



Title of Meeting: **Wales Land Management Forum (WLMF) Sub-Group on
Agricultural Pollution**

Date of Meeting: 12th August 2019 **Time:** 10.00 **Venue:** Welsh Government
Offices
Rhodfa Padarn
Llanbardarn Fawr
Aberystwyth
SY23 3UR

Present:

Bob Vaughan (NRW Chairperson)
Dennis Matheson (Tenant Farmers Association)
Creighton Harvey (Carmarthenshire Fishermen's Federation)
Bernard Griffiths (FUW)
Marc Williams (NRW)
Andrew Chambers (WG)
Ceri Davies (FUW)
Steven Bradley (Welsh Water)
Jamie McCoy (AHDB) (items 1 to 8)
Rachel Lewis-Davies (NFU Cymru)
Sara Jenkins (Menter a Busnes)
Arfon Williams (RSPB)
James Ruggieri (HCC)
Nichola Salter (NRW)
Geri Mills (NRW)

Via Skype: Lorna Davis (NFU Cymru) (item 1 to 4)

Apologies: Zoe Henderson (NRW Board member & Chairperson)
Liz Franks (Hafren Dyfrydwy)
Ryan Davies (WG)
Meinir Wigley (NRW)

Item No: **Item**

1. **Arrival & Tea/Coffee**

2. **Welcome and Apologies**

Bob Vaughan welcomed all to the meeting and noted the apologies as tendered.

3. **Voluntary Approach to Nutrient Management Update (Lorna Davis, NFU Cymru)**

Lorna Davies joined the meeting via skype to provide an update on communications and the focus moving forward for the project.

The Water quality task and finish group held a workshop on 20th May 2019 which focused on defining outcomes and deliverables. The workshop had developed a shared understanding and evaluation of risks.

The voluntary approach project continues to encourage land managers to own the impact of their activity and to monitor, manage and report on their activity. The evidence approach aligns to the development of assurance schemes and earned recognition. Considerable engagement had been undertaken during recent months at agricultural shows across Wales, with Pembroke, Anglesey, Denbigh and Flint and Usk planned in the coming weeks.

The engagement events are supported by a model which provides an opportunity for people to consider risk, water quality whilst considering benefits and opportunities on their own farms.

Lorna explained that work is starting on the drafting of a water standard following an event hosted by the NFU at the recent Royal Welsh Show. The event was supported by Zoe Henderson, NRW, Tim Render, WG and Paul Williams, farmer from North Wales. A press release will be issued shortly.

In respect of data capture Lorna explained that she had been provided with information regarding a water watch scheme from NRW which provided farmers with water testing kits. The test results are fed into a citizen science programme, Lorna had held discussions with the programme around the confidentiality of information under the General Data Protection Act.

Engagement around farm assurance standards, FWAG and FWAL is ongoing.

Creighton Harvey noted a conversation that had taken place between himself and Lorna at the Royal Welsh Show. The discussion had focused on a need for the regulator, NRW, to explain reporting and enforcement action options to farmers. It was felt that if this was explained to the industry the fear of self-reporting could be relieved and would also help NRW to develop a consistent approach across Wales.

Nichola Salter confirmed that within her new role for NRW she would be working with the continuous improvement team to review and develop consistency for regulatory enforcement across Wales. This will be developed at pace and reported back to future meetings of the group.

In response to concerns raised about engagement with all farmers in Wales, Lorna confirmed that the project reaches out across Wales via the NFU/FUW membership and local knowledge opportunities. Lorna confirmed that all feedback received at the engagement events was being recorded including a list of farmers who had expressed an interest in water quality testing and offered farm walks.

AP 1 Aug. NRW to consider release of the Paper written on behalf of the Land Management Forum, presented at the NRW Board May 2019 meeting to be shared with the Sub Group for information. (Bob Vaughan/Marc Williams)

AP 2 Aug: Discussion to be held on how the water quality model can be used at the Sustainable farming roadshows held by Menter a Busnes (Sara Jenkins/Lorna Davies).

4. Agricultural Regulation Update (Andrew Chambers/Spencer Conlon, WG)

Andrew Chambers confirmed that a meeting had been held on 16th July to discuss regulatory impact assessment which is currently under development, noting concerns on the draft developed by ADAS. The deadline for submission of comments and concerns for the Minister to consider is 10th September.

AP3 Aug: Email address for feedback to be circulated to the group (Marc Williams).

SLMEnquiries@gov.wales or SLMEnquiries@llyw.cymru

AP4 Aug: Date for next group meeting to be set ahead of 10th September deadline and notified to group members. (Andrew Chambers)

5. Shared & Contested Values Questionnaire (Bob Vaughan, NRW)

Bob Vaughan confirmed that NRW is currently undertaking a research project via contractors and sought the collaboration of the group.

AP5 Aug: Information on the project and engagement routes to be shared with the group for wider cascade. (Bob Vaughan/Marc Williams).

6. Planning Issues – discuss and develop a plan to understand the issues and how to address them with Local Authorities (Creighton Harvey, CFF / All)

Creighton Harvey presented the summary document which had been distributed to forum members ahead of the meeting.

Rachel Lewis-Davies confirmed that a meeting of the Intensive Agriculture Working Group meeting had been held on 7th August where it had been agreed that a protocol to ensure liaison between Local Authorities and NRW be developed. The working group had been challenged by WG to develop a Technical advice note (TAN) for intensive agriculture. It was noted that the timeline for developing the new TAN was challenging. Rachel also confirmed that the number of local authorities in attendance was low.

The Chair concluded the discussion with a recommendation, agreed, that the forum write to the Intensive Agriculture Working Group to raise the concerns noted in the paper presented. The letter was to highlight a need for all local authority planning departments to be engaged in the forum and for the development of the planning application process to recognise the challenges from the Slurry management requirements, January 2020, creating an enabling planning system.

AP6 Aug: Forum to provide feedback. Chair to write to the Intensive Agriculture Working Group Chair noting the feedback raised by the Forum members and noting the points of concern raised in the paper presented (All/Chair).

AP7 Aug: NRW Forum Members to liaise with Jackie Walters, NRW rep at the meeting on 7th August to offer policy support and engagement. (Nichola Salter, NRW)

7. Innovation Challenges (Bob Vaughan/Marc Williams, NRW)

Following the Innovation session led by Gareth Browning, (WG) Bob Vaughan and Marc Williams had developed a starting list of 16 challenges with the suggestion that the group select up to 3 challenges. These challenges could then be presented to WG to seek funding for contractors to work with NRW to consider and develop responses to these challenges.

AP8 Aug: Develop an explanatory brief to share with NFU/FUW members to seek a list of challenges. (Bob Vaughan)

AP9 Aug: Group to consider challenges and provide feedback to the Forum. (All)

AP10 Aug: Further meeting to be arranged to discuss challenges identified and confirm next steps with regards to seeking funding from WG. (Marc Williams, NRW).

8. Dairy Project Update (*Nichola Salter, NRW*)

Nicola confirmed that she was providing support over the summer in place of Matt Lowe, who is currently on holiday.

The Diary officers have made over 400 Diary Farm visits with report writing a key priority moving forward. There will be a delay on uploading the information to the database until all outstanding reports have been completed and sent to the landowners. It was noted that the recent reorganisation of staff, under the Organisation Design project, had presented resource challenges within the Team. The recruitment of the Project Manager is due to conclude shortly with interviewing for the 4 replacement Diary Officers to be completed during September. The project is currently funded until 20th June 2020.

Data is currently being gathered, Sarah Hetherington will be engaging with a statistician on her return from holiday to quality assure the data ahead of its release to the group.

Marc Williams confirmed that an action from the previous meeting was to develop a newsletter, it was suggested that the Diary Project could be included within the newsletter.

AP Aug 11: Data to be shared with the Group ahead of the 10th September deadline for comments to the Minister. (Bob Vaughan)

AP Aug 12: Briefing note on Diary Farm Project prepared for the Royal Welsh to be shared with the Group (Marc Williams)

AP Aug 13: Draft Newsletter to be shared with the group for comment ahead of publication and wider distribution to the Industry as soon as possible. (Marc Williams).

9. SoNaRR (*Bob Vaughan/Marc Williams, NRW*)

Marc Williams confirmed that Nicola Taylor, NRW, had prepared a written briefing for the group. The interim SoNaRR2 report is due for release December 2019. NRW noted that it wished to improve liaison with stakeholders for the second report and will be arranging webinar's.

The group were asked to consider the following areas of evidence gap

1. Enclosed farmland
2. Land-use and soils

AP Aug 14: Briefing to be shared with the Group and email address for feedback to be provided, along with a full list of ecosystems being assessed under SoNaRR. (Marc Williams)

AP Aug 15: Nicola Taylor to attend next forum meeting to discuss Forum engagement options. (Geri Mills/Nicola Taylor).

10. Farming Connect Agri-Pollution Delivery Programme (Sara Jenkins, Menter a Busnes)

Sara confirmed that the National Sustainable Farming campaign continues with a further 6 events planned across Wales. The events will be similar to the ones held last year. Farmers will need to attend the event in order to apply for the Sustainable Production Grant (SPG).

Soil & Grassland and infrastructure clinics had been successfully held with final numbers to be circulated to the forum. These clinics are aimed at providing an introduction to the advice available from Farming Connect.

Farmers continue to be encouraged to engage with the Advisory Service to develop nutrient management plans.

Training – the window for submission of applications for training opens again in September.

The forum noted the press feedback on NRW following the targeted water bodies press release from Farming Connect. The aim of the press release was to provide information to farmers on the services available from farming connect. Farming Connect apologies for the negative aspects placed on the press release by the BBC.

Targeted Water body events: 4 events had been held to date with a further 8 to be arranged. There have been issues with their list of farms in catchments again this year and are relying on Farming Unions and NRW to promote the events and circulate information to landowners. Ffermio S4C had expressed an interest in attending an event, Sara suggested that the invitation be extended to another event which will include the Voluntary Approach on Nutrient Management project. Forum agreed, Sara to approach the Ffermio S4C team.

AP Aug 16 Circulate the final number of attendees to the Soil & Grassland and the infrastructure clinics to the Sub-Group (Sara Jenkins)

AP Aug 17: Dates for the future Water Body Events to be circulated to the Forum Members for wider circulation. (Sara Jenkins)

AP Aug 18: Ffermio S4C to be invited to wider WLMF Events (Sara Jenkins)

11. Arrangements for future sub-group meetings (Marc Williams/Geri Mills, NRW)

Dates and venues for future 2019 meetings were confirmed. A visit to the Gwent Levels was suggested during 2020.

AP Aug 19: 2020 dates to be developed and shared with the group (Geri Mills).

AP Aug 20: Group members to forward any suggestions for site visits during 2020 to Marc Williams/Geri Mills (All forum Members).

12. Minutes from meeting on 8th July & outstanding action points (Marc Williams, NRW)

The minutes of the meeting held on 8th July were confirmed as a true and correct record of the meeting with no amendments.

AP Aug 21: Minutes from July meeting to be uploaded to NRW Website (Geri Mills)

Update on Actions from July Meeting:

AP3 July: Discharged

AP4 July: Marc Williams to follow up and provide update.

AP5 July: Discharged

AP5 July: Discharged

AP7 July: Discharged

AP8 July: Forum members to review and update all outstanding actions. (All)

AP9 July: Marc Williams to share dates from Nichola Taylor for Area Statement workshops.

13. Update on relevant diary activities (All)

Steven Bradley confirmed that Dwr Cymru will be holding its [Water Source Conference on 1st October](#). Forum Members wishing to attend were welcomed to contact Steven directly.

AP Aug 22: Forum members wishing to attend the Conference to contact Steven Bradley (All).

14. AoB (All)

River Basin Management Plan review 2020 – confirmed that the group will be involved in the review planned for 2020.

Steven Bradley confirmed that Dwr Cymru would be launching its [Pesticide Disposal Scheme on 13th August](#) will share further information for cascade to the group.

AP Aug 23: Further information on the Scheme to be shared with Forum Members. (Steven Bradley)

15. End
