

Environmental Stewardship



Ewan Nugent

Agri-Environment Delivery Programme Manager, North West England

Environmental Stewardship Component Parts

Since 2005:

Entry Level Stewardship (ELS)

Organic Entry Level Stewardship (OELS)

Higher Level Stewardship (HLS)

New This year:

Uplands ELS



Entry Level Stewardship (and organic equivalent, OELS)



Points target based on size of farm

Farmer Selects voluntary options for selected fields and farm boundaries to meet points target

Non competitive, suitable for almost all farmers

Automatic entry when points target reached

Typically £30/Ha over whole farm (£8/ha above moorland line)

£60/Ha for OELS

Can be paid on land under EWGS

Uplands ELS

Replaces Hill Farm Allowance

Only available on SDA land

First agreements start July 1st

Again a points target based on size of farm.

Requires coincident entry into basic Entry Level Scheme

Again automatic entry on reaching points target

Typically £62/ha on SDA parts of farm (£23 above moorland line)

Not available to ESA/CSS agreement holders (UTP instead)



Higher Level Stewardship (HLS)



Targets those farms with the most valuable environmental assets and potential:

Public Access, Historic Environment, Biodiversity,
Landscape, Resource Protection

(Climate Change Adaptation / Mitigation, Flood Management
and Genetic Resources)

HLS agreements require a far higher degree of management requirements and change than ELS

Competitive Entry, 10 year agreements

HLS Promotion

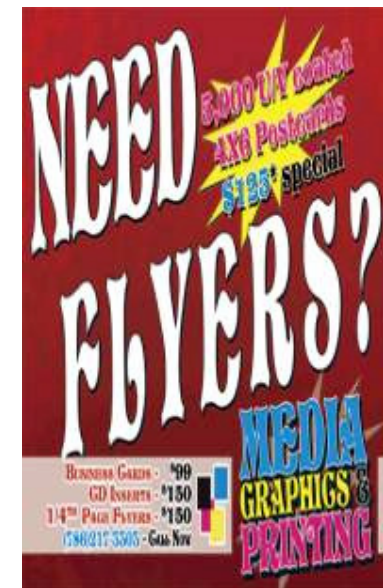
Based on a GI tool – the Holdings Assessment Toolkit (HAT)

The HAT identifies which farm holdings have the potential to make significant contributions across multiple objectives.

Results in HLS delivery “pipelines” for our teams.

Promotion on one to one basis and provision of service to match potential applicants with agents

Applications and associated farm survey largely carried out by agents.



HLS Woodland Opportunities

- Natural England focus on semi-natural woodlands within the farmed environment, managed primarily for biodiversity.
- Generally under 20Ha for woodland management options
- Creation grants limited to 3Ha maximum – though local agreement with FC to take on larger creation projects on agricultural common land
- **FC & NE will work together on any significant woodland proposals to agree which scheme is best suited**



Woodland in HLS



Annual Management Payments

- Woodland Creation £200 - £315 /Ha – (3ha limit)
- Woodland management £100/Ha
- Livestock Exclusion £100/ha
- Wood Pasture £180/Ha
- Scrub Creation £100/Ha
- Orchards £95 - £250/ha

Capital Costs in additional to above



Some HLS Outcome Stats



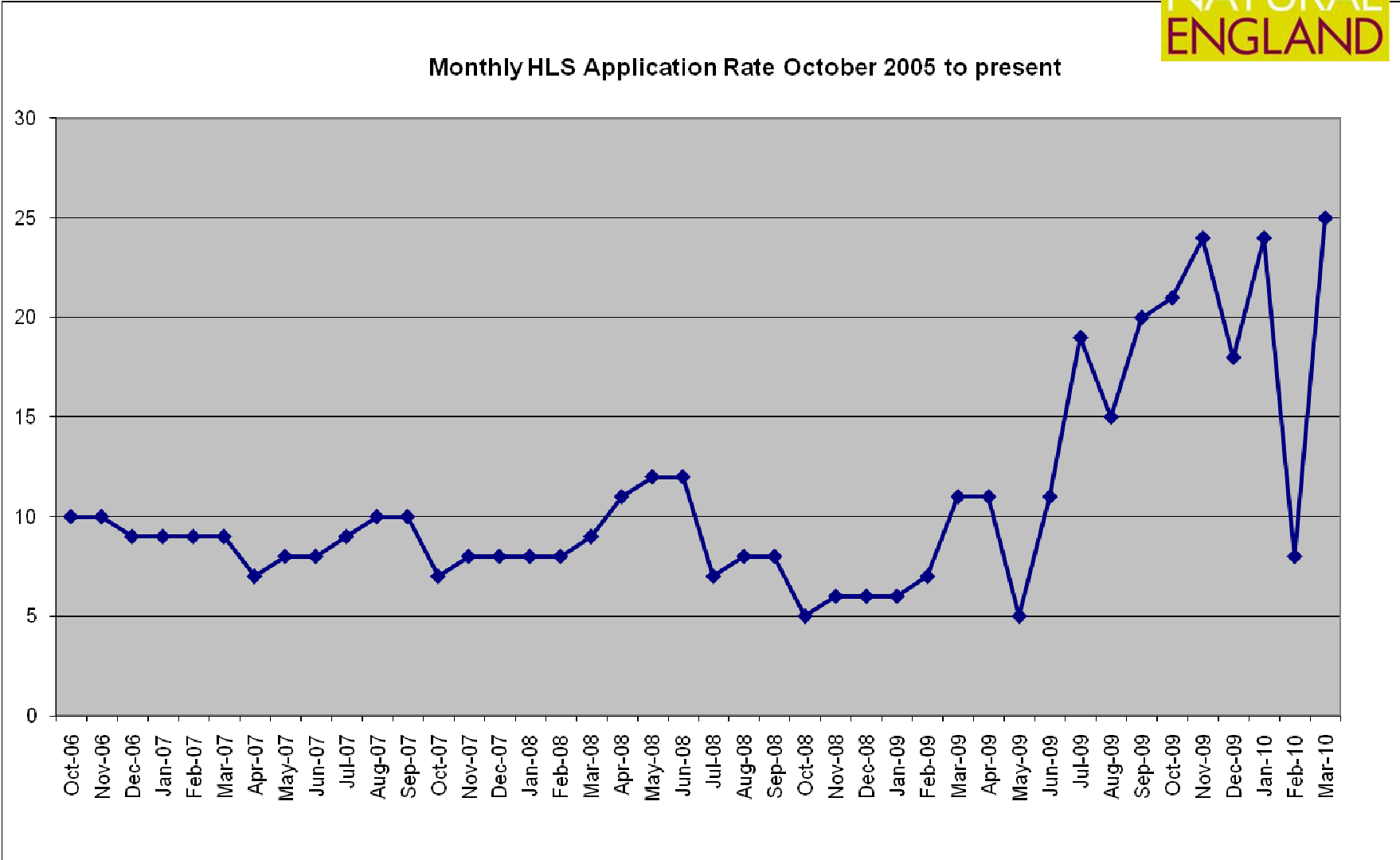
- 190 Ha of scrub creation
- 120 Ha of woodland created
- 503 Ha of woodland with livestock excluded
- 1195 Ha of woodland brought into management
- 107 Ha of wood pasture brought in
- 29 Orchards restored
- 6868 Ha of sustainable moorland management
- 108 km of hedges restored, 28 km of new hedge planting
- 39 km of dry stone wall restoration

ES Cash & Coverage Stats



- Average 1st year value of an HLS agreement is running at around £25,000
- 10/11 value of all A-E payments in the NW will approach £40M across ES, ESA & CSS
- ES Financial Value in the North West: £133M over the lifetime of live ES agreements. HLS accounts for £80M,
- 4500 ES agreements in place, (in addition to 2300 CSS/ESA agreements) of which 450 are HLS
- 71% of agricultural land in the North West is now under some form agreement with Natural England

Rising Interest in HLS



Opportunities in the North West



Unprecedented levels of funding for environmental improvement in the countryside through **Higher Level Stewardship** continues over the next 12 months.

NW Budget to commit to new HLS agreements this year is £81M

Also:

1100 ELS expiring agreements to renew

2500 Uplands ELS agreements to set up

Majority of this activity is facilitated by agents. Guesstimate value of associated agents fees charged to farmers is in order of £1M over the year



Business for agents



ELS / OELS

Typical time involved in drawing up an average ELS agreement... one to one and a half days... Typical charges work out at £30 to £40 an hour

HLS

Average agent charge for drawing up an HLS applications in the NW is £1900. Average NE contribution to cost of application fees is £1034... Again typically working out at £30 to £40 and hour

Key Messages



- We again have unprecedented levels of HLS funding for the next 12 months
- Good for the environment, good for you, good for farmers, good for us
- It takes around 9 months from initial interest to signing off the agreement
 - time is of the essence to take advantage of this years cash availability
- **There is a shortage of agents to carry out HLS farm surveys and complete applications for farmers**



HLS application Training



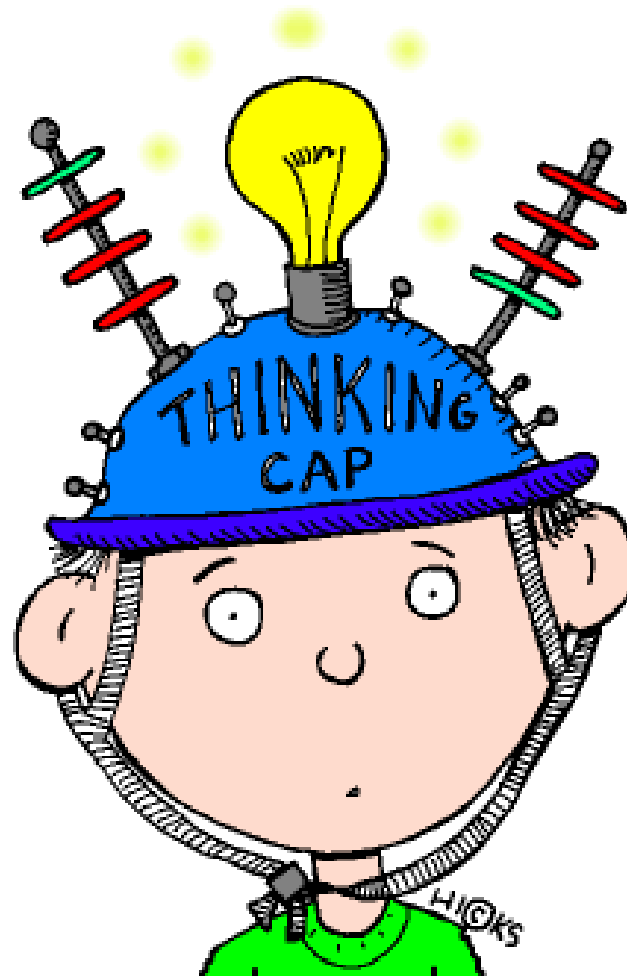
- We plan to run another training event on completing the HLS farm survey (the FEP) and the HLS application during June
- Interested ?
- First step is to register at:

<http://www.naturalengland.org.uk/ourwork/farming/funding/es/hls/fep/surveyor.aspx>

Out & About ?



- Do please promote Environmental Stewardship to land managers you are in contact with regarding EWGS
- Do they have sufficient environmental interest on the wider holding to make an HLS application worthwhile ?
 - See HLS targeting information at www.naturalengland.org.uk
- If no HLS potential are they already in ELS / UELS ?
 - If not, why not ?
- **Can you assist by making an application for the farmer ?**



Your Thoughts and Questions Please