



Environmental Stewardship Update

Forestry Commission Owners, Managers and Agents Update Seminar

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Natural England
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Introduction



- Natural England Teams
- HLS Budgets and Pipelines
- Making Environmental Stewardship More Effective (MESME)

Team Structures



- Nine local land management teams:-
 - Solway, Border and Eden – Steve Lund
 - Lake District – John Redgate
 - South Cumbria – Chris Kaighin
 - Morecambe Bay and Bowland – Sam Marsden
 - Cheshire, Gtr Mancs, Merseyside, South Lancs - Alex Lowe
 - Shropshire - Chris Hogarth
 - Staffordshire - Geoff Howe
 - Warwickshire and Worcestershire - Jennie Hughes
 - Herefordshire - Tony Phillips
- In addition, Land Use, Landscape and Biodiversity, Access and Engagement and Marine Teams operating locally
- Area Managers to provide link and “join up” across functions

HLS Budgets



- National Budget for new HLS agreements for 2012/13 circa £41m
(first year revenue and capital works spend)
- Regional Budgets

	12/13	2013
North West	£5.8m	£5.66m
West Mids	<u>£3.74m</u>	<u>£3.5m</u>
Total	£9.54m	£9.16m
- 2013/14 total budget will be less than the £41m
- budget will have to be delivered by December 2013
- In 13/14 Lake District ESA renewals will amount to £4.5m alone
- Annually we pay out over £400m in agri-environment scheme payments

HLS



- Targeted competitive scheme to complement ELS and UELS
- Management plans and capital works plans
- Objectives
 - Conserve wildlife (biodiversity)
 - Maintain and enhance landscape
 - Protect historic environment
 - Promote public access
 - Protect natural resources – water quality / soil erosion
 - Secondary objectives of genetic conservation and flood management
- Objectives designed to support climate change adaption and mitigation

HLS Outcomes



- National Targets to deliver:-
- Increase agricultural land in HLS by 200,000ha
- SSSI Area, BAP Priority Habitat, Farmland Birds, Priority Species, NIAs, WFD Resource Protection, Historic Environment, Educational access
- RDPE & CSF advice and capital grants delivers improved resource protection
- Increase ELS options that deliver biodiversity, climate change, historical, landscape and resource protection objectives by 5%

HLS and Woodland



- Woodland Creation under HLS limited to 3ha total in 1 ha max plots
 - £200/ha in SDA and £315 outside SDA plus capital costs
- Woodland maintenance and restoration
 - No limit to area and pays £100/ha
- Scrub creation and restoration - £100/ha
- Also payment for trees in arable / grassland (£25/tree) and wood pasture and parkland (£180/ha)

Joint Consultation Process



- For all woodland work under HLS – FC are a statutory consultee
- For all woodland work on or adjacent to a SSSI – Natural England are a consultee
- Early Liaison – may need felling licence, forestry EIA, entry on FC public register, SSSI consent
- Other consultees include county archaeologist, local authority (TPO or conservation area), English Heritage (SAM), EA (floodplains etc)
- In Cumbria we are piloting best practice in these areas

MAKING ENVIRONMENTAL STEWARDSHIP MORE EFFECTIVE

- Defra Ministers have now approved the main MESME recommendations which can be summarised as:
- A package of Entry Level Stewardship (ELS) option changes available to new agreements with a start date on or after 1st January 2013. This package aims to increase the uptake of options delivering higher levels of environmental benefit by:
 - Reducing the points gained for high uptake, lower-value options.
 - Revising some existing options.
 - Introducing new options.

- These changes should enable applicants to gain more of their points through options of higher environmental value.
- Details of these changes have yet to be approved by the European Commission - originally expected March 2012.
- **WILL EFFECT ALL START DATE AGREEMENTS AFTER DECEMBER 2012**



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