

GLOVER REVIEW AND FARMING IN PROTECTED LANDSCAPES

Purpose

To advise members of progress with implementation of the Glover Review of Designated Landscapes in England and announcement of the Farming in Protected Landscapes programme.

FOR INFORMATION

Key Issues

- The 'Glover' Landscapes Review of National Parks and AONBs in England was published in 2019 with 27 'Proposals' for Government.
- Proposal 5 states: "A central place for national landscapes in new Environmental Land Management Schemes".
- The formal response from Government has yet to be produced but is anticipated sometime this year. The delay of the Environment Bill may be related to the timing of the response.
- The NAAONB and AONB lead officers are collaborating with DEFRA on the provision of information, statistics and case studies in support of implementing the Glover Review.
- Recent collation of figures for DEFRA identified at that in 2019/20 the DEFRA core funding for the 34 AONBs in England totalled £2.05million against which the AONBs levered in an additional £9.24million.
- 'Farming in Protected Landscapes' was published in the Agricultural Transition Plan in November 2020 for establishment from April 2020. Details and clarification on implementation are awaited from DEFRA.
- The NAAONB secured funding from DEFRA for each AONB and National Park to deliver advocacy work with farmers in relation to Countryside Stewardship and the forthcoming Environmental Land Management scheme.

Reasons

The Glover Review in England was broadly welcomed when published in September 2019. The Government has yet to make a formal response. Meanwhile DEFRA officials continue to work with stakeholders, including the National Association for AONBs (NAAONB) on progressing preparations for the implementation of the Review.

The Path to Sustainable Farming: An Agricultural Transition Plan 2021 to 2024 was published in November 2020. This included a 'Farming in Protected Landscapes' programme (see appended below and/or the full document is available to download here:

<https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/agricultural-transition-plan-2021-to-2024>)

To progress the advocacy work with farmers the NAAONB has arranged 3 seminars to promote Countryside Stewardship and the forthcoming Environmental Land Management scheme to farmers and land managers in AONBs and National Parks in England. The flyer for these events, entitled 'Agri-environment schemes and the future: How to get the best for your business' is attached.

Implications

The NAAONB and AONB lead officers have been responding to a range of requests from DEFRA officials in support of implementing the Glover Review and preparations for the Government's Comprehensive Spending Review. This has included the collation of funding which identifies AONB leverage of 450% on the DEFRA core grant. Engagement with farmers and advocacy of the Environmental Land Management scheme is progressing.

As part of the advocacy work with farmers in relation to Countryside Stewardship and the forthcoming Environmental Land Management scheme, the Wye Valley AONB Unit has posted out over 100 copies of the attached flyer to farmers and land-managers in the AONB. In addition partners, including the NFU, Herefordshire Rural Hub and Herefordshire Meadows Network have also circulated the flyer electronically to their members. Unfortunately the first event, on February 22nd had to be cancelled or postponed due to ill health of the organisers.

Details are awaited from DEFRA on the Farming in Protected Landscapes programme. It is expected that guidance on implementation will be issued shortly. It is likely there may be some grant allocation process, potentially through the AONB Partnership. However, the funding criteria, administration, delegation, support, monitoring and distribution has yet to be clarified. Hence it is currently difficult to measure the impact on the AONB Unit and benefit for framers and land managers in the AONB.

Proposals and discussions on a National Landscapes Service for AONB s and National Parks, as outlined in the Glover Review, are on-going in government.

Background

For more information on the Review of Designated Landscapes in England visit <https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/designated-landscapes-national-parks-and-aonbs-2018-review>

Appendix

Extract from (pages 44-45)

The Path to Sustainable Farming: An Agricultural Transition Plan 2021 to 2024

<https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/agricultural-transition-plan-2021-to-2024>

B.6 Farming in Protected Landscapes

We want: To support farmers and other land managers in Protected Landscapes*, to help them diversify their income streams and lay the groundwork for our Environmental Land Management offer.

*The 44 Protected Landscapes include 10 National Parks and 34 Areas of Outstanding Natural Beauty

We will: Provide support to farmers, via National Park Authorities and Areas of Outstanding Natural Beauty bodies, to help grow businesses, create green jobs, enhance biodiversity and invest in infrastructure to attract more diverse visitors to support local economies.

Farmers in Protected Landscapes operate in challenging agricultural conditions and are often very reliant on Direct Payments. At the same time, they provide huge environmental, social and cultural benefits.

In addition to the other policies laid out here, we are proposing a specific and time limited package to help farmers adapt during the transition. This programme will support farmers and land managers so they can work with Protected Landscapes to deliver environmental outcomes, lay the groundwork for our Environmental Land Management offer, and contribute towards the delivery of recommendations in the Glover Review of National Landscapes.

Scheme description

The scheme will deliver funding through the Protected Landscapes bodies to support farmers, particularly upland farmers (75% of whom live and work in Protected Landscapes) to make improvements to the natural environment, cultural heritage and public access on their land.

Eligibility

Farmers and other land managers in Protected Landscapes will have the opportunity to work with their National Park or Area of Outstanding Natural Beauty. More information will be provided on this scheme in early 2021.

Payments

The scheme will use existing delivery mechanisms through Areas of Outstanding Natural Beauty and National Park Authorities, who have existing infrastructure and relationships across Protected Landscapes.

The spend each year would support delivery against two complementary areas: (A) farm level projects and (B) wider infrastructure and projects on farmland.

Farmers and other land managers will benefit from:

(A) Farm level projects to diversify incomes, prepare for our Environmental Land Management offer and create more green jobs.

- Support for farmers for delivering environment/landscape outcomes. Examples might include peat restoration, planting woodland, hay meadow restoration, creation of heathland and scrub, moorland management, enhancement of wetlands, and dry-stone wall repairs
- Support to farmers on areas such as carbon capture, business planning, and skills development including apprenticeships

(B) Wider infrastructure investment and projects supporting farmers and rural economies

- Infrastructure, such as better access, clearer and simpler signage, dedicated cycling/electric bike access – to attract more diverse groups of visitors (to farm businesses, camping barns, etc.) as well as creating jobs (e.g. expansion of landscape rangers supporting farmers and visitors)
- Strengthened public engagement with landscapes to attract more, and more diverse, visitors, improving mental health outcomes and better disabled access; walking routes to better connect landscapes.

Timings

We will be providing more information about the scheme in early 2021.