



Department
for Environment
Food & Rural Affairs

Tests and Trials Evidence Report

Schemes for environmental land management

June 2021

Version: 1.0

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Executive summary

This is the third in a series of evidence reports sharing the key findings from Tests and Trials arising from September 2020 to the end of March 2021. These findings originate from individual tests and trials as well as discussion points from stakeholders participating in our third round of Thematic Working Groups (TWGs). The findings have been categorised according to our six priority themes (Land Management Plans, Spatial Prioritisation, Collaboration, Role of Advice and Guidance, Payments and Innovative Delivery Mechanisms).

This report has been compiled by the Defra Tests and Trials Team and is intended as a collation exercise rather than an analysis or evaluation report.

1. Highlight findings

Evidence continues to demonstrate that developing land management plans (LMPs) can provide a range of benefits for farmers and land managers. There is support for the use of an LMP template, provided it allows for the individuality of each holding. There is agreement that visual maps are an essential component of any template. Some tests and trials have advocated for the integration of digital mapping tools with templates to increase flexibility of the LMP and enable a more accurate summary of public goods.

There is agreement amongst tests and trials that many farmers and land managers would value advice in the early stages of an agreement, but that it should remain optional. There is also appetite for building capacity and self-reliance in the sector. Most farmers and land managers feel they will need support when considering more complex or ambitious land management practices.

There are concerns that there may be a lack of appropriate advisers on the market ahead of the launch of the new schemes. One solution recommended by tests and trials is for a local board to oversee advice provision at local scale.

Support is emerging for the concept of a local convener who could coordinate collaboration efforts and priority setting at a local level. Three tests and trials have suggested that a local board, comprised of key local stakeholders, should also have a key role in scheme delivery alongside a convener.

Feedback remains mixed regarding the scale at which priorities should be set. There is support for both the use of broad frameworks such as National Character Areas Statements (NCAs) and smaller spatial areas, such as catchments and landscapes. Tests and trials have continued to highlight the inconsistencies in availability and accessibility of data sets required for local priority setting.

Emerging evidence suggests that farmers and land managers are more likely to collaborate over shared interests and objectives. Tests and trials have also highlighted that facilitation, financial incentives and effective governance may be required to enable

collaboration. Where there is a reluctance to collaborate, findings suggest that confidence and enthusiasm may increase with experience and opportunities to participate in low-risk collaboration, such as farm walks, could help to alter perceptions.

There is now a clear consensus that payment rates calculated by the current income forgone + costs (IF+C) approach are a poor incentive for farmers and land managers. Tests and trials have suggested several alternatives to the IF+C approach, including the combination of IF+C with a top up results-based payment, points-based payment systems, and natural capital-based payments.

Tests and trials have explored how public and private funding could be blended to deliver public goods across the three schemes. There is support for a local board to oversee the governance of local blended finance schemes.

2. Conclusion

Since the publication of the previous evidence report we have developed a mechanism for reporting how test and trial findings map across the 3 environmental land management schemes. An overview of high-level findings categorised by scheme is provided at annex A. We will continue to add to this throughout the lifecycle of tests and trials.

Introduction and purpose

The purpose of this report is to share the key findings from Defra Tests and Trials arising from September 2020 to the end of March 2021. At the time of writing we have seventy-eight test and trials underway (see Annex A), with twenty-eight of these having concluded. The findings detailed in this report originate from individual tests and trials as well as discussion points from test and trial stakeholders participating in our third round of Thematic Working Groups.

This report has been compiled by the Defra Tests and Trials Team and is intended as a collation exercise rather than an analysis or evaluation report. It is the third in a series of evidence reports as we continue to progress the Tests and Trials programme.

Tests and trials have been running since 2018 and will continue throughout and beyond the pilots and introduction of the future schemes so we can understand if and why things don't work and improve operability, value for money and outcomes. We have used a phased approach to delivering tests and trials and have selected proposals that contribute to our understanding of one or more of the six priority themes (Land Management Plans, Role of Advice and Guidance, Spatial Prioritisation, Collaboration, Payments, and Innovative Delivery Mechanisms).

In 'The Path to Sustainable Farming: An Agricultural Transition Plan 2021-2027' (published November 2020) Defra outlined that there will be three schemes aimed at paying for sustainable farming practices, creating habitats for nature recovery and making landscape-scale changes. To demonstrate how test and trial findings may influence policy development we have provided an overview of high-level findings mapped across each of the schemes at annex A. We will continue to build on these findings throughout the lifecycle of tests and trials.

Headline findings and evidence by theme

The following section outlines the findings gathered by each priority theme, with some additional findings drawn together in the final section. The policy questions for each theme are detailed in annex C. The themes are as follows:

- **Land Management Plan** - what would be included in a plan, how long it should be and what information is needed to support the land manager or farmer
- **Role of Advice and Guidance** - the level and role of advice and guidance required to support farmers and land managers in the uptake and successful delivery of the future schemes
- **Spatial prioritisation** - to test mechanisms to identify and agree local priorities
- **Collaboration** - to test how different mechanisms of collaboration would work to deliver environmental outcomes
- **Payments** - to test different approaches to valuing environmental outcomes and how these might work in practice

- **Innovative delivery mechanisms** - how these could be rolled out more widely and in what circumstances. For example, trialling payment by results and reverse auctions

A wide range of farmers and land managers from across England have contributed to these findings through workshops, surveys, farm walks and one-to-one interviews. We have engaged with over three thousand farmers and land managers across a range of sectors to date.

3. Land management plans

Forty-six live tests and trials have worked with a variety of farmers and land managers to test and develop land management plans (LMPs) during the period covered in this report. Over two thousand farmers and land managers are engaged in these tests and trials across a wide range of sectors and geographies. Most farmers and land managers participating in these tests and trials have enthusiastically welcomed the LMP approach.

The key focus for the tests and trials under this theme is to determine whether the LMP is a useful tool for helping farmers and land managers to plan and record which public goods they will deliver.

Findings

Evidence from tests and trials continues to show that developing **LMPs can provide a range of benefits** for farmers and land managers. Several tests have reported that the process can increase farmer's confidence in identifying public goods on their land, as well as deepening their understanding of what they can do to deliver them alongside their commercial activities.

There is continued recognition amongst tests and trials that use of **an LMP template could ease the application process** for each scheme. However, templates must allow for the individuality of each farm - for example, by accounting for different farming sectors, landscapes and more complex agreements such as tenant farmers/commons. We have now received twelve holding-scale templates which will help to inform the structure and content of the LMP. These templates have been either co-designed or tested with farmers and land managers across a diverse range of sectors and geographies. An example templates is included at Annex B.

There is clear consensus that **LMPs should be simple and work at all scales**. This aligns with an emerging preference amongst farmers and land managers to have one LMP that can be used to apply for all of the environmental land management schemes and build ambition gradually. All of the templates received to date are designed for use at holding scale, although many of them include options for collaboration with neighbours. The majority of the templates can be adapted to the needs or preferences of the farmer or land manager, although they do vary in complexity and detail. The Cuckmere and Pevensey Catchment Partnership test found that a simple, open-ended template

encouraged farmers to think creatively about what their farm could deliver, and in some cases provoked a round table intergenerational discussion about the farm's future.

However, it is clear that **simplicity of the LMP should not come at the cost of essential detail**. Farmers from the horticulture sector have stressed the importance of having a baseline auditing method that is sufficiently detailed to capture the complexity of agroecological systems involving crop rotation, polycropping, and circular systems for managing natural resources. They felt that an accurate method of quantifying public goods delivery would avoid mistakes and penalties, and ensure smaller growers are able to benefit from the new schemes. One Wildlife Trust-led test has suggested that a universal core plan for all farms, with optional extras for specific farming sectors, could be used to maximise flexibility of the LMP.

There is strong agreement that the LMP should include **an environmental baseline assessment of the holding**. Many test and trial participants feel that establishing a baseline could help them to understand the potential for public goods delivery on their farm, as well as the importance of identifying the good work already being delivered at the outset of an agreement. There is also consensus that the baseline could play a key role in monitoring during the lifetime of an agreement. Two tests and trials are exploring whether a scorecard LMP could make the monitoring process easier.

A growing body of feedback suggests that many farmers and land managers across tests and trials see a role for **business planning alongside the LMP** – either as a part of the LMP process itself, or by bringing in farm business advisers to support decision making. Ten of the twelve test and trial templates gather some form of background information on the holding, whilst half of these incorporate detailed business information, such as sources of income and farm business analyses (looking at strength, weaknesses, opportunities and threats). The North Devon Pioneer found that the following were key features of an LMP:

- A farm business situation report
- maps and tables identifying the key opportunities to enhance the quality and quantity of natural capital

These two parts taken together appeared to help farmers make informed decisions regarding future management of their business and whether to shift the balance between food production and environmental delivery. Nonetheless, some test and trial farmers remain reluctant to release financial information to advisers, particularly if they are not familiar with them.

An overwhelming majority of test and trial farmers and land managers have confirmed that **maps provide a vital visual element in the LMP**. All of the templates received to date recommend or make use of at least two maps: one which demonstrates the current baseline of the land and another to show future opportunities. A growing number of farmers, land managers and advisers have suggested that digital maps could be particularly useful for enabling a more spatially accurate, concise summary of public goods actions. Although, feedback highlights that some farmers may be reliant on the support of family members and advisers to use such tools.

In addition to consolidating information about environmental management in one place, **digital tools may have further benefits**. The Sustainable Food Trust highlighted that Apps such as SoilMentor have helped to equip farmers and land managers with the skills required for self-assessments. Also, growers participating in Cornwall Wildlife Trust's test pointed out that digital mapping tools could be beneficial in the context of complex agreements. As a sector dependent on short-term tenancies and crop rotation they responded positively to the concept of digitally mapped agreements with 'amend' options. This aligns with feedback from NFU South East farmers that they would value the option to amend the plan as necessary.

Five tests and trials have now **advocated for earned recognition in the LMP through membership of existing certification schemes**. Participants in all of these tests and trials viewed earned recognition as a good way to reduce administrative burden, bureaucracy and unnecessary auditing required to participate in different schemes. Some schemes have identified that existing platforms and assessments they use could be easily translated in their current format. However, the Soil Association has acknowledged that it may be challenging to harness the collective capabilities of certification schemes as they vary greatly in scope, capability and structure. Also, some test and trial farmers have stressed the importance of all scheme applicants being treated fairly and equally. The Sustainable Food Trust suggest that a mandatory completion of an annual sustainability assessment for all scheme users could automatically incorporate earned recognition where relevant.

There has been some **support for self-monitoring of the LMP** if training or guidance was provided, for example uploading photos to Apps or completing simple surveys. Several suggested that photos and demonstrations of good practice and how outputs should look would be helpful. The Broads Authority concluded that self-assessment can be a useful tool to increase and improve the delivery of outcomes but raised concerns about it being used for official monitoring and for the setting of payment rates, and identified challenges relating to subjectivity. They highlighted the essential role of an adviser for verification of outcomes, rather than monitoring.

4. Role of advice and guidance

We have forty-three tests and trials that are working with a range of farmers and land managers to test what advice and guidance would be needed to help farmers and land managers identify and deliver public goods. We are looking at the role of adviser, including the format of advice, stages advice may be needed and how we quality assure that provision.

Findings

There is agreement amongst tests and trials that **many farmers and land managers would value advice in the early stages of an agreement**. Feedback indicates that advice would be useful for identifying public goods on the farm, enhancing aspirations, highlighting missed opportunities and providing reassurance during the scheme application process. However, some test and trial farmers feel that **advice should be optional**, and schemes should be simple enough for farmers and land managers to navigate independently if they choose to do so.

There is **appetite across tests and trials for building capacity and self-reliance in the sector**. This would enable farmers and land managers to develop the skills and understanding needed to engage with schemes using minimal advice over time. Evidence from farmers participating in the Natural England Catchment Sensitive Farming (NE CSF) test indicated that their need for advice may decrease over time with support and familiarity – over half of the farmers participating in the test wanted advice support throughout the whole process of developing an LMP. However, most felt that once they were familiar with the process, they would be comfortable completing it themselves in the future.

There is further support for peer-to-peer learning approaches, particularly during the delivery stage of an agreement. Twenty-five farmers exploring Nature Recovery Networks in North Cornwall found that discussions with other farmers and local advisers helped to build a strong understanding of, and interest in, local ecology. Also, the Cuckmere and Pevensey Catchment Partnership test identified that peer-to-peer learning can be particularly helpful in improving the delivery specific environmental outcomes. However, the trial also identified that some form of facilitation may be needed to deliver this practically. There were also certain areas for which participant farmers preferred one-to-one advice, such as business planning. This was echoed by farmers in Surrey Hills Area of Outstanding Natural Beauty (AONB), who have supported a blended approach to advice with a mix of one-to-one, peer-to peer, and online advice and guidance, as well as demonstration events.

There is a growing consensus that **most farmers and land managers will require advice when considering uptake of more complex or ambitious land management practices**, such as those under the Local Nature Recovery and Landscape Recovery schemes. Test and trials have highlighted that working with an adviser can encourage farmers and land managers to be more ambitious when establishing an agreement. Also,

TWG members have highlighted a role for advisers in signposting farmers to specialist support and working with facilitators to provide specialist input to collaborative farmer groups when required.

Tests and trials have narrowed down the **key characteristics of effective advisers**. There is agreement that advisers should have:

- a strong understanding of business and economics, farming, and ecology
- the ability to build strong relationships
- continuity and trust with farmers
- local knowledge and familiarity with the area
- GIS mapping skills

The majority of test and trial farmers feel that one-to-one, face-to-face advice is the most effective approach for influencing scheme uptake and delivering environmental outcomes. However, there are concerns that **there may be a shortage of appropriate advisers on the market**. Tests and trials are also supportive of a training strategy to ensure enough advisers are available across all sectors and geographies for the launch of the new schemes.

Views continue to be mixed regarding adviser accreditation. Test and trial farmers have identified gaps in existing adviser skillsets, such as business expertise and carbon accounting, and have suggested that some form of certification could be helpful in building trust and upskilling the market. Also, farmers in the Broads agreed that certification can help to ensure consistent quality of advice, and that continued professional development and training of advisers is critical, **suggesting two to five years of relevant experience is needed to deliver good advice**. However, participants in the Surrey Hills AONB test expressed concerns that a complex registration process could mean some trusted advisers do not – or cannot - engage with the new schemes. Similarly, some participants in the NE CSF test questioned whether certification could guarantee knowledge.

There is **support across three tests and trials for a local management board**, comprised of local stakeholders, to oversee advice provision at local scale. The Cuckmere and Pevensy Catchment Partnership test identified that a local board could support the development of a sufficient pool of advisers and assessors for the schemes. Similarly, there is support amongst farmers in AONBs for AONB-wide teams to play a key role in the delivery of scheme advice.

Whilst many farmers and land managers favour one-to-one advice, **there are concerns amongst tests and trials regarding the cost of advice**. Feedback suggests that most farmers would prefer for Defra to provide funding for advice, particularly at the point of entry. This stems from concerns regarding prohibitively high costs of advisers and specialists. Farmers in the Broads Authority's test favoured an approach whereby advisers were funded and either accredited and registered with the funding body or employed directly by the funding body, although there was also support for up-front grants for independent advice. An approach allowing the farmer to choose their own adviser, by incorporating the cost of advice in the scheme payment was also proposed.

Farmers in Kent Downs AONB have raised concerns that a market-led approach to advice would be advantageous to more prosperous sectors. This could unfairly penalise smaller holdings and enable those who can afford advice to benefit more from the new schemes. They suggested that upfront advice costs could be refunded through the funding body only if applications are approved.

There is further evidence highlighting the **benefits of guidance resources throughout the lifetime of an agreement, as well as the most effective formats for different learning styles**. The Organic Research Centre test built on participant farmer's experience of the COVID-19 pandemic, and the consequent increase in online guidance usage. Whilst participants confirmed that face-to-face interaction remains their preferred format for support, the test concluded that digital guidance, such as videos, podcasts and live interactive events can deliver information to farmers effectively. Farmers felt that videos are particularly useful for visualising actions. They also identified a range of benefits to video and podcast guidance, such as reduced time and resource requirements compared to in-person events and increased scope for national and international knowledge transfer. It remains clear that for some farmers poor rural connectivity and confidence/familiarity using technology are barriers to accessing online and digital resources.

5. Spatial prioritisation

We have forty-three tests and trials exploring how, and by whom, spatial prioritisation could be carried out, as well as identifying the most effective scales and mechanisms for targeting environmental outcomes.

Findings

Support is emerging for the **concept of a local convener** who could coordinate collaboration efforts and priority setting at a local level. This aligns with previous feedback that local leadership of the prioritisation process is of key importance, and that a trusted, main point of contact for local scheme delivery would be welcome. The majority of TWG participants agreed that a convener should be based locally and should have deep understanding of the local area. Also, that they should have the ability to build long-lasting relationships and encourage join-up between the organisations and processes that are already in place, such as AONBs and National Parks.

There is an emerging requirement for local stakeholder bodies to work alongside local conveners to ensure an appropriate balance of national and local priorities in an area. Two tests and trials have expressed **support for formally constituted local management boards** comprised of key local stakeholders, such as farmers and land managers, conservation organisations, local authorities and internal drainage boards. The local board would hold a range of responsibilities, such as the identification of local priorities and provision of support for land manager groups collaborating to deliver environmental

outcomes. The Cuckmere and Pevensey test suggested that a local board and convenor should work together to develop priorities in a language that all local stakeholders can relate to, so that they are more likely to be adopted and delivered. This growing enthusiasm for local boards aligns with previous feedback that the prioritisation process benefits from the involvement of a wide range of stakeholders and that it is critical that farmers play a key role in this process

Tests and trials have continued to **explore a range of processes which could be used to determine local priorities**. The majority of these involve a wide range of stakeholders, including farmers and land managers, many of whom have detailed knowledge of land productivity, soil types, wetness, exposure, and past management. Feedback suggests that consultation of a wide range of local stakeholders is essential for engaging people and for developing a shared understanding of the aims of the new schemes locally. Within this, some tests have taken bottom-up approaches to setting priorities. For example, twenty-five farmers in North Cornwall determined priorities for a Nature Recovery Network through guided open discussions and found input from outside experts useful, as well as the appraisal of available data. In contrast, the Peak District National Park Authority used National Character Area statements as the basis for discussions with a wide range of local stakeholders. Farmer participants in this test supported this approach as it provided them with an opportunity to ensure the viability of prescriptions affecting their land.

We have continued to receive mixed feedback regarding the **scale at which priorities should be set**. There is support for the use of broad frameworks such as National Character Areas Statements (NCAs) as they encompass most of the six public goods and are simple and easy to understand. There is agreement that high-level strategic priorities should act as a guide for local priorities rather than an enforcement. Some tests and trials have set priorities at much smaller scales, such as catchments or landscape areas, although feedback suggests that some public goods, such as historic landscape, air quality and climate change may be better administered at a larger scale.

Tests and trials continue to report **challenges regarding the accessibility and quality of data for setting priorities**. The North Devon Pioneer reported licensing as a barrier to obtaining necessary datasets, whilst one Cornwall-based test reported that the support of experts was needed to interpret poor quality local datasets. There is strong agreement that an integrated approach to assessing data, including ground truthing and the involvement of local experts may be necessary. Kent Downs AONB has suggested that such an approach could help bridge gaps in existing datasets focused on access; Rights of Way Improvement Plans do not necessarily indicate where access networks could be located but are more focused on the necessary type of improvement to access routes.

There is **continued support for the use of digital mapping tools** to present data and support the prioritisation process. The key requirements for an App or tool include:

- Ability to store all information related to scheme agreement
- Ability to submit monitoring reports
- Option to update and amend local datasets regularly
- Interface for two-way contact with advisers

- Option to link holdings to depict collaborative delivery of outcomes

Tests and trials have **explored a range of existing Apps, as well as developing new ones to meet specific requirements**. The use of national map viewers such as MAGIC maps has been suggested as a potential useful tool to choose different prioritisation areas according to individual requirements as it shows different data layers with the possibility to cut the area to size. Equally, Cheshire Wildlife Trust and Liverpool John Moores University have developed EcoservR, a natural capital mapping tool which can produce a detailed, accurate natural capital register with over two hundred possible habitat types. They found that it provides a rigorous, standardised method to measure the change in the delivery of environmental outcomes.

6. Collaboration

Twenty-two tests and trials are working with approximately seven hundred farmer and land managers to explore how different methods of collaboration work to deliver environmental outcomes at scale. These tests and trials are gathering evidence on the mechanisms and incentives necessary for successful collaboration between farmers, as well as the barriers that may need to be addressed. By demonstrating the benefits of collaboration through tests and trials we also hope this will help to overcome existing barriers for farmers and land managers to collaborate effectively.

Findings

Three tests and trials have suggested that farmers and land managers are **more likely to collaborate over shared interests and objectives**. Eighty farmers and land managers in the Broads strongly supported a collaborative approach to the delivery of sustainable wildfowling, predator management, and breeding wader habitat provision. They also identified a growing need to collaborate over water availability. Similarly, the Peak District test found that sharing a commonality with other holdings could foster collaboration. For example, shared underlying geology, soils or cultural/heritage features.

An overwhelming majority of tests and trials under this theme have concluded that **financial incentives are key to effective collaboration**. Farmers in the Kent and Sussex Wildlife Trust test agreed that a collaboration payment would help develop closer working practices and encourage shared delivery of environmental outcomes. It remains unclear how this should be calculated or administered. Views amongst twenty-nine farmers and land managers in a CLA-led test varied - some felt that collaboration funding should cover facilitation, whilst others suggested it should deliver a bonus payment to land managers or consist of a landscape scale results-based bonus.

Farmers participating in the Broads Authority's test agreed that **to encourage effective, efficient collaboration a standalone document should be in place** that sets out agreed objectives, actions and delivery milestones. This document would be separate to the LMP. Similarly, thirty farmers in an RSPB-led test in south Devon highlighted that it would be important for the purpose and function of any collaborative group to be agreed prior to any

action taking place. The group felt that the need for simplicity, clarity of goals and effective management increases with the number of land managers collaborating within a group.

Tests and trials continue to highlight the **essential role of facilitation in effective collaboration**. There is agreement that facilitators should coordinate group meetings, source expert advice, engage with hard-to-reach land managers, and establish effective communications amongst the group. Farmers in the Peak District test suggested that an external facilitator would alleviate some of the main concerns around sharing sensitive information and lack of confidence in approaching neighbours. However, farmers in a test led by the Barningham Estate stated that they would prefer to have control over which activities they undertake collaboratively in order to meet objectives, rather than relying upon external support. They suggested utilising the skills of individuals within their group of land managers to lead on specific tasks, such as hedgerow planting and dry-stone walling.

Regarding **who should facilitate or lead the collaborative delivery of outcomes**, participants in the North Devon Pioneer referred to existing local projects which have been successful. They felt that charitable organisations, local communities, private stakeholders or arms-length bodies would be ideally placed to coordinate activity. Similarly, participants in Buglife's pollinator-focused test cited existing groups led by farm clusters as good collaborative examples.

Two AONBs have trialled a **peer to peer approach to facilitation**. Blackdown Hills AONB recruited two Farmer Ambassadors who were tasked with signing up a group of up to ten farmers from their immediate area. Initial findings indicated that the approach succeeded in involving farmers who have never before participated in agri-environment schemes. Cornwall AONB found that having an influential, confident and successful local farmer to talk to other farmers about environmental land management has encouraged involvement from other farmers.

In line with the previous evidence report, further test and trial participants have demonstrated a **willingness to collaborate in some form and continue to identify a range of benefits**. The North Cornwall Nature Recovery Networks test found that collaborative meetings resulted in farmers having a better understanding of and interest in local ecology. They also helped the formation of a group identity and a shared vision of how habitats can be provided in the landscape to support local wildlife. Evidence from the North Devon Pioneer points to benefits such as access to expert advice, maximising of the value of farmers' own actions on farm, ensuring that the benefits of their actions were not jeopardised by the actions of their neighbours and a wide range of social capital benefits.

A small number of land managers remain **uncomfortable with the idea of collaborating with others**. Farmers in the Broads highlighted risks to successful collaboration in two areas – not meeting objectives due to the actions or inactions of other group members and secondly, not meeting group objectives due to outside factors such as weather and climate change. One suggestion to address this was the possibility of splitting any payment into two parts, one for annual management tasks and collaboration activities and a further payment in the future following monitoring and delivery of objectives. Tests and trials are

continuing to explore what barriers may need to be addressed, with emerging findings suggesting that confidence and enthusiasm may increase with experience, and opportunities to participate in low-risk collaboration, such as farm walks, could help to alter perceptions.

7. Payments and innovative delivery mechanisms

The tests and trials under this theme focus on the financial incentives needed for the delivery of environmental interventions, methods of calculating payment rates, appropriate basis of payment, natural capital valuation approaches, and payment frequency and triggers. This theme also incorporates novel financial delivery mechanisms, such as reverse auctions, results-based approaches, and blended finance.

Findings

There is now a clear consensus that **payment rates calculated by the current income forgone + costs (IF+C) approach are a poor incentive for farmers and land managers**. Feedback suggests that IF+C payment rates are inaccurate and unreliable as they do not reflect the true costs involved in management, such as long working hours not recorded in the farm budget. The Buglife test found that current IF+C rates cover just 70% of the costs of creating pollinator habitats. A range of farming sectors have expressed concerns about the approach, including small-scale arable, uplands and horticulture. The Landworkers Alliance test has highlighted that the traditional focus on land area rather than the nature of environmental and social goods delivered means that IF+C is not appropriate for smallholdings, many of which deliver substantial public goods on smaller farms.

Tests and trials have suggested several alternatives to the IF+C approach. For example, there is support for a combined approach of IF+C with a top up results-based payment or sliding scale of performance. This would provide some of the benefits of results-based approaches with certainty and familiarity of single payments. Alternatively, there is further support for a points-based payments system whereby holdings are scored according to their public goods value. Feedback suggests that this approach fulfils the demand for the future schemes to be inclusive of all farmers, non-competitive or divisive, and administratively straightforward. Some test and trial farmers favour locally tailored payments to account for regional variation in costs. Other tests and trials are exploring the use of value transfer approaches to calculate the total ecosystem service value of key natural capital types.

Tests and trials have stressed a **critical need for capital grant funding in the new schemes**. Farmers in the Broads Authority's test highlighted that infrastructure grants to support reed and sedge cutting, including machinery grants for cutters, training grants to encourage entry into the industry and essential capital grant funding for land use change projects (such as habitat creation and large water management projects).

There is **further support for fixed, regular payment schedules** amongst test and trial participants. However, the preferred frequency for payments varies across tests and trials. Suggestions range from monthly payments on specific dates, to being paid two years of intervention following verification of compliance in year one.

Three tests and trials have found **financial modelling tools to be useful when discussing the impact of environmental delivery on farm business planning**. The North York Moors National Park (NYMNP) test developed and tested a tool that highlighted the differences in payments that would be required to maintain the current income of different sectors across the National Park. Some farmers in the Kent Downs AONB test supported the idea of applying prioritisation to payments through HydroloGIS modelling. Ranking payments in this way would ensure the most effective interventions would be paid at a higher rate, although several participants were not confident in the accuracy and effectiveness of the tool to support its use for allocating payment rates.

Tests and trials have **continued to explore the role that results-based approaches could play in the future schemes**. The National Trust Payments for Outcomes (PfO) test concluded that a whole farm results-based approach (whereby a range of public goods are delivered simultaneously on the same farm) is a feasible mechanism for scheme design. The majority of thirty tenant farmers participating in this test favoured a tiered payment system as it provides a stronger incentive than single payments. They also agreed that the assessment and payment process for a results-based scheme would be simpler if it incorporated the whole holding. However, the PfO test identified several barriers to the approach, including complexity, farmer's confidence and time, provision of trusted advisers and pace of mindset change.

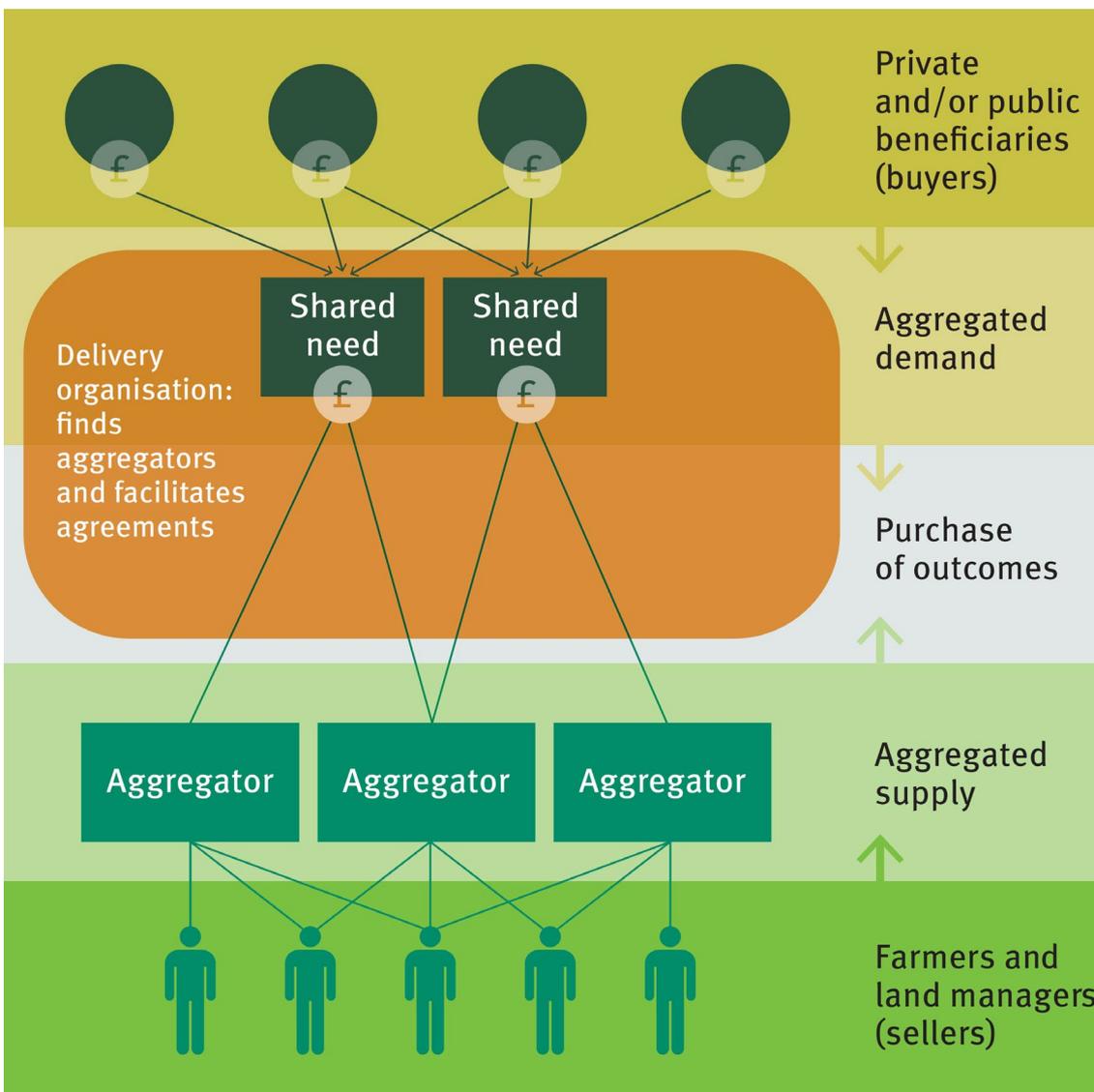
Farmers participating in reverse auction trials have continued to show a dislike for the approach in the initial stages of engagement. In line with previous findings, farmers participating in an RSPB-led test felt that reverse auctions promote a "race to the bottom" mentality and suggested that the use of competitive mechanisms could be divisive of rural communities. However, farmers responded more positively to the concept following explanation of the proposed auction scoring system and the potential for reverse auctions to help set location-specific rates. To date, findings from reverse auction trials highlight the importance of extensive participant engagement and the critical role of a trusted facilitator.

The National Trust and Green Alliance test has **produced a toolkit designed for stakeholders seeking to establish blended finance schemes**. It provides guidance on the steps necessary to initiate and complete successful transactions with multiple beneficiaries and suppliers, using insights from farmers in their trial scheme in the Eden river catchment in Cumbria. The toolkit outlines five key steps for procurement:

1. Identifying opportunities for private funding trading
2. Aggregate supply and demand by developing a local purchasing partnership
3. Develop demand specifications, and supply propositions to identify buyers need and what sellers can provide
4. Negotiating agreements and trading
5. Growing a regional network

The National Trust and Green Alliance have designed proposals for **how private funding through their Eden model could be aligned with public funding** under the environmental land management schemes. For example, they have suggested that funding for outcomes under the Local Nature Recovery scheme should be linked by supply aggregators (with input from demand aggregators) who design complementary suites of interventions to deliver against both public and private needs. Equally, under Landscape Recovery they have highlighted the possibility of designing trades specifically for both public and private benefits, with commensurate contributions from each.

Figure 1: The Eden Model, whereby supply and demand of ecosystem services are aggregated to facilitate purchase of outcomes. National Trust and Green Alliance.



There is support across four tests and trials for **blended finance schemes to be developed and governed by a local delivery board**. National Trust and Green Alliance highlighted that as trades expand, some form of organisational infrastructure and governance is required to manage and broker them in an equitable, transparent and locally accountable manner. Similarly, Cuckmere and Pevensey highlighted that a local

board a could provide a robust governance framework to ensure that clear accreditation and monitoring systems for delivery of outcomes are in place.

8. Other findings

Support is emerging amongst tests and trials for **formally constituted local management boards to support scheme delivery in a number of areas**. Tests and trials have suggested that a local board, comprised of elected representatives, could act as a key source of information for local farmers and land managers - overseeing local advice provision, managing governance of blended finance, and incorporating local knowledge into the prioritisation process.

Tests and trials have continued to report **concerns regarding the eligibility of tenant farmers and land managers under the new schemes**. Farmers participating in the Broads Authority test highlighted that reed and sedge cutters, and graziers are often not tied into the payment received by landowners or agreement holders, despite being critical to outcome delivery. Farmers in the Peak District test reiterated that short-term tenancies could inhibit farmers from investing in a long-term vision for the land. They can also be an issue for those neighbouring land in short-term tenancy, as they struggle to work collaboratively due to regular changes in the neighbouring tenant.

We have wide-ranging received recommendations from tests and trials for **how public access could be funded and delivered** via the new schemes. Kent Downs AONB identified that there is an appetite for providing permissive and enhanced access amongst farmers and land managers, but the payment rates must be at a level that provides an incentive to do so. This test suggested that developing and maintaining access routes could require collaboration as part of a geographical-based cluster or a specific access-based cluster.

Conclusion

Over the past six months tests and trials have continued to contribute to explore how the building blocks of the new schemes could work on the ground with farmers and land managers. We are now able to build a working picture of how test and trial findings map across the new environmental land management schemes and will continue to add to this as more tests and trials conclude (annex A).

With the launch of the Sustainable Farming Incentive Pilot approaching, we intend to build on the successes of tests and trials with wider groups of farmers. This may include, for example, testing some of the LMP templates we have received with pilot participants to understand how they could work in different sectors and geographies. The work of individual tests and trials will also continue throughout piloting and wider scheme rollout so that we can continuously prepare and support the piloting of the schemes and improve scheme operability.

We have developed a learning strategy which ensures that the knowledge and evidence acquired from tests and trials is gathered and used in a meaningful way to inform recommendations and decisions shaping policy development, scheme design and user up-take.

One of our current key priorities is testing different mechanisms by which we can achieve Landscape Recovery. We launched a call earlier this year looking for further tests and trials to co-design mechanisms by which we can achieve this. We will continue to review gaps and priorities and any emerging issues that we can meet through future phases of tests and trials.

Annex A: headline findings by scheme

9. Land management plans

Universal findings

1. Farmers prefer a guide or template for the LMP
2. For farmers to buy into the approach it needs to be owned by them
3. LMP needs to be flexible so that it changes over time and can be used to track and monitor delivery across more than one scheme
4. Use of LMPs increase the confidence of farmers to identify the environmental outcomes that could be delivered on their land
5. Key feature includes:
 - a) A map
 - b) Basic farm details
 - c) Environmental baseline
 - d) Public goods delivery assessment
 - e) Aspirations and opportunities

Sustainable Farming Incentive

1. Producing an LMP can build farmer's confidence and familiarity with public goods delivery
2. LMP can ensure existing/historical public goods delivery is documented and rewarded through baseline assessments
3. LMP can inform how environmental actions could work alongside commercial activities
4. There is support for members of existing standards and certification (e.g. Red Tractor, Organic) to receive earned recognition in the LMP
5. Some tests and trials have overlayed the Sustainable Farming Incentive Standards with existing LMP templates to see how the planning process could work in a real-life environment

Local Nature Recovery

1. LMP can incentivise landscape scale collaboration
2. Maps and mapping tools help farmers to see individual holdings in the context of the wider landscape
3. Use of digital mapping tools has been well-received, but paper-based maps and plans should remain available.
4. Two distinct approaches to developing landscape-scale plans have emerged: top-down and bottom-up
5. The LMP provides a mechanism for individual farmers to verify and update natural capital data sets regularly
6. Farmers and land managers likely to require advice when developing and implementing more complex LMPs

Landscape Recovery

1. Farmers and land managers like the idea building ambition gradually across schemes
2. Farmers and land managers would prefer to use the same LMP to enter multiple schemes
3. There is support for LMPs as overarching long-term frameworks
4. LMP must include break clauses and opportunities to update the plan
5. Individual holding LMPs could be linked to depict landscape-scale interventions
6. There may be a role for LMPs in attracting blended finance

10. Role of advice and guidance

Universal findings

1. Advice should be optional for scheme entry
2. Comprehensive guidance packages could support farmers and land managers with developing an LMP
3. Key roles for advisers include identification of public goods opportunities, reassurance, and signposting to specialist support
4. Feedback suggests that the most effective advisers are trustworthy, good communicators, based locally, and have a strong understanding of farming and the environment.
5. Farmers would prefer to select their own adviser
6. There are mixed views on adviser certification

Sustainable Farming Incentive

1. Farmers know their land best, but support, such as guidance, training and/or specialist advice, is likely to be required to enable farmers and land managers to engage with the future schemes
2. No consensus on whether chargeable advice should be paid for by the funding body or individual farmers and land managers as and when they see a benefit to it
3. Principal concerns with a market-based approach to advice include affordability, possible disadvantage to small holdings and potential to dictate the advice available on the market

Local Nature Recovery

1. Advice should be optional for entry to the scheme but might be wanted by some farmers and land managers (e.g. for reassurance)
2. Guidance should consider a diverse range of farmer and land manager needs, learning styles and willingness or ability to access content types. Toolkits could include written guidance, videos, and workshops

3. Digital methods, such as videos and podcasts can be effective for delivering information. Where possible, they should mimic key elements of face to face support, for example delivered by local, trusted, experienced advisers and peers

Landscape Recovery

1. Farmers and land managers are more likely to need advice as ambition and scheme complexity increase
2. There is agreement that farmers should complete their own LMPs. However, most will need support when developing and implementing more complex plans
3. Local delivery boards may have a role in coordinating advice, and identifying and delivering training opportunities
4. Trusted relationships established between farmers and their advisers can encourage uptake of more ambitious schemes
5. Expert support for local nature recovery groups could be administered in either group or individual settings
6. Facilitators may have a role in coordinating the delivery of advice and providing expert information for group discussion

11. Spatial prioritisation

Universal findings

1. Most tests and trials are looking at prioritisation processes which adopt a combination of 'top-down' and 'bottom-up' approaches
2. 22 tests and trials are developing new landscape scale plans, but most are yet to be delivered and analysed
3. Available spatial data can be inconsistent or lacking in detail
4. Farmers' own knowledge has been found important in ground-truthing or supplementing existing data
5. A variety of existing plans and policies (e.g. AONB Management Plans and National Character Area (NCA) profiles) have been found helpful for identifying high-level priorities, but are not fine-grained enough for land managers to identify priorities at holding level
6. Farmers and land managers feel best placed to evaluate the appropriateness of delivering priorities on their land
7. There is positive feedback regarding the use of web-based platforms for facilitating the prioritisation process

Local Nature Recovery

1. There are mixed views regarding the level of text and detail needed to communicate priorities in landscape plans

2. We are exploring the role of the convener - there is support for the idea of the convener being local, with an understanding of the area, and the ability to build long-lasting relationships
3. Tests and trials are looking at variety of scales for priority setting, including regional, county, AONB, National Park, catchment, and sub-catchment.
4. Some participants prefer catchment or sub-catchment scale whilst others see the advantage in identifying public goods at national or regional scale, while offering farmers a menu of interventions to choose from which would be scored reflecting the local, spatial context
5. There is support for a local governance board leading a map-based approach to prioritisation. The inclusion of farmers was stressed as necessary to ensure the deliverability of agreed priorities

Landscape Recovery

1. We are looking at the role of local governance could play in balancing local/national priorities, with specific functions including leveraging blended finance and monitoring delivery
2. We are exploring the use of tools which can be used for the classification of natural capital, blended finance, and a range of spatial strategies. One trial is exploring the use of UK Habitat Classifications for this purpose

12. Collaboration

Universal findings

1. Tests and trials have identified a range of potential benefits to co-ordinated delivery of environmental outcomes at different scales. These include increased social capital, business profitability and improved environmental outcomes. Others have highlighted that working together can improve social contact and knowledge sharing
2. We have received consistent findings to suggest that a major barrier to collaboration is farmers' fear of being penalised for the inaction of individuals within a collaborative agreement; another is the reluctance to share knowledge and information about their own businesses

Local Nature Recovery

1. There so far not a consensus over which collaboration model works best, whether a mixed approach or sector-based groups would be more successful
2. Some farmers favour a 'bottom-up' co-design approach in which they maintain a sense of ownership over group work, with facilitators playing a supporting role only
3. There is consensus amongst tests and trials that most farmer and land groups will require some form of facilitation, regardless of size, sector, and focus. A facilitator's skillset includes the initiative and commitment to drive things forward and effective leadership

4. There are mixed opinions regarding the type of financial support required: while some explicitly refer to a collaboration bonus, others want a clear return on investment or access to additional scheme funding

Landscape Recovery

1. Collaboration could be more difficult where neighbours are absentee landlords or are part of a larger corporate organisation
2. We have received feedback from two national park trials that short-term tenancies are a barrier to collaboration as they inhibit delivery of environmental outcomes
3. A key incentive for farmers to collaborate is financial support – but it is not yet clear how much funding groups and individuals will require

13. Payments and innovative delivery mechanisms

Universal findings

1. Farmer views on results-based payments remain varied
2. There is support for a combined approach of action-based payments with an outcome based 'top up' payment
3. Income forgone plus costs (IF+C) payment rates do not offer sufficient incentive to deliver environmental outcomes
4. IF+C rates assigned by participants are generally higher than existing rates
5. Participants have identified a range of capital and transactional costs which they would like to be funded under the future schemes
6. Farmers support natural capital-based payment rates. However, calculating natural capital values remains challenging
7. Tests and trials have stressed the importance of fixed date payment schedules with regular and reliable payments throughout the lifetime of an agreement

Local Nature Recovery and Landscape Recovery

1. Early evidence suggests that reverse auctions provide good value for money, with payment rates set at auction being lower than current CS rates
2. The NatureBid reverse auction platform has been well-received by participants
3. Reverse auctions may be a suitable mechanism to deliver natural flood management measures through a catchment scale collaborative approach
4. Emerging findings suggest that delivery of complex landscape scale measures such as woodland creation through reverse auctions may require substantial input of engagement and advice
5. Tests and trials have developed private payment models which are designed to link with public funding under Landscape Recovery
6. There may be a role for a local delivery board in facilitating blended finance
7. Conflicting regulatory requirements and baselines, along with risk of double funding, have been identified as key barriers to blended finance

8. Results-based approaches are viewed as fairer than existing Agri-environment schemes and have been shown to deliver greater environmental benefits in certain circumstances. However, there is concern that risk of external factors (e.g. adverse weather) would be off-putting to farmers and land managers
9. There is support for a tiered payment structure within a results-based scheme

Annex B: Tests and Trials land management plan template example

1. Cuckmere and Pevensey Catchment Partnership

Table 1 – About my farm

| | |
|---|--|
| Name | |
| Farm | |
| Size | |
| Owned or rented? | |
| What is your main farm business? (give as much detail as you like) | |
| Have you diversified? | |
| Accreditation schemes? | |
| Who do you get your advice from? | |
| Got any plans for your farm? | |
| Which environmental aspects of the farm are you interested in? | |

Table 2 – What am I already doing on the farm for local and national land management priorities?

| What? | What am I doing? | Where? Mark it on the map | How do you want this to be measured? | What incentive do you think you should get for this? | Would it help to work on this issue with your neighbours? |
|--------------|-------------------------|----------------------------------|---|---|--|
| | | | | | |
| | | | | | |

Table 3 – What would I like to do?

| What? | What am I doing? | Where? Mark it on the map | How do you want this to be measured? | What incentive do you think you should get for this? | Would it help to work on this issue with your neighbours? |
|--------------|-------------------------|----------------------------------|---|---|--|
| | | | | | |
| | | | | | |

Table 4 – What training or advice do you think will help you? Some examples are given here but put in what you like.

| What? | Training in a group | On farm advice specific to your holding, i.e. an advisor coming over |
|---|----------------------------|---|
| Farm business advice – management and financial | | |
| Soil health | | |

Annex C: List of live and concluded Tests and Trials

| Organisation | Title | Location | Thematic Priorities |
|---|--|--|---|
| 23 Burns Collective | Development of Land Management Plans | Northumberland coastal strip from Bamburgh to Howick | Land Management Plans Advice & Guidance Payments Collaboration |
| Broads Authority | Test and Trial for the Broads | The Norfolk Broads and Broadland Rivers Catchment in Norfolk and NE. Suffolk | Spatial Prioritisation Advice Payments Collaboration |
| Buglife | Testing Monetary Incentives for delivering Landscapes for Pollinators | England | Land Management Plans Advice & Guidance Payments Spatial Prioritisation Collaboration |
| Country Land and Business Association | Wildlife Estates | Ford & Etal Estate, Northumberland; Woodhall Park Estate, Hertfordshire; Monkton Farleigh, Wiltshire; Holkham Estate, Norfolk; Knepp Estate, West Sussex; Tregothnan Estate, Cornwall | Land Management Plans Advice & Guidance Collaboration |
| Country Land and Business Association | Incentivising sustainable farming and forestry practices that deliver public benefits | Countrywide | Land Management Plans Advice & Guidance Payments Innovative Mechanisms |
| Lanhydrock Estate | Respryn Natural Capital Project "A bridge between Economic and Environmental Delivery" | 5000 hectares in Cornwall around the Respryn Bridge area and Fowey catchment | Advice & Guidance Payments Spatial Prioritisation Land Management Plans |
| Cotswolds Conservation Board, Cotswolds AONB | Researching and piloting the need for local payment rates and options to achieve outcomes in the Cotswolds | Cotswolds AONB | Land Management Plans Advice & Guidance Local Prioritisation Innovative Mechanisms |

| Organisation | Title | Location | Thematic Priorities |
|--|---|---|---|
| Dartmoor National Park | To test and trial a plan-based approach, building on our experience of Dartmoor Farming Futures | Dartmoor National Park | Spatial Prioritisation Land Management Plans Payments |
| Exmoor National Park | Using natural capital to deliver the 'broadly accessible scheme' in upland and pastoral landscapes | Exmoor National Park | Land Management Plans Spatial Prioritisation |
| Farming and Wildlife Advisory Group South West | Multi-functional land and water management on the Somerset Levels | Somerset Levels & Moors | Payments Advice Spatial Prioritisation Innovative Mechanisms |
| Farming and Wildlife Advisory Group South West and Partners | Integrated Local Delivery Framework | Upper Thames Catchment, Gloucestershire | Collaboration Spatial Prioritisation Advice & Guidance Land Management Plans |
| Foundation for Common Land | Development of a Commons Proofing Tool | Countrywide | Land Management Plans Spatial prioritisation Collaboration |
| Forestry Commission | Urban woodland creation | Great Manchester, Merseyside, Cheshire, Greater London Authority areas | Land Management Plans Spatial Prioritisation Advice |
| Forestry Commission | Agent LMPs | Three mixed use estates in South East England | Land management plans Advice & Guidance |
| Linking Environment and Farming (LEAF) | LEAF Demo Farms and LEAF Marque as an ELMS platform | England | Land management plans Advice & Guidance |
| NAAONBs | Farming for the Nation: Areas of Outstanding Natural Beauty (AONBs) as test beds for a new Environmental Land Management System | Blackdown Hills, East Devon, Kent Downs, Surrey Hills, Cornwall, Cranborne Chase, Tamar Valley, Dorset, Quantock Hills, Forest of Bowland, Nidderdale, North Pennines | Land management Plans Advice & Guidance Spatial Prioritisation Collaboration Payments |
| National Trust | Developing a farmer led Nature Recovery Network | Bude to Newquay | Spatial Prioritisation Collaboration Advice & Guidance |
| National Trust | Payments for Outcomes: working towards a whole farm approach | The Yorkshire Dales | Land Management Plans Advice & Guidance Innovative Mechanisms |

| Organisation | Title | Location | Thematic Priorities |
|--|--|---|---|
| National Trust | Steppingstones: Whole Farm Plans | Shropshire hills | Land Management Plans Advice & Guidance Spatial Prioritisation Collaboration Payments |
| National Trust and Green Alliance | Test of the Natural Infrastructure Scheme concept through integration with LENS and EnTrade (the 'Eden Model') | The Petteril & Ullswater Catchments, Cumbria | Innovative Mechanisms |
| Northumberland National Park | Curlew Contracts | Northumberland National Park | Land Management Plans Spatial Prioritisation Advice & Guidance Payments |
| Ordnance Survey | N/A | Upper Thames Catchment, Gloucestershire, Northumberland National Park and Cornwall LEP | Spatial Prioritisation |
| Peak District National Park | Using the White Peak National Character Area (NCA) for testing and trials ideas | Peak District National Park – White Peak NCA, Dark Peak/SW Peak and/or Derbyshire Peak Fringe and Lower Derwent NCA | Land Management Plans Spatial Prioritisation Advice & Guidance |
| RSPB | Developing and testing a local collaborative ELM offer to support and maintain species recovery in South Devon | South Devon | Spatial Prioritisation Collaboration |
| RSPB | Investigating the potential for reverse auctions to deliver the recovery of priority species | South East England | Innovative Mechanisms Collaboration |
| RSPB | Developing and testing self-assessment of environmental land management scheme options | Cambridgeshire fens arable farms and the Broads | Land Management Plans Advice & Guidance |
| Small Woods Association | Small Woodland management option - Strategic networks for sustainable woodland management | Cumbria; Churnet Valley & SW Peak; Eastern Clay lands; Surrey Hills; Cotswolds; North Devon; Marches | Advice & Guidance Land Management Plans Collaboration |
| Soil Association and Partners | Testing the Public Goods Tool for ELM | Exe Valley [Simons bath to Exmouth] The Clun [Craven | Land Management Plans Advice & Guidance Spatial Prioritisation |

| Organisation | Title | Location | Thematic Priorities |
|---|--|---|--|
| | | Arms to Church Stretton] | |
| Sustainable Food Trust | Harmonisation of standards | Countrywide | Land Management Plan Advice & Guidance Collaboration |
| Gloucestershire Wildlife Trust | A facilitated, farmer-led approach to the delivery of environmental public goods on a landscape scale across Gloucestershire, Worcestershire, Berkshire, Buckinghamshire, Oxfordshire, Hampshire and the Isle of Wight | Gloucestershire, Herefordshire, Worcestershire, Berkshire, Buckinghamshire, Oxfordshire, the Hampshire and Isle of Wight. | Land Management Plan Advice & Guidance |
| Cheshire Wildlife Trust | A natural capital base, farmer-led model of the delivery of environmental public benefit on a landscape scale in the uplands - Cheshire Wildlife Trust | Upper River Dane catchment, Cheshire, Peak District National Park | Land Management Plans Advice Spatial Prioritisation |
| Beds, Cambs and Northants (BCN) Wildlife Trust | Delivering a catchment-based nature recovery network - The Wildlife Trust for Bedfordshire, Cambridgeshire and Northamptonshire | Upper Nene Valley Catchment (Northampton to Peterborough) | Land Management Plans, Advice and Guidance, Spatial Prioritisation |
| Kent and Sussex Wildlife Trusts | Delivering ELMS at a landscape scale through Farmer Clusters - Kent and Sussex Wildlife Trusts | Cross Kent and Sussex borders | Advice & Guidance Collaboration |
| Cornwall Wildlife Trust | Development of a Natural Capital assessment tool and App. | Cornwall Wildlife Trust reserves and nearby farms | Land Management Plan Spatial Prioritisation |
| Cornwall Wildlife Trust | Incentivising ELMS for contract farmers – Cornwall Wildlife Trust | West Cornwall | Land Management Plan |
| North Yorks Moors National Park | North York Moors National Park Authority (NYMNP) building on the success of previous schemes to achieve better collective outcomes | North Yorks Moors National Park | Spatial Prioritisation Payments Innovative Delivery Mechanisms |
| GWCT | Practitioner-led farm monitoring | South of England (mainly Wiltshire) | Land Management Plan |
| Clinton Devon Estates | Catchment Co-design in East Devon: testing collaborative approaches to landscape planning and ecosystem service delivery | Beer & Lower Otter Catchments, East Devon | Land Management plans Advice and Guidance, Spatial Prioritisation, Payments |
| En Trade | EnTrade/Wessex Water Reverse Auctions | Poole Harbour Catchment, Dorset | Innovative Mechanisms Payments Collaboration |

| Organisation | Title | Location | Thematic Priorities |
|---|--|--|--|
| Cuckmere & Pevensey Levels Catchment Partnership | Cuckmere & Pevensey levels land management pilot | Cuckmere & Pevensey Catchment [From High & Low Weld in the North to the South Downs], East Sussex | Land Management Plans Advice & Guidance Collaboration Spatial prioritisation Innovative Delivery Solutions |
| Woodland Trusts | Agroforestry in England | National Test across England, which will represent regional variation and will include grassland-based livestock systems in the south west, lowland arable systems in East Anglia; horticultural systems in south east and flood prone upland areas in the north west. | Advice and Guidance Payments |
| Natural England | Catchment Sensitive Farming | The Rivers Mease, Humber, Wye & Till; East Suffolk Rivers | Innovative Mechanisms Advice & Guidance |
| Environment Agency (EA) | EA NatureBid | Somerset; Kent & Cheshire; | Innovative Mechanisms Payments |
| Landworkers' Alliance and Growing Communities | A Horticulture Environmental Land Management Scheme | Countrywide | Land Management Plans Advice and Guidance Payments |
| Cholderton Estate | The Cholderton Estate Pilot | This test will cover an area of approximately 2,500 acres on the Hampshire/Wiltshire border. | Land Management Plans Advice and Guidance Spatial Prioritisation Payments |
| Aqualate Castle Holdings | Aqualate Mere Farmer-led Catchment Land Management Plans | Aqualate Mere, Staffordshire/Shropshire Border | Land Management Plans Collaboration Advice & Guidance Spatial Prioritisation |
| Cholderton Estate | Establish a non-statutory advisory board to help the public sector develop a LMP for | Hampshire | Spatial Prioritisation Innovative Delivery Mechanisms Advice and Guidance |

| Organisation | Title | Location | Thematic Priorities |
|---|--|---|---|
| | Hampshire & assist in securing delivery | | Collaboration |
| The Trails Trust | How to incentivise green infrastructure access and biodiversity creation | Mendip Hill AONB and surrounding area | Land Management Plans Advice and Guidance Collaboration |
| Lincolnshire Wildlife Trust with South Lincs Water Partnership and University of Lincs | Habitat restoration at landscape scale through a partnership driven market for integrated land and water management services | South Lincolnshire | Spatial Prioritisation Innovative Delivery Mechanisms Payments |
| Breckland Farmers Network | Breckland Farmers Network Test | Breckland Region | Spatial Prioritisation |
| NFU West Midlands | Testing approaches to natural capital delivery in a network of mixed farming businesses in north Shropshire and north-west Staffordshire | North Shropshire/Staffordshire and South Shropshire | Land Management Plans Advice & Guidance |
| Pollardine Farm | A farmer-driven approach for wildlife corridors | Gatten Valley, Shropshire | Land Management Plan Spatial Prioritisation |
| Sylva Foundation | Woodland Creation Software | Northern Forest | Innovative Mechanisms Land Management Plans Advice & Guidance Payments |
| Lincolnshire Wildlife Trusts | Humberhead Levels: a holistic approach to managing peat, water and habitat recovery at landscape scale | Humberhead Levels including Lincs, Notts and Yorks | Land Management Plans Spatial Prioritisation Innovative Mechanisms |
| North Cumbria Farmers Group | North Cumbria Farmers Group – Forgotten Lands | Cumbria | Land Management Plan Advice & Guidance Spatial Prioritisation |
| Plant Life | Plant Life | Herefordshire, Hampshire, Duchy of Cornwall, Worcestershire, Sandringham Estate | Land management plans Collaboration Innovative Mechanisms |
| NFU | Integrated Pest Management | Across England | Land Management Plans Advice & Guidance Payments Collaboration |
| Barningham Farmers Group | Testing an innovative crossholding, collaborative system for planning and delivering environmental management on land that | Barningham Estate, North Yorks | Land Management Plans Payments Collaboration |

| Organisation | Title | Location | Thematic Priorities |
|--|--|---|---|
| | encompasses a variety of farming systems and a tapestry of nationally and internationally important habitats | | |
| The Organic Research Centre | Agricology | Countrywide | Advice & Guidance |
| NFU | Net Zero | National | Land Management Plans Advice & Guidance |
| Lancashire Wildlife Trust | Trialling how Environmental Land Management and net gain could help to deliver the Nature Recovery Network in peri-urban areas | Greater Manchester Peri-Urban areas | Collaboration Spatial Prioritisation Land management Plan Payments |
| Shropshire Wildlife Trust | Connecting the Clees: Shropshire Wildlife Trust | South Eastern hills of Shropshire, which includes part of the Shropshire Hills AONB | Land management Plan Spatial Prioritisation |
| Brown and Co | Exploring how to implement a UK-wide carbon farming scheme | York to Oxford | Advice & Guidance Innovative Mechanisms Payments |
| Agricultural Industries Confederation | Evaluation of Animal, Crop Nutrition and Agronomy Advisors | Nationwide | Advice & Guidance |
| NFU South East | Farmer Group Plans - How to achieve more, bigger, better, more joined up | East Sussex, West Sussex, Hampshire and Kent | LMP Spatial Prioritisation Advice Collaboration |
| Black Sheep Countryside Management | To develop the next generation of collaborative initiatives | Wiltshire | Spatial Prioritisation Collaboration Advice & Guidance |
| 23 Burns Collective | Testing Collaboration Mechanisms | Northumberland coastal strip from Bamburgh to Howick | Collaboration Spatial Prioritisation Advice |
| The Broads Authority | Testing the use of a Local Delivery Board as a steering board supporting a local convener | Norfolk and Suffolk | Collaboration Spatial Prioritisation Innovative Mechanisms |
| Country Land and Business Association | Investigating incentives and payment rates for sustainable farming and forestry across 3 components of Environmental Land Management | Countrywide | Payments |
| South Downs NP Authority | South Downs Farm Clusters | South Downs National Park | Land Management Plans Collaboration |

| Organisation | Title | Location | Thematic Priorities |
|--|-------------------------------|---|--|
| South Downs NP Authority | Testing The Land App | South Downs National Park | Land Management Plan Advice & Guidance Spatial prioritisation |
| Natural England & Yorkshire Dales NP | Payment by Results | Yorkshire Dales National Park and Norfolk | Innovative Mechanisms Payments |
| Environment Agency and Lake District NP Authority | Cumbria Catchment Pioneer | Upper Derwent Catchment and Waver Wampool | Land Management Plan Spatial Prioritisation |
| Natural England | North Devon Landscape Pioneer | 3 operational catchments: River Torridge, River Taw, Hartland and Clovelly. This is also the Landscape Pioneer boundary and the terrestrial extent of the UNESCO Biosphere Reserve. | Land Management Plan Spatial Prioritisation Advice & Guidance Payments Innovative Mechanisms |