public goods'.

The White Peak Test was one of Defra's initial Tests & Trials, and aimed to determine whether a National Character Area (NCA) framework could be used as an approach to designing some of the building blocks for Environmental Land Management, as well as help change the relationship between Government and farmers and land managers. Focus themes for the Test were spatial prioritisation and land management plans; this report also comments on advice, collaboration and payments, as well as three ready reckoner tools and general feedback. A summary of the first year of the small-scale practical fields trials, which are looking at nature connectivity across an agriculturally improved landscape is available alongside this report.

The Test set out to engage farmers and land managers through a series of workshops and one-to-one interviews across the White Peak NCA. A total of 72 participants representing 62 holdings have taken part - approximately 6% of holdings in the White Peak with influence over more than 6,500ha; 12% of the White Peak area. Farmers and land managers were paid £150 for their participation, in recognition of their valuable time and input.

All farmers and land managers welcomed the opportunity to input into the design of Environmental Land Management, although this was a new way of working for them. All except two holdings have livestock enterprises (dairy, beef, sheep), representing the nature of the White Peak - predominantly productive grassland used for livestock farming. There is a high financial dependency on the current support systems, with almost 80% of those that run their farm business for profit dependent on at least Basic Payment Scheme and over 50% dependent on environmental scheme funding as well.

There was unanimous support for local spatial prioritisation, but all participants would like to see local decision-making and advice to sit alongside.

Land management plans should cover three main functions, to: construct the offer of public goods delivery; form the basis of an agreement or contract; and demonstrate delivery and progress. Plans should be map-based, with the map supplied in large scale printed format. Participants would like to see one online platform that brings all information about their holding together.

Local, trusted advice was considered essential for all participants at some point during Environmental Land Management, whether exploring public goods delivery, constructing the offer, setting up the agreement or contract, managing the land once in agreement, or for training, monitoring and evaluation.

The NCA was determined to be a good framework for Environmental Land Management. Participants recognise their holding in the description, feel it's relevance and could use it to determine which public goods they could deliver. The NCA is therefore a good tool to engage farmers and land managers in Environmental Land Management and should lead to good uptake, enabling Government to achieve the targets in the 25 Year Environment Plan.

Contents

Acronyms and definitions

NCA	National Character Area
Defra	Department for Environment, Food and Rural Affairs
BPS	Basic Payment Scheme
CS	Countryside Stewardship
ES	Environmental Stewardship (agri-environment scheme)
NFU	National Farmers' Union
ha	Hectare (equivalent to 2.47 acres)
RPA	Rural Payments Agency

National Character Area	Broad divisions of landscape based on a combination of landscape, ecology, geology, cultural heritage and economic activity, giving each area a distinctive and unique 'sense of place'.
25 Year Environment Plan	'A Green Future: Our 25 Year Plan to Improve the Environment' report produced by HM Government in January 2018, sets out what Government will do to improve the environment, within a generation.
Facilitation fund	Funding under Countryside Stewardship to help groups of farmers, foresters and land managers improve the natural environment.

The White Peak

The White Peak National Character Area (NCA) is an upland limestone plateau incised by deep, steep-sided valleys. There is a strong sense of place linked with the underlying geology and its influence on natural and human landscape features such as caves, drystone walls and traditional buildings. 78% of the NCA is within the Peak District National Park.

The dales valleys are of significant value to wildlife, and as such are predominantly designated as Sites of Special Scientific Interest and/ or National Nature Reserves. All the Peak District's internationally important upland ashwoods are in the White Peak, collectively forming the largest extent of ravine woods in Britain. However, designated sites for wildlife only cover 6% of the White Peak area, and the White Peak has the most fragmented priority habitats of any NCA within an English national park.

The plateau has been a hub of cultural significance for several thousand years and is rich in archaeology, from Neolithic burial mounds to remains of early lead working. There are distinctive, well-preserved historical landscapes, with ridge and furrow, and field boundaries of medieval field systems around villages.

There is an extensive network of footpaths, multi-user trails and green lanes. The White Peak Ordnance Survey map is one of the most popular in the UK. Many farmers and land managers have taken advantage of this, and have diversified with businesses reliant on visitors.

Around 89% of the White Peak is a farmed landscape and 99% of this is grassland. The plateau has a unique soil deposit, meaning it is able to support relatively intensive grass-based livestock farming. There is a wide diversity of farm holding size: 143 are larger than 100 ha and cover 47% of the White Peak, with an estimated 900 being less than 100 ha. 85% of the White Peak is classed as Severely Disadvantaged, with plateau land rising to over 400 metres above sea level.

Land is predominantly privately owned and occupied, with only 6% owned by public or conservation organisations. The White Peak landscape is a major contributor to the Peak District's worth to the regional economy.

Coverage of agri-environment schemes fell from 80% in 2014/15 to 40% in 2018/19, predominantly due to poor payment rates and restrictive options which do not work for this landscape.

The White Peak NCA description (NCA 52) is available online, and provides a full description of the NCA. It was last updated in 2014.

A White Peak Partnership was developed in 2017, which has produced a vision for the future of the White Peak that covers wildlife, farming, cultural heritage and access. It is available alongside this report.

The White Peak Test

Organisations and collectives were invited by Defra to submit ideas for designing a new agricultural support scheme, and in 2018 the Peak District Land Managers' Forum, with support from the White Peak Partnership and Peak District National Park Authority, submitted their ideas for a new scheme. This was followed by a proposal for the White Peak to became one of the initial Tests & Trials. Some elements of the proposal were accepted, and in November 2019 the White Peak Test became one of the first phase Tests.

The White Peak Test aimed to determine whether an NCA framework could be used as an approach to designing some of the building blocks for Environmental Land Management, and help change the relationship between Government and farmers and land managers. The Test was set up to address the following policy questions (*and sub-questions*):

1. Is there a role for local prioritisation of public goods?
    - Is there a role for prioritisation of public goods based on NCAs?
    - Is there a role for NCAs to facilitate collaboration?
2. What mechanism will scheme participants use to plan and record which public goods they will deliver?
    - What role do NCAs have in Land Management Plans?
    - How do you translate landscape scale objectives to the holding level?
    - *What data/ information will scheme participants require?*
3. *What expert support will participants require to help them plan and record which public goods they will deliver?*

The White Peak Test aimed to answer these questions through a series of three workshops run by a professional facilitator and 25 one-to-one interviews with National Park Farm Advisers, engaging farmers and land managers from 75 holdings.

To support the Test, the National Park Authority and consultants developed:

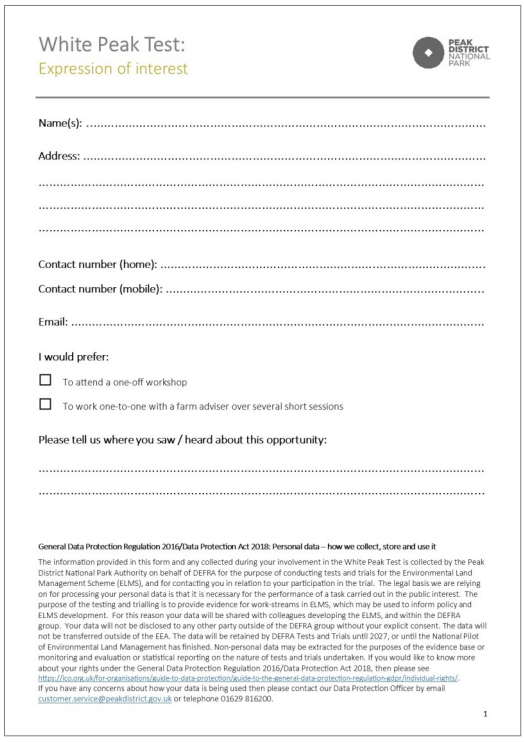
- A short, simple summary of the NCA (available alongside this report)
- A simple carbon tool - the carbon ready reckoner - designed to show the carbon storage of different White Peak habitats and management interventions. The carbon ready reckoner was trialled at two agricultural shows in August 2019, before the start of the Test.
- A simple budgeting tool - the budget ready reckoner - that farmers and land managers can use to calculate a hypothetical payment based on their delivery of public goods, and also to see the reduction in BPS. The budget ready reckoner was completed in June 2020.

Alongside the White Peak Test, the Peak District National Park Authority, in partnership with Natural England and seven landowners, are running small-scale practical field trials. The aim of the field trials is to explore the options for, and practicalities of, delivering a Nature Recovery Network in the White Peak, in line with the Lawton principles of 'better, bigger, more and joined' [as outlined in the 2010 White Paper 'Making space for nature'] within a productive grassland agricultural landscape. The aim is that the findings of the practical field trials will be reported on alongside the Tests & Trials process. The summary of the field trials and first year summary report are available alongside this report.

Methodology

Participants

Workshop one: Participants were all members of the White Peak Farmers facilitation fund group, which had been functioning for over four years. The opportunity to attend the workshop was shared with all members, with a maximum of 10 places available (for separate holdings). Holdings that wished to send more than one participant were judged on a case-by-case basis. Participants were selected on a first-come basis. All participants completed an Expression of Interest.


White Peak Test:
Expression of interest

Name(s): .....

Address: .....

.....

.....

.....

Contact number (home): .....

Contact number (mobile): .....

Email: .....

I would prefer:

☐ To attend a one-off workshop

☐ To work one-to-one with a farm adviser over several short sessions

Please tell us where you saw / heard about this opportunity:

.....

.....

General Data Protection Regulation 2016/Data Protection Act 2018: Personal data – how we collect, store and use it

The information provided in this form and any collected during your involvement in the White Peak Test is collected by the Peak District National Park Authority on behalf of DEFRA for the purpose of conducting tests and trials for the Environmental Land Management Scheme (ELMS), and for contacting you in relation to your participation in the trial. The legal basis we are relying on for processing your personal data is that it is necessary for the performance of a task carried out in the public interest. The purpose of the testing and trialling is to provide evidence for work-streams in ELMS, which may be used to inform policy and ELMS development. For this reason your data will be shared with colleagues developing the ELMS, and within the DEFRA group. Your data will not be disclosed to any other party outside of the DEFRA group without your explicit consent. The data will not be transfered outside of the EEA. The data will be retained by DEFRA Tests and Trials until 2027, or until the National Pilot of Environmental Land Management has finished. Non-personal data may be extracted for the purposes of the evidence base or monitoring and evaluation or statistical reporting on the nature of tests and trials undertaken. If you would like to know more about your rights under the General Data Protection Regulation 2016/Data Protection Act 2018, then please see https://ico.org.uk/for-organisations/guide-to-data-protection/guide-to-the-general-data-protection-regulation-gdpr/individual-rights/. If you have any concerns about how your data is being used then please contact our Data Protection Officer by email customer.service@peakdistrict.gov.uk or telephone 01629 816200.

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Expression of Interest front cover

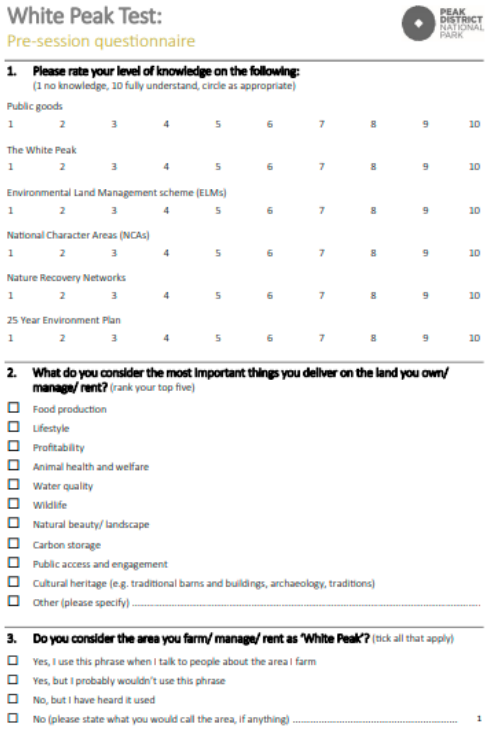
Other workshops and one-to-ones: In January 2020, the opportunity to participate in the Test was advertised through a variety of mechanisms (letters to contacts, talks at NFU and other agricultural meetings, independent agricultural advisers, partnership organisations, posters at veterinary clinics, agricultural suppliers and livestock markets). Those who wished to participate completed and returned an Expression of Interest, which they received alongside a covering letter which explained some background to the Test . Those interested were given the option to attend a one-off workshop, or a series of one-to-one interviews with a National Park Farm Adviser at their holding (or online/ over the phone after 23 March due to Covid-19 restrictions).

The aim was to select participants from the Expressions of Interest to get a full representative range of farm type, and farmer and land manager demographic from across the White Peak (based on national statistics and the National Park Authority's extensive farmer database). This is the methodology that was used for selecting participants for workshop two.

For the first seven one-to-one interviews, participants were selected at first on how familiar they were to the Farm Advisers, so they could familiarise themselves with the interview process. Once each of the five Farm Advisers had carried out one interview, participants were then selected in the same way as for the second workshop, to reflect the range of White Peak farm type and farmer and land manager demographic.

Due to Covid-19 restrictions which came into force in late March, there was not the opportunity to push advertisement of the Test further, so we did not receive the expected number of Expressions of Interest. Therefore, for workshop three and the remaining one-to-ones, we offered participation to all those that had sent in an Expression of Interest, plus a few others who expressed a wish to participate but hadn't sent in an Expression of Interest. Of the 54 Expressions of Interest received by the end of March, only five have not participated. Overall, 68 Expressions of Interest have been received for the White Peak Test, with six not participating (of which two were for the same holding).

All participants completed a two-page pre- and post-session questionnaire before and after their engagement to guage changes in opinion and levels of knowledge. The Expression of Interest and both questionnaires were designed to be in paper format. In light of events arising from the Covid-19 pandemic, it would have been useful to have had online and/ or email compatible versions. Some participants have still received and completed paper versions, but most since late March have received a PDF via email and then printed, completed and either scanned in or taken pictures of their forms to return via email.



White Peak Test:
Pre-session questionnaire

PEAK DISTRICT NATIONAL PARK

1. Please rate your level of knowledge on the following:
(1 no knowledge, 10 fully understand, circle as appropriate)

Public goods
1 2 3 4 5 6 7 8 9 10

The White Peak
1 2 3 4 5 6 7 8 9 10

Environmental Land Management scheme (ELMs)
1 2 3 4 5 6 7 8 9 10

National Character Areas (NCAs)
1 2 3 4 5 6 7 8 9 10

Nature Recovery Networks
1 2 3 4 5 6 7 8 9 10

25 Year Environment Plan
1 2 3 4 5 6 7 8 9 10

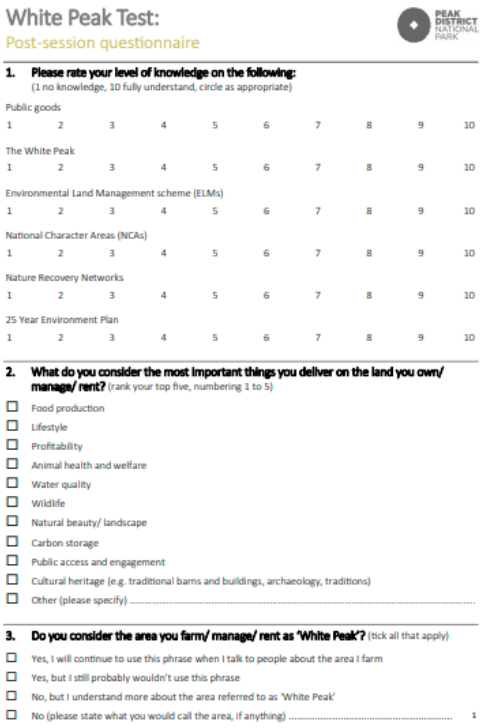
2. What do you consider the most important things you deliver on the land you own/ manage/ rent? (rank your top five)

- ☐ Food production
- ☐ Lifestyle
- ☐ Profitability
- ☐ Animal health and welfare
- ☐ Water quality
- ☐ Wildlife
- ☐ Natural beauty/ landscape
- ☐ Carbon storage
- ☐ Public access and engagement
- ☐ Cultural heritage (e.g. traditional barns and buildings, archaeology, traditions)
- ☐ Other (please specify) .....

3. Do you consider the area you farm/ manage/ rent as 'White Peak'? (tick all that apply)

- ☐ Yes, I use this phrase when I talk to people about the area I farm
- ☐ Yes, but I probably wouldn't use this phrase
- ☐ No, but I have heard it used
- ☐ No (please state what you would call the area, if anything) 1

Pre-session questionnaire page 1



White Peak Test:
Post-session questionnaire

PEAK DISTRICT NATIONAL PARK

1. Please rate your level of knowledge on the following:
(1 no knowledge, 10 fully understand, circle as appropriate)

Public goods
1 2 3 4 5 6 7 8 9 10

The White Peak
1 2 3 4 5 6 7 8 9 10

Environmental Land Management scheme (ELMs)
1 2 3 4 5 6 7 8 9 10

National Character Areas (NCAs)
1 2 3 4 5 6 7 8 9 10

Nature Recovery Networks
1 2 3 4 5 6 7 8 9 10

25 Year Environment Plan
1 2 3 4 5 6 7 8 9 10

2. What do you consider the most important things you deliver on the land you own/ manage/ rent? (rank your top five, numbering 1 to 5)

- ☐ Food production
- ☐ Lifestyle
- ☐ Profitability
- ☐ Animal health and welfare
- ☐ Water quality
- ☐ Wildlife
- ☐ Natural beauty/ landscape
- ☐ Carbon storage
- ☐ Public access and engagement
- ☐ Cultural heritage (e.g. traditional barns and buildings, archaeology, traditions)
- ☐ Other (please specify) .....

3. Do you consider the area you farm/ manage/ rent as 'White Peak'? (tick all that apply)

- ☐ Yes, I will continue to use this phrase when I talk to people about the area I farm
- ☐ Yes, but I still probably wouldn't use this phrase
- ☐ No, but I understand more about the area referred to as 'White Peak'
- ☐ No (please state what you would call the area, if anything) 1

Post-session questionnaire page 1

After completing the pre-session questionnaire but before engagement, participants received (via email or hard copy) a map of the White Peak area, a copy of the NCA two-page summary (see ready reckoners below) and a link to the full NCA document online. One-to-one participants from late-July also received a short slide pack similar to the presentation given at the workshops, as it was felt this would increase consistency of information to date on Environmental Land Management.

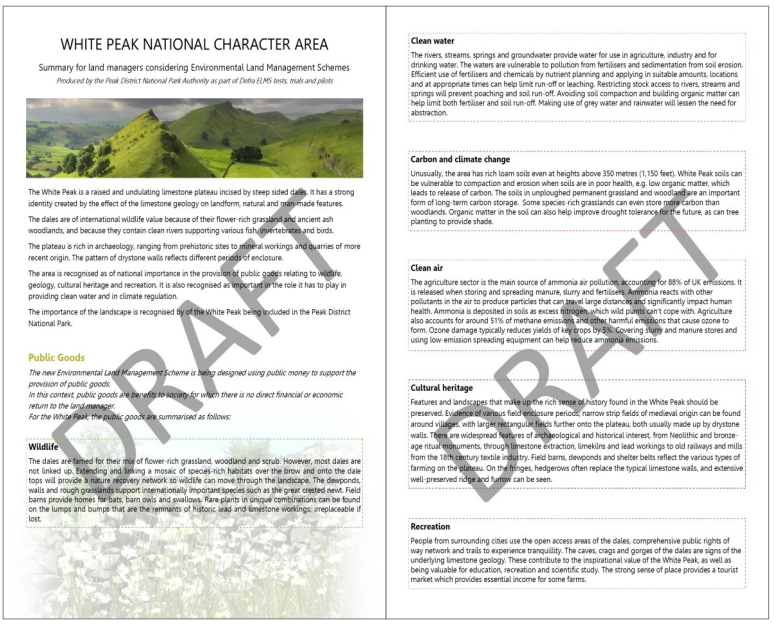
Each holding was offered a day rate of £150 (or up to £200 with evidence of employed cover) in recognition of the value of their time. All participants were expected to contribute one full day. One holding has received two payments, one for the owner and one for the new tenant (see results for details).

Ready reckoners

The Peak District National Park Authority has funded the development of a White Peak NCA summary and two 'ready reckoner' tools for farmers and land managers to use to aid their decision-making when it comes to Environmental Land Management.

NCA Summary:

A two-page summary of the White Peak NCA was produced by the Peak District National Park Authority in consultation with the Peak District Land Managers' Forum Brexit sub-group and the White Peak Partnership (which includes representation from Natural England; the original authors of the NCA profile documents). The summary was deliberately sent out in 'draft', so it was obvious to those that saw and read it that it was not a finalised version, and was open to comment.


WHITE PEAK NATIONAL CHARACTER AREA

Summary for land managers considering Environmental Land Management Schemes

Produced by the Peak District National Park Authority as part of Defra ELMS tests, trials and pilots

The White Peak is a raised and undulating limestone plateau incised by steep sided dales. It has a strong identity created by the effect of the limestone geology on landform, natural and man-made features.

The dales are of international wildlife value because of their flower-rich grassland and ancient ash woodlands, and because they contain clean rivers supporting various fish, invertebrates and birds.

The plateau is rich in archaeology, ranging from prehistoric sites to mineral workings and quarries of more recent origin. The pattern of drystone walls reflects different periods of enclosure.

The area is recognised as of national importance in the provision of public goods relating to wildlife, geology, cultural heritage and recreation. It is also recognised as important in the role it has to play in providing clean water and in climate regulation.

The importance of the landscape is recognised by of the White Peak being included in the Peak District National Park.

Public Goods

The new Environmental Land Management Scheme is being designed using public money to support the provision of public goods.
In this context, public goods are benefits to society for which there is no direct financial or economic return to the land manager.
For the White Peak, the public goods are summarised as follows:

Wildlife

The dales are famed for their mix of flower-rich grassland, woodland and scrub. However, most dales are not linked up. Extending and linking a mosaic of species-rich habitats over the brow and onto the dale tops will provide a nature recovery network so wildlife can move through the landscape. The dewponds, walls and rough grasslands support internationally important species such as the great crested newt. Field barns provide homes for bats, barn owls and swallows. Rare plants in unique combinations can be found on the lumps and bumps that are the remnants of historic lead and limestone workings; irreplaceable if lost.

Clean water

The rivers, streams, springs and groundwater provide water for use in agriculture, industry and for drinking water. The waters are vulnerable to pollution from fertilisers and sedimentation from soil erosion. Efficient use of fertilisers and chemicals by nutrient planning and applying in suitable amounts, locations and at appropriate times can help limit run-off or leaching. Restricting stock access to rivers, streams and springs will prevent poaching and soil run-off. Avoiding soil compaction and building organic matter can help limit both fertiliser and soil run-off. Making use of grey water and rainwater will lessen the need for abstraction.

Carbon and climate change

Unusually, the area has rich loam soils even at heights above 350 metres (1,150 feet). White Peak soils can be vulnerable to compaction and erosion when soils are in poor health, e.g. low organic matter, which leads to release of carbon. The soils in unploughed permanent grassland and woodland are an important form of long-term carbon storage. Some species-rich grasslands can even store more carbon than woodlands. Organic matter in the soil can also help improve drought tolerance for the future, as can tree planting to provide shade.

Clean air

The agriculture sector is the main source of ammonia air pollution, accounting for 88% of UK emissions. It is released when storing and spreading manure, slurry and fertilisers. Ammonia reacts with other pollutants in the air to produce particles that can travel large distances and significantly impact human health. Ammonia is deposited in soils as excess nitrogen, which wild plants can't cope with. Agriculture also accounts for around 51% of methane emissions and other harmful emissions that cause ozone to form. Ozone damage typically reduces yields of key crops by 5%. Covering slurry and manure stores and using low-emission spreading equipment can help reduce ammonia emissions.

Cultural heritage

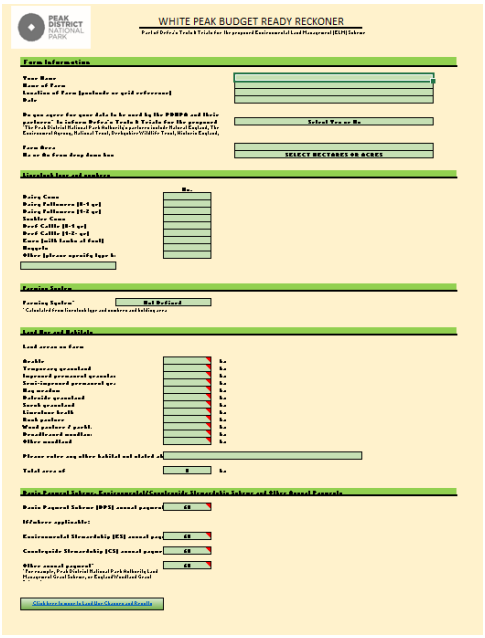
Features and landscapes that make up the rich sense of history found in the White Peak should be preserved. Evidence of various field enclosure periods; narrow strip fields of medieval origin can be found around villages, with larger rectangular fields further onto the plateau, both usually made up by drystone walls. There are widespread features of archaeological and historical interest, from Neolithic and bronze age ritual monuments, through limestone extraction, limekilns and lead workings to old railways and mills from the 18th century textile industry. Field barns, dewponds and shelter belts reflect the various types of farming on the plateau. On the fringes, hedgerows often replace the typical limestone walls, and extensive well-preserved ridge and furrow can be seen.

Recreation

People from surrounding cities use the open access areas of the dales, comprehensive public rights of way network and trails to experience tranquillity. The caves, crags and gorges of the dales are signs of the underlying limestone geology. These contribute to the inspirational value of the White Peak, as well as being valuable for education, recreation and scientific study. The strong sense of place provides a tourist market which provides essential income for some farms.

NCA 2-page summary

Budget ready reckoner:


WHITE PEAK BUDGET READY RECKONER

First page of the budget ready reckoner

It was suspected that many farmers and land managers in the White Peak do not do much, if any, farm budgeting.

The aim was to produce a simple list of public goods which can be delivered in the White Peak, based on habitats, in relation to farming type. Farmers and land managers should be able to see the impacts of entering Environmental Land Management (using hypothetical payments) and increasing or decreasing their public goods delivery on their farm management budget and stocking rate. Environmental Land Management rates were set at 175% of CS where appropriate. Some rates are those that have been used in the practical field trials.

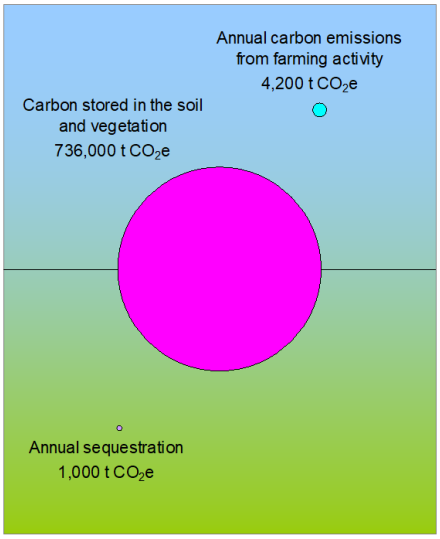
A draft budget ready reckoner was produced and tested with the Land Managers' Forum Brexit Sub-group in May 2020, with a version ready for Test participants in time for the third workshop in June 2020.

Carbon ready reckoner:

There has been a lot of information in the public domain in the past few years regarding carbon emissions and climate change, with particular reference to agriculture, but it was suspected information available to farmers and land managers on carbon sequestration and storage was low, leading to a low awareness of the influence of land management on carbon.

A Peak Carbon Management Tool was developed in 2009 by ADAS Consultancy as part of the Peak District Environmental Quality Mark's Carbon and Water Management Pilot Project to help businesses improve their environmental sustainability. The Tool is very detailed, and most upland farmers and land managers require support to complete it. It is, however, the only carbon tool available that fully takes into account carbon emissions and carbon sequestered and stored in soils and vegetation.

Valuable lessons were learnt during the Pilot concerning the limitations of relying on carbon foot-printing as opposed to the whole carbon management story. For example, the carbon footprint of intensively produced beef will be lower than that produced on a more extensive holding delivering species-rich grassland for conservation, but when the stored carbon is taken into account and the full carbon picture is considered, then the more extensive holding delivers greater carbon public goods. The tool has most recently been used to assess the carbon impacts of management on the Peak District National Park Authority's Warslow Moors Estate and for Derbyshire Wildlife Trust's land holdings.



Summary illustration from the Pilot Project showing the importance of soil carbon storage

The Peak District National Park Authority commissioned the consultant that was involved in the development the carbon footprinting tool to develop a simple carbon ready reckoner, based specifically on White Peak habitats, that farmers and land managers can use to explore what they might deliver for carbon capture and storage. The aim of the ready reckoner was to produce a simple list of habitats/ land management interventions which, based on known figures for carbon emissions, sequestration and storage and the area of each habitat, would show the carbon public goods delivery and how changes in habitats/ land management could affect carbon storage and release.

A draft carbon ready reckoner was tested with eight farmers and land managers at two agricultural shows in August 2019. Changes were then applied, and the carbon ready reckoner has been available for farmers and land managers to try throughout the White Peak Test.

The carbon data that sits behind the Peak Carbon Management Tool and thus the carbon ready reckoner was updated in 2014. The data for the Peak Carbon Management Tool has recently been updated again, which will feed into any revised ready reckoners going forward.

Funding is currently being sought to develop a simpler online version of the Peak Carbon Management Tool.

Workshops

A professional facilitator ran all three workshops. Learnings from each workshop were used to refine the structure of the next. The Project Officer and Project lead were present at each workshop to give presentations, and prompt and guide discussion. Results from each workshop were written up by the facilitator, along with additional comments noted by staff. One extra member of staff from the National Park Authority attended the second workshop to aid facilitation and make notes, as there were more participants. A workshop prompt sheet was developed but not needed at any of the workshops.

Workshop one was held face-to-face in February 2020 with 11 participants from 10 holdings, at Beechenhill Farm, Ilam.

Workshop two was held face-to-face in March 2020 with 21 participants from 19 holdings, at Great Longstone Village Hall.

Participants at workshops one and two received complimentary drinks and lunch. During lunch, they were offered the opportunity to look at a demonstration of the carbon ready reckoner and have a go at putting in their own figures.

Workshop three was intended to be held in May 2020, with participants from 20 holdings. Due to Covid-19 restrictions, this workshop was held online using Zoom in June 2020, and split into two sessions over two days. Session one was to go through the same questions as in workshops one and two, session two was to go through the two ready reckoners. Participants were also offered an extra session at a later date to go through either or both of the ready reckoners to input their own figures with the Project Officer. Three participants requested an extra session. Participants were offered Zoom training drop in sessions hosted by the facilitator the week before the workshop, which was used by five participants. One participant had no camera or microphone, but could see the presentations and hear the discussions, and could contribute via the chat function. Workshop three ran with 11 participants from 10 holdings.

Note: workshop three was intended to be run 10 days earlier, but 2 weeks notice was not enough for the potential participants, especially given it was hay and silage cutting time.

After a brief introductory exercise (see workshop results), the Project Officer and Project lead gave a short presentation on the background to Environmental Land Management, the principles of Environmental Land Management design and the White Peak Test.

Participants were then split into groups and asked what could be delivered under specified public goods. A brief definition of public goods, particularly in the White Peak context, was provided.

After the workshop participants were sent a draft write-up of the workshop, written by the facilitator, to make sure it was an accurate reflection of the discussions. No requests for changes to the write-ups were received.

One-to-ones

One-to-one interviews were conducted by the National Park Authority Farm Advisers. Farm Advisers were provided with the background to the Test and regular progress updates from the Project Officer and Project lead. They also received a training session from the professional facilitator in July to help them with conducting interviews online and over the phone.

The aim was to conduct 25 one-to-one interviews.

Six one-to-ones were conducted face-to-face before Covid-19 restrictions were introduced. Since Covid-19 restrictions began on March 23rd, six interviews have been conducted over the phone and five have been conducted online using Lifesize meeting software. One has been conducted using a combination of both online and over the phone. Two have been conducted at available Covid-safe meeting rooms at the National Park Authority office, one has been conducted in a combination of Covid-safe spaces, including a village hall, and one has been conducted in a barn, with social distancing and personal protective equipment in place. Phone interviewers have had to describe the ready reckoners and input figures accordingly. Those conducted online or in meeting spaces with screens/ projectors have been able to share their screen so the participant can see the ready reckoner(s), with the Farm Adviser inputting figures.

A total of 23 one-to-one interviews have been carried out.

IT literacy, IT equipment and internet access have been major restrictive factors for carrying out one-to-one interviews since Covid-19 restrictions came into place. IT skill levels were not high amongst participants, with many relying on relatives (usually younger generations) to help. Most of the participants that were interviewed by phone did not know how to use a computer. Some did not have access to microphones or cameras to enable them to use the online methods. Internet connectivity and speed is also an issue in rural locations, with some experiencing intermittent connections only.

After the interview(s), participants were sent a draft write-up of their discussions, written by the Farm Adviser, to make sure it was an accurate and a full reflection of their interview. Approved write-ups have been used to compile results and discussion in this report, and have been made available to Defra (after references to individuals had been removed).

Results

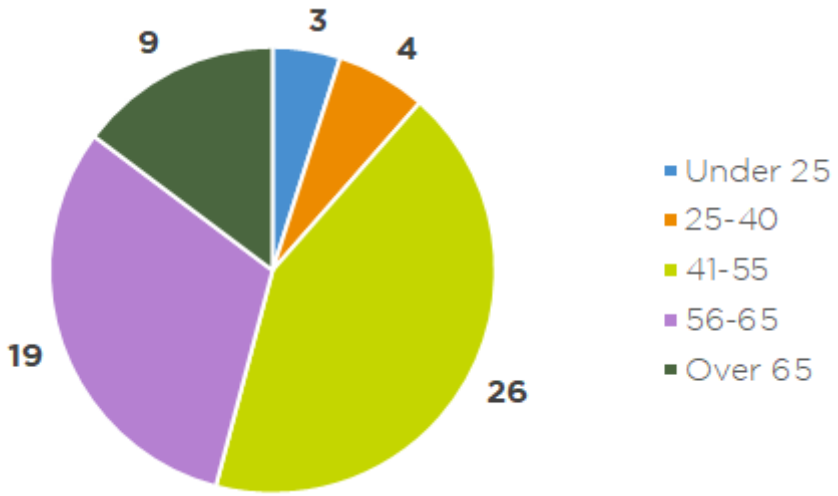
Participants

The White Peak Test has engaged with 71 farmers and land managers from 61 different holdings. Each holding is classed as one participant, except one holding which has had two separate participants (the land owner and new tenant for some of the land), therefore results are for a total of 62 participants.

Age

All age ranges were represented by participants. The majority of participants were aged 41 and over. One participant abstained from answering the question on age.

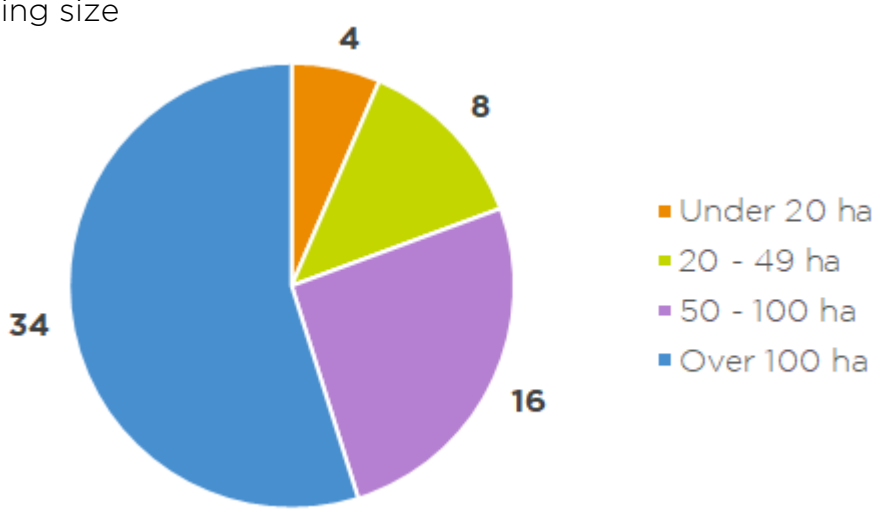
Figure 1: Age range



Holding size

The White Peak Test has engaged participants who manage land covering at least 6,500 ha, equivalent to 12% of the White Peak area and representing around 6% of White Peak farmers and land managers*. National statistics from 2016 state there are 143 holdings over 100 ha in the White Peak. Results from the 62 participating holdings put average holding size at around 107 ha.

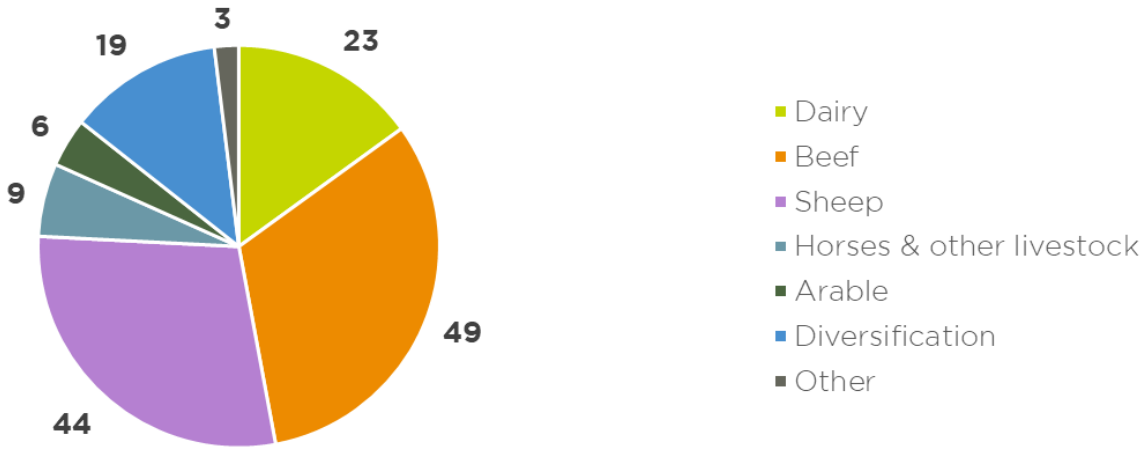
Figure 2: Holding size



*calculated using known managed areas from the PDNPA land manager database, and minimum area where actual area is not known e.g. 50 ha for the 50 - 100 ha category .

Farm type

Figure 3: Farm type

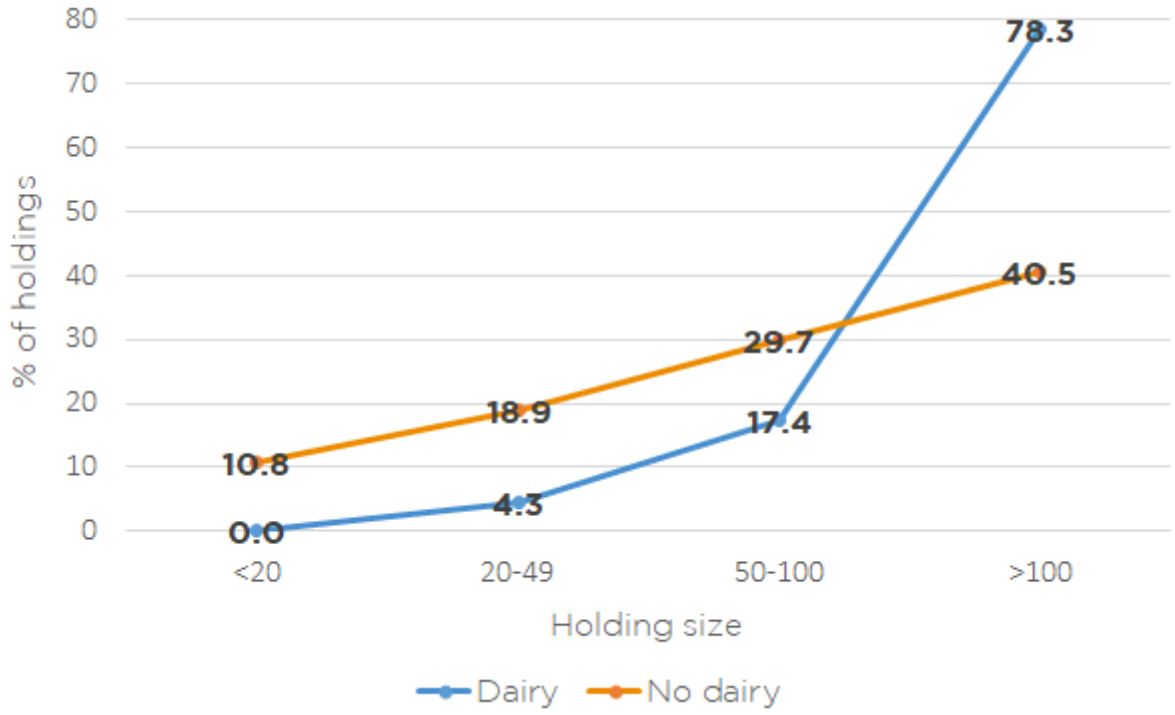


Of the different combinations of enterprise, beef and sheep was the most common (17 holdings).

23 holdings have dairy enterprises. Of these, seven are solely dairy (excluding whether or not they had diversification enterprises). The other 16 also have beef and/or sheep.

There were a total of 24 different combinations of enterprise (including diversification). All but two holdings have livestock (dairy, beef, sheep) enterprises.

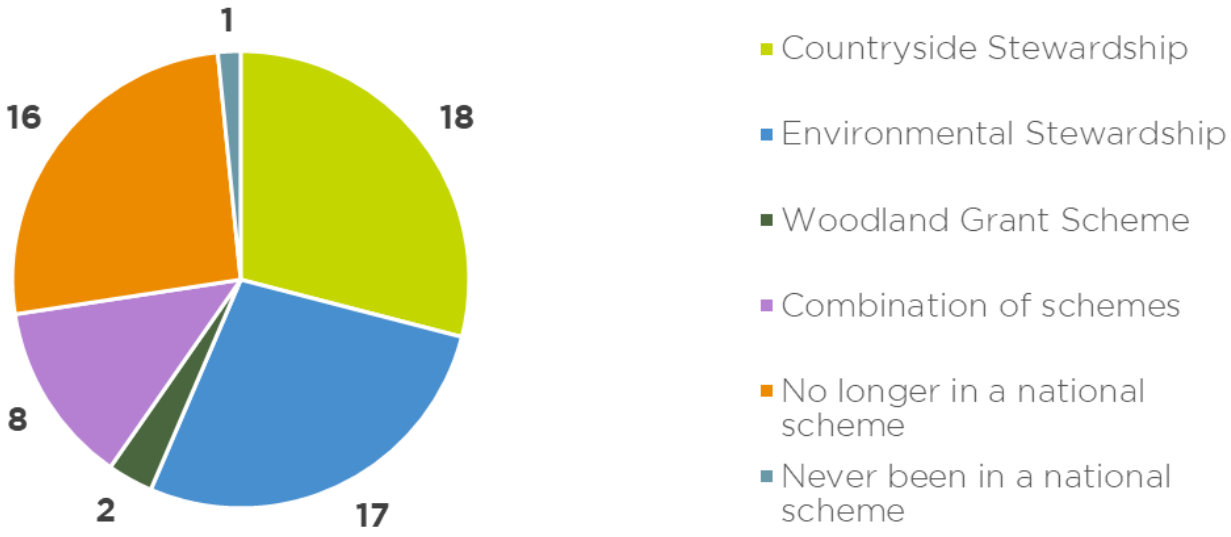
Figure 4: Dairy and non-dairy holdings by average size (%)



All holdings over 100ha had livestock enterprises. Of the 34 holdings over 100 ha, 18 have a dairy enterprise. Of the 23 holdings which have dairy enterprises, almost 80% were over 100 ha (figure 4).

Schemes

Figure 5: Environmental schemes



27% of holdings are currently not in a national scheme.

Five of those who are no longer in a national scheme are in receipt of the Hedgerows & Boundaries Grant Scheme.

Seven holdings that are in a national scheme of some kind also receive funding from the National Park Grant Scheme*. The National Park Grant Scheme is also providing funding on two holdings which are not in a national scheme.

Of those that are no longer in a national scheme or have never been in one (17):

- **1** is no longer run as a farm business,
- **2** are dependent on diversification,
- **8** are dependent on receiving BPS,
- **6** are dairy farms, all of which are 100 ha or more.

Finance

All holdings except three are in receipt of Basic Payment Scheme (one participant is an agricultural student and one holding ownership is too small). One participant did not answer this question.

Figure 6: Funding dependence

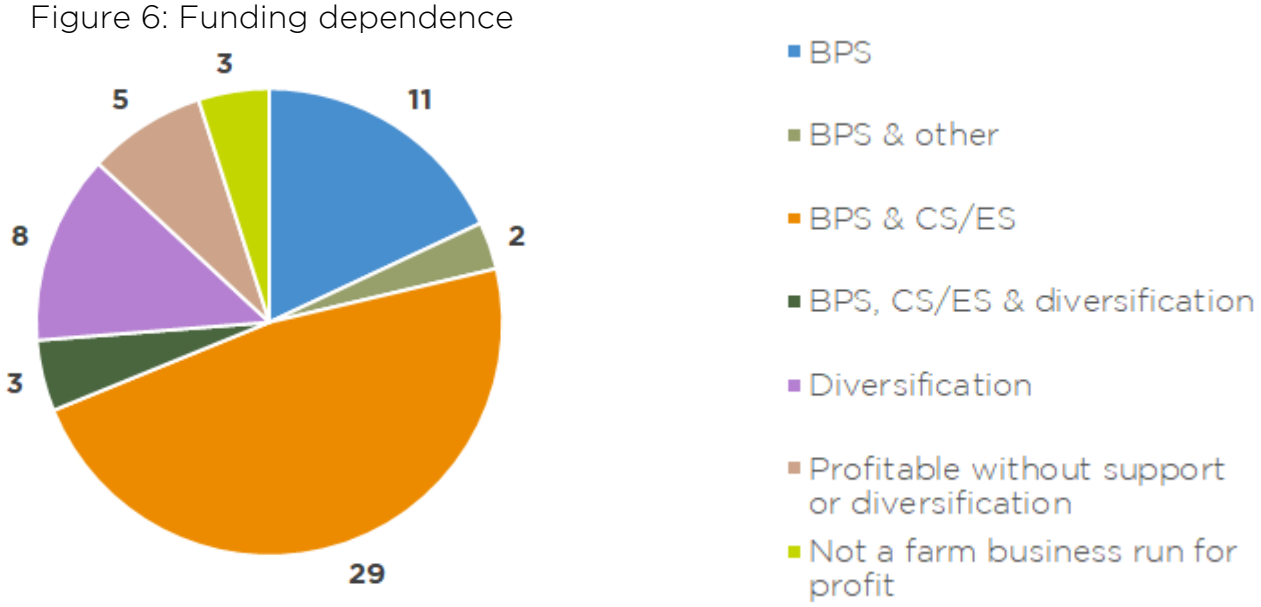
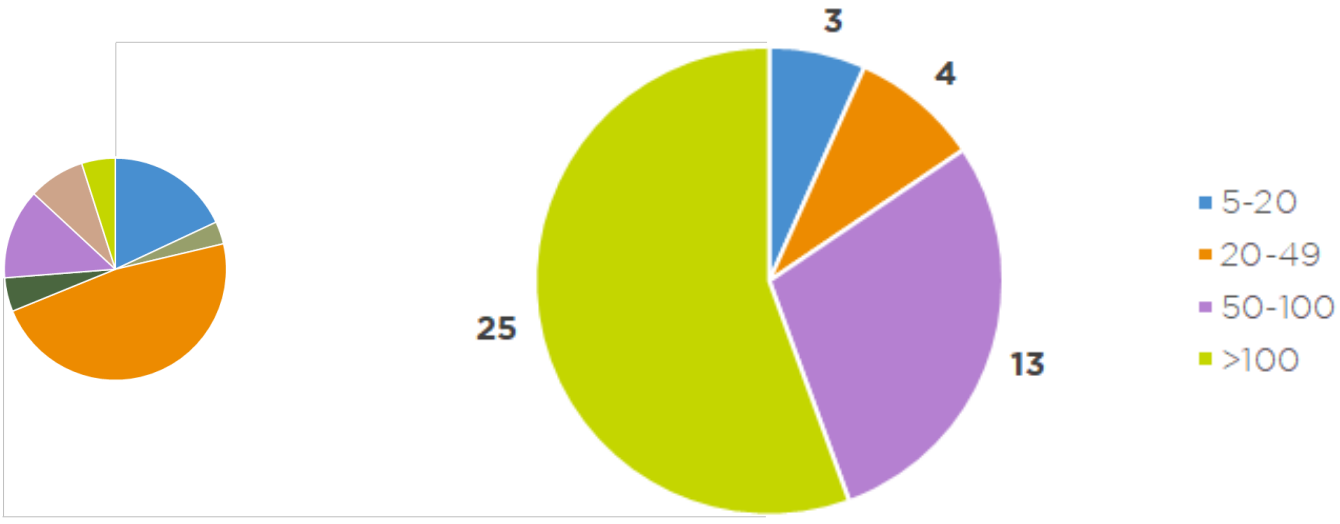


Figure 6 shows which funding the farm businesses are dependent on. Of the 58 holdings run as a farm businesses, 45 (almost 80%) are reliant on national support.
Of the 19 holdings with diversification enterprises, 11 are reliant on these to top up their farm business income.

Figure 7: Funding dependence (see Figure 6) split by holding size



Holdings of all sizes are reliant on national funding, as can be seen in Figure 7. All holdings run as a farm business under 20 ha are reliant on national funding. Half of farms in the 20-49 ha category are reliant on national funding, but all others are dependent on diversification.

Four out of the five holdings which are profitable farm businesses not reliant on support or diversification are over 100 ha, and the other is just under 100 ha. Four have dairy enterprises.

All those who rent land (tenant, 24 holdings) except two are reliant on national funding. One tenant who is not reliant on national funding relies on current milk prices, and would become dependent on national funding if they were receiving a low milk price.

Workshops

The White Peak Test has engaged with 43 farmers and land managers from 39 different holdings through one-to-many workshops.

The White Peak

An introductory exercise asked individuals to introduce themselves and share three words that first sprang to mind when they thought about the White Peak. A total of 59 different words/ phrases were used.

Responses can generally be grouped into seven categories:

1. Food and farming
2. Visual landscape
3. Cultural heritage
4. Wildlife
5. Water
6. Recreation
7. Geology

Public goods

Participants split into groups and were asked what could be delivered under specific public goods within the White Peak. In summary, responses were as follows (full workshop reports are available upon request):

Carbon and climate change (all workshops):

- Reduced stocking density/ extensive farming
- Reduced fossil fuel use
- Soil health/ management
- Increased tree cover
- Renewable energy
- Permanent grassland
- Species-rich grassland
- No ploughing/ minimum tillage
- Research, support and understanding
- Organic farming

Wildlife (all workshops):

- Meadows/ hay
- Join habitats across the plateau
- Protect what we already have
- Habitat for most threatened species
- Rewilding
- Increased tree cover
- Improve water quality
- Walls as linking habitats
- Hedgerow management
- Organic farming
- Ponds
- Flexibility for future climate
- Skills and time
- Fits with the business

Water - quality and flood mitigation (workshops one and two):

- Fencing along watercourses
- Buffer strips along watercourses
- Natural course
- Appropriate manure/ slurry storage
- Judicious fertiliser application
- Yard drainage well-maintained
- Separate dirty yard water from rain water
- Best practice management only when suitable ground conditions/ weather
- Vegetation to reduce erosion
- Water harvesting
- Flood plains
- Slow the flow/ natural flood management
- More farmer input into SSSI management
- Ridge and furrow
- Protect old industrial features
- Protect ancient monuments and other archaeological features
- Prevent damaging public activities
- Maintain and restore walls
- Restore and reuse field barns
- Mines and lead rakes
- Shelter belts
- Footpaths and green lanes
- The farmed landscape

Cultural heritage (workshop two):

- Maintain and restore walls
- Restore and use field barns
- Mines and lead rakes/ old industrial features
- Shelter belts
- Ridge and furrow
- Protection for ancient monuments
- Footpaths and green lanes
- Farmed landscape

Participants were then asked to vote for what they felt were the three most important public goods for the White Peak NCA to deliver.

	Ranking		
Public good	Workshop one	Workshop two	Workshop three
Wildlife	1	1	1
Carbon & climate change	2	2	4
Clean water	3	4	3
Cultural heritage	4	3	2
Recreation	5	5	4
Clean air	6	6	6

Spatial Prioritisation

Participants were asked to consider how Defra might decide which public goods to support in the White Peak. There was unanimous support for some level of local prioritisation.

1. NCA as a mechanism to set and agree local priorities:
    - Recognises what is unique/ iconic about the White Peak
    - Existing information, e.g. NCA description
    - Access and recreation, especially for areas in the national park, linked to their role and the Glover Review
    - Existing features
    - Appropriate habitat management
2. Who would be involved in the decision making?
    - Farmer groups e.g. facilitation groups
    - Defra staff should visit and speak to farmers and land managers
    - Consistent staff
    - Local case officers
    - Collaboration across different sectors with local knowledge
    - Layers of national and local
3. How would they decide?
    - Guidelines
    - Advice and expertise
    - Best value for money
    - Collaboration/ shared working across farms
    - Monitoring requirements
    - Legislation compliance
    - Public opinion/ demand
    - Practicality of implementation
    - Sustainability (including profitable farming)
    - Jobs
    - Tangible demonstrable benefits, e.g. for the general public/ visitors
    - What wouldn't be maintained without financial help or advice?

Land Management Plans

Participants were asked to generate suggestions for what a Land Management Plan for public goods might look like. Responses mentioned in at least two workshops are highlighted in bold.

What elements would a Land Management Plan require?

- Simplicity

1. Content and scope (what should be included):
    - **Map(s)**
    - **Baseline holding information - features and public goods**
    - **Historic/ background information about the holding**
    - **Regulatory baseline**
    - **Collaborative multi-holding plan if working in collaboration**
    - Timescales
    - Cropping plan
    - Designations
    - Any surveys e.g. habitats
    - Ambition for the farm (and next generation)
    - The strengths of the holding and how you'll deliver the priorities
    - Benchmarking
    - Map of holding overlaid onto NCA map
    - Summary of works to be delivered
    - What has been delivered
    - Assessment of delivery/ improvement per year
2. Format/ Structure (how will it be designed and accessed e.g. digital, app, map, and how will it be laid out):
    - User-friendly
    - Map of whole holding
    - Build on previous schemes
    - Template
    - Ability to have paper option
    - Photos to evidence outputs
    - Explanations and definitions of public goods and options
    - Based on spatial prioritisation

Participants were asked about evidencing and monitoring.

How would you show Defra you're delivering the public goods you said you'd deliver (above the regulatory baseline)?

- **Photos**
- **Surveys**
- **Soil tests**
- **Assess against the baseline (regulatory and starting point of public goods)**
- Flexible recording date
- Checks that work has been done
- Checks that what is being done is working
- Independent/ impartial checks
- Some checks could be done by a 'champion' farmer
- Some monitoring/ surveys will need specialists
- Business is sustainable
- Simple calculators, e.g. carbon calculator
- Evidence of work carried out in previous schemes
- Certification from other bodies e.g. soil association
- More self-assessment rather than inspections

Barriers:

- Low technology and IT skills level
- **Who pays for specialists, testing and surveys? Most farmers and land managers wouldn't be able to afford private rates.**
- Checks must be complimentary to delivery (not something to be feared) so improvements can be made by working together.
- Access to data

Advice:

General comments:

- One adviser per 20-30 agreements

Role of adviser:

- To look at priorities for area (on the landscape map) and translate to the holding level
- Support to produce a Land Management Plan
- Help interpret areas of confusion
- Support evaluation of progress
- Drive ambitions
- Monitoring or checking farmer/ land manager monitoring
- Specialist monitoring or bring in specialists

Adviser skills/ description:

- Local
- Trusted
- Practical

Guidance:

- Examples of good practice

Payments:

- Flexibility of length of scheme (linked to tenancy length?)
- Opportunity for training to correct mistakes rather than being penalised
- Outcomes not prescriptions
- Recognition of ongoing maintenance
- Incentive to change or continue good work

Collaboration:

Participants were asked about public goods delivery in a landscape/ collaborative context.

How could the plan fit with your neighbour's plan/ the wider NCA in order to contribute to landscape scale delivery?

Mechanisms for collaboration:

- Common aim/ vision/ action plan and outcomes for group
- Extend existing facilitation groups
- Farm clusters
- Assess land in wider context across boundaries, e.g. features
- Risk assessment across holdings

Incentivising collaboration:

- Facilitator/ independent link person
- Still recognising each farm is different
- Supermarket labelling of product

Benefits of collaboration:

- Sharing costs
- Transfer of skills
- Working between generations
- Share good practice
- Share ideas
- Share experiences and practical solutions
- Peer pressure
- Impacts on neighbouring holdings
- Maximise public goods delivery

Barriers to collaboration:

- Sharing of sensitive information - get around this by having an adviser/ coordinator
- Some will have different numbers of neighbours (2-10+)
- Short-term tenancies on neighbouring land

NCA is good starting point for bringing people together - land is similar, what works for one will probably work for another.

One-to-ones

The White Peak Test has engaged with 31 farmers and land managers from 23 different holdings through one-to-one interviews.

Responses are laid out along with how many 1:1 participants said them in brackets.

General comments

- No barrier to entry, e.g. holding size, low public goods delivery, lack of features (1)

IT/ technology skills and access:

- Recognise the limitations of the lack of adequate internet connection in many rural areas (4)
- Older generations rely on younger for IT skills, would have to pay for someone to do computer work if they didn't have this (5)
- Hardware has to be tough for a farm environment, e.g. smartphones and tablets are easily broken (2)
- Finance needed to pay for technology, this is an expense many cannot afford (2)
- Training needed to be able to use technology and do things online (3)
- 'Paperwork' is done in the evening after practical work is completed - issue for alertness, capacity. Don't have time to go through all emails, many get missed (4).

Agreement/ contract term:

- Long-term (terms mentioned varied from 10 to 30+ years) (6)
    - Changing from intensive production (1)
    - Woodland creation (2)
    - Landscape change (2)

Public education:

Public education on farming and responsible use of the countryside was mentioned in all three workshops and by 8 one-to-one participants.

- The true cost to farmers and land managers of food production (1)

Access:

- Responsible visiting/ use of farmed land (4)
- Feel there is a lack of respect towards farmers (4)
- Impacts on farm business of irresponsible visiting e.g. time, asset damage, on livestock (1)
- Signage to demonstrate the public goods being delivered (3)
- Educational farm visits (4)
- Reconnect the general public to farming and the countryside (1)

Benefits of farming:

- Local food production (1)
- Ethical food production (1)
- Environmentally friendly food production (2)
- Good quality food (1)
- Supply chain and food security (1)

Spatial prioritisation

There was unanimous support for some level of local spatial prioritisation. Main reasons cited were:

- Differences in farm type and management e.g. upland and lowland, stocking rates, cutting dates (11)
- Differences in weather and seasonal variability and impacts on ground conditions (5)
- Differences in profitability i.e. family-run farms with no farm manager, no specialist or large kit (1)
- Broad and general prescriptions don't work in the White Peak, i.e. due to local conditions making them impractical (3)
- Would apply relevance and flexibility to how/ where they farm (6)
- Maximises opportunities for public goods delivery (2)
- Relevance of public goods to an area/ holding (1)

Comments on the policy questions:

1. Who would be involved in the decision making?
    - Defra/ national body should be responsible, a national framework with local collaboration (5)
    - Local specialist knowledgeable in the landscape, it's value and types of farming (4)
    - Farming representatives e.g. NFU, facilitation groups, farmer groups (2)
    - People who can see the whole picture, not just specialists (1)
2. How would they decide?
    - Recognise conflicts e.g. archaeological features that need grazing to remove scrub whilst not damaging the feature (1)
    - Decisions made by collectives removes the onus on single individuals (1)

    2a. NCA as a mechanism to set and agree local priorities:
        - NCA is a good spatial scale (6)
        - Highlights the different challenges and opportunities for each public good (2)
        - Recognises local values and unique features (7)
        - Recognise their holding in the description, making it relevant (8)
        - Recognises (and celebrates) the differences in farming type
        - Brings together the opportunities and practical management

        Two participants specifically mentioned they would not like to see local spatial prioritisation done at county level.

Land Management Plans

General comments:

- Flexible (11)
- Simple and straightforward (4)
- Involvement in design by the farmer or land manager will help to give ownership of their scheme and enthuse delivery (1)
- How to achieve measurable outcomes, i.e. practically and examples of what they should look like (applies to 1, 3, 4 and 5) (2)

Central portal (7):

- Easily updated
- Reduces the need for duplication of effort (2)
- Accessible by the farmer/ land manager, RPA, accreditation bodies and advisers for multi-way reporting and information sharing (3)
- Accessible by the RPA to help with making sure payments are on time (1)
- Farmer/ land manager can set up permissions - who they want to see what (1)
- Farmer/ land manager or adviser can raise questions (4)
- Adviser alerted when something completed or evidence uploaded, evidencing can be signed off by adviser/ specialist/ RPA etc. (5)
- Reminds for advisers/ specialists etc. to set up a call or site visit (1)
- Share information to show landscape-scale delivery (3)
- Share peer to peer ideas and learnings (6)
- Linked via an app (8)

  Should include:

  - Plans e.g. Red Tractor, Soil Association, milk buyers (3)
  - Planning tools, e.g. for finance and budgeting
  - Species list tick sheets/ monitoring guidance (1)
  - Inspection results
  - Survey and test results, e.g. soil tests (3)
  - Ability to upload evidencing/ reports - farmer/ land manager, adviser, others (6)

Comments on the key policy questions:

1. Content and scope (what should be included):
   - Whole holding map but with field scale detail (4)
   - Past management, including previous scheme options (3)
   - Baseline public good delivery (what is there already) (2)
   - Regulatory baseline associated with relevant public goods (2)
   - Stacked multiple public goods delivery (1)
   - Where on the 'public goods delivery scale' (1)
   - What is to be delivered where and when (5)
   - Soil health analysis (4)
   - Carbon audit (1)
   - Staged benchmarking to show progress of delivery (timeline of aims and outcomes) (1)
   - Financial overview and scheme payments (1)
   - Designations (1)

2. Format/ Structure (how will it be designed and accessed e.g. digital, app, map, and how will it be laid out):
    - Map(s) of the holding (14)
    - Online but something that can also be printed (e.g. large map on the wall, reference copy) - for poor internet connection, lack of IT skills, easier reading and quick access (17)
    - Recognise the need to adapt to new technologies (3)
    - Access through an app, to use for evidencing and provide app notifications (9)
    - Automatic text alerts/ reminders for time-specific activities, uploading evidence or making claims (8)
3. Scale (how much detail is included):
    - Only necessary/ relevant information
    - Soil health report per field to help decision-making (1)
    - Whole holding to maximise public goods delivery
4. Function (contractual, auditable, how do farmers and land managers use them):
    - Inspiring - show farmers and land managers what they are achieving is valuable and valued (1)
    - Show time-specific actions (but not farming to specific dates) (2)
    - Indicators of success
    - Farmer/ land manager to set permissions, i.e. who they want to see what (1)
5. Data requirements (what will be needed to complete a land management plan):
    - Baseline survey of existing features e.g. boundaries - type, condition and importance (5)
    - Soil testing

Evidencing and monitoring:

- The amount of monitoring and who it is done by will depend on the complexity of the proposal (2)
- Some monitoring and evidencing by farmers and land managers will give them ownership of their scheme (1)
- Training and guidance for farmers and land managers would be needed (13)
- Continual skill development (1)
- Need accountability and checks if public money being used (3).
- Will need checking every 1-3 years (6)
- Some monitoring will require a specialist, but this shouldn't be prohibitively expensive (2)
- Technology for monitoring if needed would need to be affordable (1)
  Evidencing could be done using:
    - On the ground surveys (4)
    - Photos (8)
    - Invoices (1)
    - Satellite data/ aerial photography (9)
    - Apps (2)
    - Reminder system to know what to monitor and when - either adviser or automatic via text or app (3)

NCA as a mechanism to design and deliver land management plans:

- Brings together the opportunities (NCA profile and summary) and land management plans to form a helpful tool (1)
- Land management plans could link to the objectives laid out in the NCA (4)

Advice

General comments:

- Financial implications of using an adviser (must be cost-effective) (2) - advice mustn't be cost restrictive, and must be open and accessible to all (e.g. public or third sector)
- Advice shouldn't cost too much of the overall Environmental Land Management budget, taking money away from delivery (2)
- Would need training to be able to deliver a land management plan and monitoring themselves.
- Need accountability and checks if public money being used (1).

Role of adviser:

- Keep them updated on farming issues (1)
- Understanding regulatory requirements (2)
- Interpreting results e.g. soil testing (2)
- Other understanding and interpretation (1)
- Help when something goes wrong (2)
- Facilitate collaboration (2)
- Managing expectations (1)

  Land Management Plans:

  - To help design their land management plan (5)
  - To apply context to the plan - weather, environment, food production, long-term vision
  - To put together a vision for their land (1)
  - To help know and understand what existing public goods delivery is happening on the land (3)
  - Joint interpretation - farmer/ land manager knows history/ practicalities whilst adviser knows what's needed for public goods delivery - maximising public goods delivery on every land parcel/ in every field (1)
  - Help to translate public goods (from spatial prioritisation) into practice (3)
  - How delivery of public goods can be delivered in partnership with farming, e.g. designing ponds that cattle can also use for drinking (1)
  - How and where to deliver improvements in public goods delivery (1)
  - Apply variability of scheme to each holding (2)
  - Particularly important on complex holdings with multiple interests (1)
  - Workshops and farm walks to explain what is wanted from them and to show examples (1)

  Monitoring:

  - What needs monitoring and when (1)
  - Experts/ specialist needed to monitor every few years. This could be the adviser or specialists brought in by the adviser. (5)
  - For specialist surveys that the farmer or land manager does not have the skills to do (2)
  - Quality control of farmer monitoring (2)
  - To make sure any farmer monitoring is 'honest' (8)
  - Help sort any honest mistakes - build trust and accuracy (4)
  - Make ongoing changes/ tweaks to the agreement (2)
  - To keep plans on track and farmer enthused (4)
  - Progress updates (2)
  - Provide [continual] farmer training (7)

Adviser skills/ description:

- Local (7)
- Local knowledge/ understanding/ familiarity with the area (7)
- Knowledgeable about farming practices and practical implementation (2)
- Knowledgeable about the land they were dealing with (1)
- Knowledgeable about Environmental Land Management and other schemes/ finance opportunities (2)
- Passionate about the place (1)
- Independent, not just saying what the land manager wants to hear
- Able to build relationship with the farmer, continuity and trust (7)
- Appropriate insurance (that the farmer or land manager doesn't have) (1)

Specific advice mentioned:

- Peak District National Park Authority adviser (9)
- Natural England (5)
- Other third party (3)
- Accountant (12)
- Land agent (for completing forms, claims) (1)
- Other consultant, e.g. financial planning or agronomy (6)

Guidance

- Pictures/ photos to inspire and show what good looks like (2)
- Online training sessions
- 'How to' videos etc. online available for a convenient time for the farmer to watch them (available through the 'portal') (1)

Collaboration

Mechanisms for collaboration:

- Open to sharing ideas and experiences (10)
- Share information on successes/ approaches with like-minded neighbours (4)
- Features that link across neighbouring land (2)
- Web-based forum or Whatsapp group (might work best for younger farmers and land managers) (1)
- App for sharing information amongst multiple people on a single holding (1)

Incentivising collaboration:

- Best practice example farms for people to see/ visit/ talk to - a couple of examples per NCA (2)

Barriers to collaboration:

- Do not want to share financial or other sensitive information (7)

Payments

- Consistent across holdings, not disadvantaging anyone or making it unfair (2)
- Recognise and reward those already providing a high level of public goods delivery
- Sliding payment based on sliding scale of performance of public good delivery (6)
- Base payment for action, even if don't achieve outcomes, as some things you can't guarantee even if doing everything 'correctly' (4)
- Cluster payments - providing habitat over several holdings and paid proportional 'add on' based on number of birds in the cluster, no matter whose land they are on
- Prefer the concept of 'public money for public goods' and outcomes rather than income foregone (4)
- Outcomes better than actions and prescriptions (3)
- Would like to be rewarded for quality of product, like they are for food (2)

Monitoring and evaluation:

- Farmer time spent monitoring should be paid for, recognising the value of their skills and time (5)
- Time spent monitoring undertaken by the farmer needs to be compensated for (5), or
- Farmer needs to recognise the value it adds to the business (1)

All participants had thought about the public goods delivery on their land, both existing and more in the future, that they would like to see payments for as part of Environmental Land Management. Specifically:

- Wall maintenance rather than, or as well as, rebuilding - wall deterioration and the erection of substitute fencing is changing the landscape character. Many (both participants and their neighbours, as reported by participants) are letting walls fall down, then using the grant to rebuild, which is not cost effective. Some participants find the cost to maintain or rebuild prohibitively expensive, even with scheme or grant funding. There is also a shortage of contractors available to carry out dry stone wall maintenance or rebuilding. (5)
- Tree planting for multiple public goods and farmer benefits including wood fuel, income from timber products or shelter (11)
- Educational access for the public, including school visits (2)
- Rewilding (1)
- Carbon - use the ready reckoner to demonstrate public goods delivery, but don't reward for this, instead provide capital grants for equipment or infrastructure (2)

Comments on the NCA summary

Positives:

- Understood the language, user-friendly (12)
- Helps in understanding of public goods (9)
- Clearly identifies the relevant public goods (4)
- Enthuses about the White Peak and the public goods it can deliver (2)
- Helped in thinking what the important features on the holding are already delivering public goods (2)
- Helps to reiterate many of the things being done already are the 'right things' (1)
- Reminds them that what they are delivering is valued (beyond food production) (1)
- Helps to make them feel like they could deliver some of the public goods on their land (9)
- Helps to make them feel like they could deliver more public goods (7)
- Could be used to show the link between farming and public goods delivery (1)

Recommendations:

- Show what progress has already been made/ what is already being done (3)
- More engaging (3)
- More optimistic, including a vision for the future (1)
- Recognition that landscape and cultural heritage will continue to change and evolve (1)
- More landscape scale e.g. rewilding (1)
- More on the unfamiliar public goods i.e. carbon, clean air (2)
- More practical interventions (2)
- Sources for figures (1)

Something between the summary and the profile to use it as a framework (7).

Carbon ready reckoner

18 participants from the one-to-ones had not done a carbon calculation before. Of these, seven said the carbon ready reckoner had helped to initiate their thinking and/ or discussion around carbon. However, eight said the tool in it's current form was too simplistic to use to inform any potential changes in land management. Eight would like to explore the concept further by using a full carbon footprinting tool, such as the one used by the National Park Authority, but which also takes into account the land management as laid out in this ready reckoner.

Those that had done a carbon audit before had usually done so upon request by another body e.g. milk buyer, soil association. However, none had considered their land as part of the carbon audit and still found it useful, especially opening their eyes to the potential of land use change in managing carbon.

Positives:

- Easy to use (7)
- Initiates thinking around carbon (6)
- Facilitates discussion about carbon (1)
- Raise awareness about carbon storage in permanent grassland (4)
- Shows the potential for carbon storage and public goods delivery (1)
- Gives some ideas and ways of thinking differently about land management, e.g. no plough (4)
- Highlights the importance of healthy soils (1)
- Highlights what they are doing already is good for carbon storage (3)
- Gives confidence that they are doing the 'right thing' (2)
- Could use as a marketing/ education tool (4)
- Could use to demonstrate public goods delivery when applying for Environmental Land Management and showing continual improvement (8)

Recommendations:

- Limited by the simplistic habitats (1)
- Doesn't include herbal leys (3)
- Could include/ be based on different soil types (1)
- Difficult to assign the grasslands to the different categories (1)

Only a few participants took the opportunity to use the carbon ready reckoner at the end of the first two workshops. However, having a dedicated workshop on the ready reckoners for the third workshop allowed much more feedback. Comments were broadly similar to those from the one-to-ones, with the ready reckoner being generally simple and easy to use. There was some confusion over terminology and meaning of sequestration and storage. It was also not clear whether figures were good or bad, and whether changing scenarios was improving carbon storage and sequestration or not. A simple benchmarking and colour-coding system was suggested to make the figures more easily interpreted.

Budget ready reckoner

The budget ready reckoner was developed in response to the assumption that a lot of farmers and land managers did very little or no financial planning. Of the 59 participants that responded, five do no financial planning, and 18 plan up to one year in advance, totalling almost 40% of respondents. 50% of those with holdings greater than 100ha plan up to or over five years in advance. Those that rent land are also split similarly, with 48% planning up to or over five years in advance. However, this split changes when considering those that are solely tenants and do not own their own land - 78% plan up to or over five years in advance. 80% of participants who have a profitable farm business without national support or diversification plan up to or over five years in advance.

12 participants tested the budget ready reckoner, eight from the one-to-ones and four from the third workshop. Holding size varied from 25 ha to 323 ha. The full range of farm type was represented; five traditional beef, two traditional sheep, three traditional dairy and two intensive dairy.

Most participants tested a scenario where they would increase public goods delivery, entering between 5% and 92% of their total land holding into Environmental Land Management. The most common options selected were hay meadow, herbal ley and woodland. One participant tested four different scenarios of increasing public goods delivery.

Six participants increased their gross margin, and three of the four scenarios tested by one participant resulted in increased gross margins. Increases in gross margin ranged from 11% to 153%. There was no correlation between increase in gross margin and farm size, area of holding entered into Environmental Land Management, or whether the business is reliant on national funding. Only three of the eight increases in gross margin were enough to offset the loss in BPS, with two out of the three being dependant on BPS to support their business.

Five participants' changes resulted in a decrease in their gross margin, and one of the four scenarios tested by one participant also decreased their gross margin. Decrease in gross margin ranged from less than 1% to 21%. There was no correlation between decrease in gross margin and farm size or the area entered into Environmental Land Management. However, all holdings with dairy enterprises had a decrease in gross margin, and all those that are profitable without national funding or diversification had a decrease. All participants that used a woodland option (except one which entered a small area as part of a suite of options) saw their gross margin decrease.

All participants would have to decrease their livestock units on the holding to enable them to deliver their chosen Environmental Land Management public good options. Reductions ranged from 4 to 87 livestock units, between 4% and 47% of the total, with an average reduction of 20 units.

Positives:

- Useful to initiate thinking and discussion (4)
- Could be used to help decide whether to engage with Environmental Land Management (2)
- Demonstrated the 'less is more' concept (to increase public goods delivery) (3)

Recommendations:

- Limited by the assumptions (2)
- Carbon and budget ready reckoners should be aligned with the same habitats (2)
- Need to know the BPS and existing scheme payments (1)
- Cannot translate existing scheme into Environmental Land Management options (3)
- Difficult to use for tenanted land (2)

Discussion

Spatial prioritisation

There was unanimous support from participants in workshops and one-to-ones for spatial prioritisation, however, there was a presumption that spatial prioritisation would lead to the scheme being run more locally, with more local advisers and decision-makers, including farmer and land manager representation.

Spatial prioritisation should recognise the differences in farm type, management and climate, as these will dictate what is practical to deliver. Many farmers and land managers in the White Peak have struggled to adapt nationally-set prescriptions to their holding, and is one of the main reasons for not entering Countryside Stewardship (as experienced by National Park Farm Advisers). However, just under half of participants are financially dependent on schemes, therefore it is likely that some will be struggling to deliver them correctly, or delivering inappropriately for the area due to strict prescriptions. For example, many farmers and land managers cited the drought and hot weather of 2018 and their struggle to get a change in cutting date of hay meadows, due to changes being processed by RPA staff based over 80 miles away who are unfamiliar with the local area.

From the responses received through this test, we would recommend that NCAs are one of the mechanisms that could be used to set and agree local priorities.

- ✓ A good spatial scale.
- ✓ Based on soils and landscape, which most influence type of farming/ management.
- ✓ Farmers and land managers identify with the White Peak, feel it represents their holding, and are therefore more likely to engage with Environmental Land Management.
- ✓ Uses data that is already available, is easily updated and can incorporate local data.
- ✓ Includes all six public goods and their relevance in the NCA.
- ✓ Easy to extract key features which may be a priority or deliver priority public goods.
- ✓ Can be applied across England.

It also seems to work well for those on the boundary between NCAs, and those whose holding is spread across multiple NCAs, with one participant on the boundary saying the description matches 'their bit' of the White Peak, and they feel "the line on the ground matches the line on the map" and can "clearly see that boundary in the landscape".

The White Peak NCA Profile was last updated in 2014 so does need updating, particularly in relation to the 25 Year Environment Plan and Agricultural Transition Period public goods language. Feedback included that the NCA summary, although helpful as a familiarisation tool, is perhaps too short, but the full NCA Profile to perhaps a bit too long. However, the underlying principles and descriptions in the Profile, which were used to produce the summary document, were agreed to still be useful, useable and relevant. Updates to the language and new opportunities should be considered and included in any review, as these have found to be most useful in the summary. For example, the Profile currently causes some confusion over ecosystem services and public goods.

There was concern expressed about a county- or catchment-based approach, as many felt the NCA provided an excellent summary of the full range of public goods delivered by the landscape, in a way which farmers and land managers could relate to. County and catchment approaches were seen as more of a single-interest rather than multi public good description. Spatial identity was strong with the NCA.

Land Management Plans

Three main functions of land management plans have been identified, which are to:

1. construct the offer of public goods delivery,
2. form the basis of an agreement or contract,
3. demonstrate delivery and progress.

Each of these functions will require different information. However, there are some principles of land management plans that transcend across the three functions that farmers and land managers have said that they would need, the main one being that the plan must be map-based (mentioned in all three workshops and by 60% of one-to-one participants). The map should show the whole holding, but with more detail. The White Peak is predominantly enclosed, so this was suggested as 'field scale', but other scales could be explored in phase two, including multi-holding plans that could foster wider collaborative landscape-scale delivery. All participants said they want the creation and delivery of land management plans to be simple, as current schemes are perceived as too complicated, which is one of the main barriers to uptake.

Almost all participants would like their map in paper format, even those that are competent in using online systems and apps. Many reasons were given for this, including the unreliability of broadband and wifi connection, the ease of reading/ looking at something on paper and for quick reference. This should be large scale, provided by Defra (or other administrative body), as farmers and land managers will not have the facilities to print large maps.

To create a land management plan and use it to put forward their Environmental Land Management offer/ proposal, participants said they would need to know/ see on a map their existing features and their potential for public goods delivery. They would then need to know where that public goods delivery 'scores' on a scale, including whether they are complying with the regulatory baseline. For example, the carbon ready reckoner was suggested by 35% of one-to-one participants as being potentially useful to demonstrate carbon storage and sequestration as a public good. To explore and plan their public goods delivery, participants said they would also need to know any designations. Most participants said they would find a soil health test useful, which could be used alongside the ready reckoner tools for business and management planning.

All participants presumed that the land management plan would form the basis or part of their Environmental Land Management agreement or contract. It would therefore need to have any actions or outcomes agreed, shown at a relevant scale on the map (see above comments on maps), and the management the farmer/ land manager would carry out to deliver these. The land management plan would also need to include timescales.

For the land management plan to be used to show delivery and progress, it will need to include a facility for incorporating evidencing and monitoring that are measurable against baselines and aspirations or targets.

As the NCA was suggested as a good foundation to base any spatial prioritisation, it was also suggested that land management plans could link to the objectives laid out in the NCA (and thus the priorities identified in any prioritisation exercise). This would limit the options available to those that are relevant, making the process simpler, as requested by participants. Relevancy is also likely to encourage engagement in the scheme.

A third of one-to-one participants said they would like one platform i.e. an online portal, with the following advantageous functions:

- ✓ Bringing together all existing information to reduce duplication of effort and time. Those that are involved in assurance schemes, certification schemes and/ or with milk buyers have said that they often have to send the same information to several bodies.
- ✓ Regulation and scheme guidance is easily accessible.
- ✓ Planning tools are available to help farmers and land managers ensure they have a sustainable business model and schemes are deliverable.
- ✓ Upload new information, for example evidencing and monitoring, and showing progress of public goods delivery.
- ✓ Easily updated.
- ✓ Farmers and land managers can set viewing permissions so everyone can access the information they need to see.
- ✓ Multi-way communication between the farmer or land manager and the people they work with, for example advisers.
- ✓ Collaborative holdings working together can be linked.
- ✓ Linked via an app so all those that are involved in scheme delivery on a holding (including multiple people on the same holding) can view it on a smartphone or tablet, receive notifications and reminders, and upload evidence immediately, for example photos.

Advice

Without it being a specific question in this Test, all participants from the one-to-ones said that advice at some point when considering whether to enter a scheme or once they have entered a scheme is essential.

The role of advisers and the potential skills and knowledge they would need to fulfil these roles is extremely wide-ranging and variable.

Advisers are relied upon to keep farmers and land managers updated on the latest farming issues and funding that is available. They are often the first port of call for interpreting areas of confusion and results of tests or surveys, understanding regulation or simply when something goes wrong.

A quarter of one-to-one participants and many of those in the workshops said they would need an adviser to help them create their land management plan. The adviser could be involved in many facets of this, including applying wider context, for example landscape context, translating the priorities to holding level, how to translate features into public goods delivery, how to maximise public good delivery and what the opportunities are.

Despite many participants saying they could do some aspects of monitoring and evidencing themselves, over half of one-to-one participants said they would still need some training, with the expectation this would be done or organised by an adviser. However, almost all said there would be some elements of monitoring that would need a specialist, either carried out by an adviser or a specialist. If farmers and land managers do undertake some monitoring and evidencing, all participants said they would like checks to be done; by the adviser when evidencing is uploaded for some elements, and between every one to three years for others. This is to ensure there is accountability in the spending of public money, to keep people 'honest', but also to make sure it is being done correctly and to keep scheme participants enthused.

None of the farmers and land managers that participated in the Test thought that they could collaborate either with neighbours or for landscape-scale delivery without someone to facilitate. An adviser or facilitator would alleviate some of the main concerns around sharing sensitive information and lack of confidence in approaching neighbours.

From experience, emphasised by the results of this Test, farmers and land managers prefer one point of contact. Continuity of staff is therefore key to building relationships and trust with farmers and land managers. An ability to build trust was mentioned as one of the main skills that an adviser would need. Other key skills would be local knowledge and practical farming and land management knowledge.

An adviser should be available fairly for everyone, not just those that can afford it. Many expressed concerns over having to pay for advisers and specialists, which most would not be able to afford currently, and would probably become more unaffordable when BPS is lost. Recent quotes obtained by the Peak District National Park Authority are a minimum of £400 per day. It is therefore unlikely that many will either be able to justify such an expense in fulfilling their Environmental Land Management ambitions.

It is therefore vital that a trusted, local adviser is available to farmers and land managers to maximise public goods delivery opportunities from Environmental Land Management and meet the targets set out by Government in the 25 Year Environment Plan.

Collaboration

10 participants in the one-to-ones and many participants that spoke up in the workshops said they would be open to collaborating, but doubted whether others would be. For most, this was about sharing ideas and experiences, rather than working collaboratively towards a Land Management Plan for example. This could be reflective of the fact that in the White Peak, there has been very little collaborative working between farmers and land managers. These results suggest that there is a perception that others would be unwilling to cooperate and collaborate, rather than this being a true barrier.

All participants felt that an adviser or independent facilitator would be needed to support farmers and land managers working together and better exploring a wider landscape-scale approach to Environmental Land Management delivery, with hardly any feeling comfortable approaching their neighbour by themselves to suggest collaborative working, and none knowing how they would approach the collaborative process to deliver public goods at scale.

There was concern and reluctance to share personal data, in particular financial and business, or other sensitive information with other farmers and land managers, but this could be alleviated by a facilitator. If farmers and land managers were to be more experienced in collaborative working however, they might feel more comfortable with elements of data sharing, with one farmer suggesting that more collaboration could result in the opportunity to explore benchmarking.

The CS Farm Facilitation Fund Group that participated in the first workshop, along with others in the local area, are starting to bring farmers and land managers together. Some have expressed a desire for more opportunities like this, especially to explore some of the elements of collaborative working further. A few suggested they are part of or would like to be part of a machinery ring for example, which could be a useful way of initiating collaborative working.

As suggested in all three workshops and specifically by a quarter of the one-to-one participants, the NCA is a good foundation for facilitating collaboration.

- ✓ Farmers and land managers in this NCA have a strong White Peak identity, helping to bring them together under a shared sense of place.
- ✓ Farmers and land managers feel their holding is represented in the White Peak description, making them more likely to engage with others in the NCA.
- ✓ NCA brings together similar farming systems that share a commonality e.g. underlying geology, soils, culture, that could foster collaboration.
- ✓ Helped participants consider their own holding as part of the wider White Peak landscape.

The White Peak Test has stimulated a desire from participants for more information, sharing of ideas and getting ready to explore Environmental Land Management together. This provides a huge opportunity right now to build on the interest the Test has stimulated, but it is currently unclear how to maintain this momentum in the context of limited time and resource.

The budget ready reckoner

As assumed when commissioning the budget ready reckoner, around 50% of participants plan ahead financially two years or less, with almost 78% of those actually planning one year or less. Those that are profitable without national support are more likely to plan financially at least five years in advance, implying that to engage with those that are not reliant on national funding as part of their farm business will require longer-term agreements or contracts, with associated payments. This concurs with general comments from the Test that agreement or contract holders in Environmental Land Management would like a longer-term option, particularly when this would involve significant changes to the farm business model.

Of those that used the budget ready reckoner, half found that increasing public goods delivery (by entering into Environmental Land Management options above what they are currently delivering) resulted in them being worse off financially. All participants that used the budget ready reckoner that have profitable farm businesses without relying on national support or diversification were dairy enterprises. Most impacted were these dairy farms, both traditional and intensive, implying that the dairy sector will be one of the most difficult to engage with for Environmental Land Management due to impacts on profitability.

80% of those that added a woodland option had a resulting decrease in their gross margins. If increased tree and woodland cover are to be significant, these findings imply that associated options or outcomes payments will have to be higher than 175% of options currently available.

These findings imply that major changes to the farming system and the farm or land management business would be required by the farmer or land manager for Environmental Land Management to be part of a viable and sustainable farm business. As raised by 25% of one-to-one participants and in all three workshops (not captured in the workshop reports), that would require long-term commitment and certainty from Government in the form of agreements or contracts lasting at least 10 years. For options such as increasing tree or woodland cover, or landscape change, it was suggested this would require a long -term vision and plan of at least 20 years, with agreements or contracts, and payments, to match.

Of those that found increasing their public goods delivery and entering Environmental Land Management increased their gross margin, only three participants found that their potential gross margin increased enough to make up for the loss of BPS and for the farm business to remain viable. Even then, they were only able to do so by putting large proportions of their land into Environmental Land Management options, in combination with reducing livestock units across the holding. Half of participants who used the budget ready reckoner are dependent on BPS as part of their farm business, with only two (one third) able to make up the loss in BPS by increasing public goods delivery through Environmental Land Management. The loss of BPS is therefore likely to have significant impacts on a large proportion of farmers and land managers in the White Peak, with most unlikely to be able to make up the difference by increasing public goods delivery in Environmental Land Management if the payment rate is 175% of current CS rates.

All participants that used the budget ready reckoner to increase their public goods delivery would need a reduction in livestock units across the holding. This prompted a lot of thought about how this might work, with many of the smaller, family-run farm participants being open to this idea, as for example it would reduce the livestock handling and care burden, but Environmental Land Management payments must take this need for reduction into consideration.

Payments

In addition to the findings on payment rates made by the testing of the budget ready reckoner, participants also suggested ways that payments might work for them, and elements they would want to be or need to be paid for.

Most participants were in favour of being paid for outcomes rather than by income foregone, and felt this was a fairer way to allocate payments, as it can be tailored much more locally. In reality, payments are likely to be for a mix of actions and outcomes, but the Environmental Land Management payments need to incentivise and properly reward farmers and land managers for the public goods they deliver.

As mentioned, schemes that assume a universal income foregone payment, with associated time-dependent dos and don'ts, are failing to work for farmers and land managers in the White Peak. The traditional income foregone and additional cost calculation for payment levels does not equate to the range and amount of public goods already being delivered and potential enhanced delivery in upland protected landscapes.

In addition, the income foregone approach does not cover many of the hidden costs on upland family farms, e.g. long hours not recorded in the farm budget. Several participants struggled with the extra reading the Test required, with some pointing out specifically that 'paperwork' is done in the evening after practical work is completed, which poses an issue for alertness and capacity. Many participants said they don't have time to go through all their emails for example, which, on top of any broadband or wifi issues, means many get missed.

Payments based on sliding scale of performance of public good delivery was a common suggestion from one-to-one participants, providing an incentive for continual improvement but flexibility for lower payment if they don't reach the initial/ desired target that particular year/ claim period. It also allows Environmental Land Management participants to build up their public goods delivery, learning from previous experience and from experiences of those around them.

Test participants highlighted the need for maintenance payments to be the pinnacle, with the highest payment rate to encourage farmers and land managers to keep their natural assets rather than such habitats being damaged or destroyed and public funds being used to restore or reinstate them.

Larger, more intensive dairy farms may have scope to intensify further, which in turn has the potential to negatively impact on natural and cultural assets. Many White Peak holdings have already been intensified in terms of their agricultural productivity, so future payments will need to support a significant change in approach, which is likely to include a more extensive system if nature recovery is to be delivered in this NCA.

Smaller holdings in particular would like recognition of the public goods they are already delivering, as they are often managed with low inputs or organically (certified and non-certified), in line with individual interests, and are more likely to be part-time holdings. However, these type of holdings bear a proportionately higher cost for participation in environmental schemes as compared to medium and large holdings. A minimum base payment could be considered for Environmental Land Management to incentivise participation, as collectively many of these smaller holdings will be instrumental in delivering the networks for natures recovery.

The carbon ready reckoner

Most participants had not considered carbon on their holding before, or had thought about it but had not done a carbon audit. Only two participants had thought about carbon in the context of land use, with the rest saying it had been an eye opener in terms of land carbon usage and storage.

When thinking about carbon on their land, most participants' first consideration was to plant trees and increase woodland cover. Almost none had considered the carbon storage potential of soils and the impacts their management has on sequestration and storage. After using the carbon ready reckoner to try different land management scenarios, most participants then went on to think about other changes in land management they could implement in consideration of carbon, including stopping ploughing and replacing ryegrass silage fields with herbal leys, particularly when discussed at the workshops.

Most participants had not done a carbon audit before, with 40% of one-to-one participants finding the carbon ready reckoner useful in initiating or furthering their thinking around carbon management, with seven thinking it would be a useful tool in demonstrating public goods delivery when applying for Environmental Land Management. Eight one-to-one participants said it inspired them to the extent that they would like to go further and use a full carbon footprinting tool, like that developed for the National Park Authority, that takes into account land management and soils as well as fuel efficiencies and livestock emissions.

Those that had done a carbon audit before had usually done so by request of other bodies, such as milk buyers or accreditation schemes. All still found it eye opening in consideration of land use and land use change, but the response to it's usefulness in terms of planning land use change to apply for and deliver Environmental Land Management was more mixed, and depended much more on the interest of the individual.

The carbon ready reckoner is currently intentionally limited by being very simple, as it is aimed at those that are at or near the beginning of their carbon journey. Many thought it was too simple to be able to base any land management or use changes on without full consideration of the whole carbon picture (i.e. fuel use, livestock emissions etc.).

Many participants mentioned they feel farmers (in particular, more than land managers) have been victimised in the public eye over contributions to carbon emissions and climate change. This is particularly acute in livestock farmers, who feel that the blame is disproportionate compared to other industries, particularly in the UK. It was suggested by several participants that the approach taken by the carbon ready reckoner could be used to tell the land management carbon story in a positive way, highlighting the existing and potential carbon storage opportunities on grassland used for livestock production - "we think we are doing the right thing on the farm but this kind of thing can give confidence that you are".

There has been a lot of interest in the carbon ready reckoner, with several participants asking if they could "take it away to have a play". It has also been requested for use by other National Parks, National Parks England, the Environment Agency, and other farmers and land managers. As the carbon ready reckoner is still in testing and refinement stage, and is based in Microsoft Excel, it has been decided thus far to not release it for further use. However, with further testing and disclaimers, we are considering distribution to others. The use will probably come with an agreement that users complete a short survey after use, to continue to test its usefulness and functionality, and identify any problems. These results can continue to be fed back to Defra as part of phase two of this Test.

Other comments

IT and technology:

A significant issue for the White Peak Test has been the generally low levels of IT and technology skills amongst participants, particularly when Covid-19 restrictions came in in March and engagement had to move online or over the phone. Eight participants from the one-to-ones either don't use a computer or have very low IT skills, with three specifically saying that they rely on someone from a younger generation (usually someone in the family) for access to emails and other online activities. The third workshop was conducted online using Zoom, which most participants had at least heard of, and some had used, providing some level of familiarity and confidence. The professional facilitator and Project Officer ran three drop-in sessions over a morning before the workshop for those who had not used Zoom before or who weren't confident with IT. The feedback from these sessions was extremely positive, with one participant who had never used an online meeting platform and had low IT skills confidence, subsequently signing up to other online webinars run by Government. Support was also available over the phone with the Project Officer, with some participants using this 'service' after the workshop for other purposes.
Lack of access to adequate broadband and wifi in rural areas has been acknowledged, with various Government-backed funding available to try and tackle the issue. However, for many farmers and land managers in the White Peak, this continues to be a problem. One participant has even paid for their own upgrades at significant personal expense in order to be able to have sufficient broadband for their business needs.
Affordability of up to date technology is also an issue, especially in the context of small family-run upland farms where technology expenses could be a significant proportion of any outgoings. Technology also has to be appropriate for use in an active farm environment, as some technology is easily damaged, adding to costs.

Monitoring and evaluation:

Farmers and land managers recognised the need for monitoring of Environmental Land Management, but wanted it to be complimentary to delivering agreement or contract outcomes, rather than a process to be feared. They suggested that whoever was monitoring needed to work together with the agreement or contract holder to consider any issues or management that wasn't quite delivering the required outcomes, and look at how to make improvements in delivery in a positive way.

Hefty penalties to date that are often not in proportion to the fault or lack of delivery are acting as a huge barrier to participation in the current CS scheme and potentially Environmental Land Management, with many participants in the Test saying they feel scared of 'tripping up' over regulation or process. Understanding of the regulatory baseline and how public goods delivery can be above this needs to be incorporated into Environmental Land Management. Participants suggested this could be done by having the regulatory baseline shown as part of their land management plan, with an adviser to work with them to resolve issues.
There is appetite for farmer and land manager training, for them to be able to do some of the monitoring themselves. At the same time, there was recognition that they would not be able to be a specialist in every area, so would continue to need specialist and local, trusted adviser support.

Tenanted land:

Affordability of taking on a tenancy was cited as a barrier to being able to deliver public goods or maximise public goods delivery, limiting opportunities. Almost 40% of participants rent land and almost all of these are dependent on national funding, therefore issues around tenancies could have a significant impact on the uptake and delivery of Environmental Land Management.

The ability of a tenant farmer or land manager to deliver public goods on their rented land will depend heavily on their relationship with their landlord and the aspirations of the landlord for their land. Some participants have said that they are restricted in terms of what they can deliver by their landlord.

Short-term tenancies were cited as a particular restriction in delivering public goods. Those with short-term tenancies are often reluctant to invest financially or invest in a long-term vision for the land. This is also an issue for those neighbouring land in short-term tenancy, as they struggle to work collaboratively due to the above and/ or regular changes in the neighbouring tenant.

There are also financial complications of tenancies. Some participants have stated that their rent includes the assumption that the tenant is receiving BPS, and do not think that their rent will reduce when BPS is phased out. For others, their landlord receives the BPS (and in some cases scheme payments), and some tenants are worried that rent will increase when BPS is phased out. One tenant has cited that their landlord has reserved the right to receive any payments through carbon offsetting, which will potentially become more common as this sort of payment becomes mainstream. This could be further complicated by any blended finance models.

Permanent land use change and large scale public goods delivery will need engagement with the landlord and consistency of tenancy agreement, backed by long-term scheme agreements/ contracts.

Visitors:

The White Peak has a large network of footpaths, trails and green lanes, and is one of the most popular areas of the English national parks. Previous research has shown that many people feel more comfortable using the traffic-free trails, green lanes and footpath network in the White Peak than they do in the more remote moorland landscapes of the Dark and South West Peaks. As such, there is enormous scope for enhancing the visitor experience when using these rights of way, by developing nature networks and connectivity along these, in line with the White Peak practical field trials.

The benefits of existing and increasing levels of access to the White Peak are recognised, but this can lead to conflicts between visitors and countryside-users, and the farming and land management community. For example, gates being left open or dogs not on leads can use up a lot of a farmer or land manager's time, and can impact on their mental health. Many farmers and land managers wanted to welcome visitors and help people of all backgrounds to enjoy the countryside for their physical and mental wellbeing, but there is a need to encourage responsible visiting, particularly highlighted when Covid-19 restrictions were eased in June after the first lockdown period. Over a third of participants have diversification enterprises on their holding, most of which are related to tourism e.g. holiday lets, camping, café and shops/ direct sales. Of those that have diversification, almost two thirds are financially reliant on it. Educational visits and rebranding offer opportunities to better share the story of the public goods farmers and land managers are delivering in the White Peak, and is an important opportunity for Environmental Land Management and Government.

Trees:

There was a lot of interest in expanding tree cover, in particular the creation of wood/ scrub pasture (mentioned by 2 participants). This appears to be a really good example of multiple public goods delivery that can work in a livestock farming context. Increased tree cover was the most used example of how farmers and land mangers could increase carbon sequestration and storage on their land, whilst also delivering a nature recovery network and potentially slowing water flow and increasing water quality. Scattered tree and scrub cover in a pastoral context could allow farmers and land managers to continue producing livestock, whilst also providing them with shelter and shade, particularly if weather patterns continue to change in response to climate change, e.g. dryer summers, wetter winters and more extreme weather events. Trees (and scrub to a lesser extent) could also be used to provide wood fuel.

Reduction in BPS payment due to natural regeneration and an increase in tree and scrub cover was cited as the main reason why many farmers and land managers have not looked to increase cover thus far. Most farmers and land managers in the White Peak cannot afford this financial loss currently, with three quarters of participants financially dependent on BPS. However, when BPS is phased out, it offers an excellent opportunity for farmers and land managers to explore this option and be properly rewarded for the public goods it can deliver.

Creation of wood/ scrub pasture is being explored as part of the small scale practical field trials. This is particularly important in a productive grassland context such as the White Peak, where soils are fertile, often sown with highly competitive ryegrass for silage, and the tree and scrub seed resource is low or is likely to have been removed entirely. The report of the first year findings from the practical field trials is available alongside this report.

For woodland creation, large scale tree planting, or the above type of permanent land use change, long-term agreements will be needed to demonstrate financial commitment, with many participants stating they would only be open to this with agreements over several decades (at least 20 years). This is in consideration of the difficulty of reversion and, if using for wood fuel or income, earnings would only kick in after a minimum of 10 years.

Recommendations for phase two

The Environmental Land Management Test run by the Peak District National Park Authority will move into phase two for a further year, testing the NCA approach in two other NCAs - the Dark Peak and the South West Peak.

Approach:

The Expressions of Interest, pre- and post-session questionnaires were designed to be printed and completed, as this format works better for most farmers and land managers, and also can be completed and collected immediately. However, due to the restrictions in place for Coronavirus, phase two is planning to engage with farmers and land managers predominantly online. Using learnings from the White Peak Test, it is proposed that questionnaires are developed into an online survey that participants can complete from a link in an email. To make this more efficient, the Expression of Interest and pre-session questionnaire should be combined, with reduction and refinement in the questions depending on how useful they have been and to clarify any assumptions that have been made in drawing out conclusions from the White Peak Test.

The methodology for the workshops worked well, with a combination of Facilitation Fund groups and farmers and land managers who did not know each other, as it was interesting to compare responses depending on whether participants were familiar with each other or not. This approach should therefore continue into phase two.

Land Management Plans:

The principles and ideas for land management plans that have been suggested by participants in the White Peak Test should now be used to define (a) guiding land management plan template(s). These can look deeper into exactly what data and information is needed, whether it is (freely) available, how much involvement from others is required to set up and maintain a plan, and how a farmer or land manager would use their plan day to day in a practical setting.

A common suggestion from participants was to have a sliding scale of payments dependent on the amount or quality of public good delivery. Land management plans could investigate the development of a public goods delivery scale. This could be done for a sample of interventions or outcomes relevant to the NCA for each of the six main public goods, and used to test the concept. It should be based on delivery over and above the regulatory baseline, so could also be used to inform farmers and land managers whether they are at the baseline. Farmers and land managers would use this scale to check their current public goods delivery, and track progress against both the scale baseline and their own baseline, and it could be used as a basis for payment. This is similar to the model developed for the budget ready reckoner, which is designed to help farmers and land managers decide whether they want to engage with and enter Environmental Land Management, so could be used as part of this process.

Land management plan templates should explore different scales, for example per ‘management area’. This could be the field scale as suggested by White Peak participants, based on particular features, or across large areas, for example for large farms or land ownerships that have large scale habitats such as moorland or woodland. It could also be for collaborative plans along watercourses or for landscape scale change. Realistically, it is likely that different scales will be needed dependent on the public goods being delivered, but this assumption will need testing.

Ready reckoners:

It was suggested that a slightly longer NCA summary document is produced, taking on board the feedback from participants that it be slightly more detailed and inspiring. Therefore, it is recommended that both a short two-page summary and a slightly longer document be produced, to test which participants find most useful.

Both the carbon and budget ready reckoners will need to be adapted to include habitats relevant to each of the Dark Peak and South West Peak.

The carbon ready reckoner should be updated with the latest data following the update of the larger carbon footprinting tool. It was suggested that more consideration be given to soil type and health, so the Peak District National Park Authority has already secured funding from the Environment Agency for this work in the South West Peak, helping to link up the work done by the Dove Catchment Partnership and South West Peak Landscape Partnership. With the updates to the carbon ready reckoner comes the opportunity to implement some of the changes that will make it easier to use and the results easier to interpret. The carbon ready reckoner has been very popular, with high demand for participants to "take it away to play", and other organisations wanting to test it's use outside of the scope of the Test. If resource allows, the aim is to develop the carbon ready reckoner so it can be used independently, but with some short, simple questions to complete before and after use to continue to receive feedback on it's usefulness and the context in which it is being used. This is likely to be web-based.

The budget ready reckoner has proved a useful tool in demonstrating the level of payments delivery of Environmental Land Management at scale will require. Some participants suggested that the assumptions and general figures used were skewing the results for their holding, so any adaptation of the ready reckoner should explore having the option to input a farmer or land manager's own figures where they are available. Going forward, it would be useful to use the budget ready reckoner to test what level of payments would be required. This could be set at multiple different rates, or automated, depending on the public goods delivery that is likely to be achieved. There should also be the option to automatically transfer existing scheme options into hypothetical equivalent Environmental Land Management options. This would be particularly useful for those in CS; with the multiple rates options they would be able to see automatically what payment level will maintain a sustainable business.

The budget ready reckoner was intended to be BPS-neutral, indicating payments once BPS had been removed in 2027. However, when tested it was requested that BPS reductions be included. Now the BPS reduction rates have been published, these can be updated in the ready reckoner, and BPS reductions and loss can be integrated in any future budget planning. This is particularly important if farmers and land managers in other NCAs have the same level of financial dependency on BPS as in the White Peak.

Concluding remarks

The White Peak Test concludes that National Character Areas are a good framework for designing some of the building blocks for Environmental Land Management. In particular, farmers and land managers identify with and relate to the features which give the White Peak it's sense of place. This means farmers and land managers are much more likely to engage with Environmental Land Management and deliver more and better quality public goods. The NCA summary in particular has reminded farmers and land managers that the public goods they are delivering are valued beyond food production.

Participants would like recognition of the public goods they are already delivering. Holdings in the White Peak are predominantly family-run farms, with little scope to intensify within the business, so many have been delivering a high level of public goods for several years. One participant said "we have 500 cows but you wouldn't know it" - low input, no plough and habitat creation are an integral part of the business.

What has become apparent is the anxiety farmers and land managers are feeling from the public and Government pressures, in particular around livestock farming and the interaction with climate change. When asked about carbon and climate change public goods delivery, the main response is tree planting, probably in reaction to the high profile this has had in the media. Government could better publically recognise the range of public goods UK farmers and land managers deliver as well as high quality food production.

At the same time, many face the confliction of having diversification enterprises reliant on tourism, but not all visitors behave or use the farmland and the countryside responsibly. Participants would like Environmental Land Management to help them play their part in public education on responsible visiting and reconnecting the public with farming and the countryside. Several participants expressed their willingness to host educational visits.

This Test has been truly farmer and land manager led. Whilst there have been specific questions to answer to ensure the objectives of the Test have been met, all the findings set out in this report have come from the farmers and land managers involved. It is therefore important to note that where comments have been quantified, it is not that others said the opposite, rather that they didn't have that particular thought. No scenarios were presented to participants to 'pick the one they prefer'. As the Test has gone on, we have increasingly felt the importance of conducting it in this way, as all the findings are what will realistically work for farmers and land managers in the White Peak to maximise engagement and uptake in Environmental Land Management. It has been a struggle at times to initiate engagement and thoughts, as this is a new way of working for all those involved, but the feedback indicates that the farmers and land managers that have participated have appreciated the chance to input, and have embraced the principle of co-design. The importance of their input and recognition of their value has been emphasised through the payment for their time, and has helped to dispel any thoughts that their input might be 'tokenistic'.

The workshops have been particularly useful in bringing together farmers and land managers who would not normally interact, and have helped to show the full range of opinions that individuals have on different topics and ideas. Valuable learnings from this Test can be used going forward in finding new ways to bring farmers and land managers together and how to share thoughts, opinions and experiences in the wider farming and land manager community.

The format of the Test has also helped to increase farmer and land manager awareness of some of the language and terms used around the new land management support system, demonstrating the influence of early engagement. Before and after engagement, participants were asked to rate their knowledge, out of 10, of six terms. Average knowledge for all six terms increased, with the rating for 'National Character Areas', 'Nature Recovery Networks' and '25 Year Environment Plan' more than doubling. 'White Peak' knowledge rating increased the least, confirming the link farmers and land managers already have to the place.

The White Peak Test has stimulated a desire from participants for more information, sharing of ideas and getting ready to explore Environmental Land Management together. This provides a huge opportunity right now to build on the interest the Test has stimulated, but it is currently unclear how to maintain this momentum in the context of limited time and resource.

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PEAK DISTRICT NATIONAL PARK

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