

# THE UPLANDS ALLIANCE

A Network For The Future Of England's Uplands

## 2019 Oxford Real Farming Conference:

### 3<sup>rd</sup> Jan: Uplands Session: 1400 – 1800

#### Summary

We propose running three sessions with a cross cutting theme of collective action. The sessions will be focused on:

1. **Maximising the potential of uplands businesses**
2. **Farmers – showcasing Stewardship**
3. **Making the most of the public benefits your farm provides – an Uplands Farming Renaissance**

The Uplands Alliance is a network bringing together those farming and managing the land, influencing policy and researching the uplands. We are all passionate about creating a sustainable future for England's Uplands. Over the last two years through events across the country and a broad Steering Group we have developed a Core Narrative. Our next ambition is to reach out to 20% of hill farmers (1300 farm businesses) to enable them to explore the public payments for public benefits narrative. What does this ambition mean in practice for a livestock farmer in the uplands? There has been plenty of attractive rhetoric but for marginal farm businesses how do we get from here to the bright new future without crashing out in transition. Cross cutting issues we will explore are:

- Business structures that promote resilience balancing food and other products that the are not paid for at the till
- Enabling high nature value (HNV) farming including sustainable grazing of the fells and moors
- Role of commons as a model to develop collaborative action at scale
- How do we create a shared Vision for the Uplands with farmers, tenants and commoners collectively playing a full role and being rewarded fairly alongside landowners whether private or institutional?

We would like to use these sessions to test ideas and thinking with farmers and other attendees at the ORFC. Each session will have a Chair and 3 speakers with a series of questions to engage the participants to explore the issue.

Contact Julia Aglionby 07702 100111 [julia@foundationforcommonland.org.uk](mailto:julia@foundationforcommonland.org.uk)

[www.uplandsalliance.com](http://www.uplandsalliance.com)

## The Proposed Sessions

Each session will have three speakers and a Chair. We expect half the time of each session (assuming 1 hour sessions) to be allocated to structured discussion with the audience. The Overall Chair for the Afternoon is Julia Aglionby, Chair of the Uplands Alliance and Executive Director of the Foundation for Common Land.

<b>Introduction</b>	<b>1400 - 1410</b>
<b>1. Maximising the potential of uplands businesses</b>	<b>1410 - 1500</b>
<b>Break</b>	
<b>2. Farmers - showcasing Stewardship</b>	<b>1530 - 1630</b>
<b>Break</b>	
<b>3. Making the most of the public benefits your farm provides</b>	<b>1700 - 1800</b>

The sessions will address the following areas:

### 1. Maximising the potential of uplands businesses

There are over 6,500 farm businesses in the hills. The average Farm Business Income in 2016/17 was £27,000 before any family labour costs. Basic Payment Scheme income averaged £22,700 and Stewardship payments averaged £11,200. We know BPS will be withdrawn by 2027. How can farm businesses thrive given these financial pressures to keep producing good quality food and public benefits? Will farmers be able to rely on government contracts to pay them on time for delivering public benefits. What will be the impact on remote rural communities if restructuring of landholding occurs?

Speakers:

- Professor Janet Dwyer: Countryside and Communities Research Institute, University of Gloucestershire: Data analysed from the Farm Business Survey
- Will Cockbain: Lake District Hill Farmer and Chair of the Swaledale Sheep Breeders Association
- Robin Milton: Hill Farmer, Chair of Exmoor National Park Authority and Deputy Chair, Uplands Alliance

Session Chair: Patrick Begg, National Trust, Director Outdoors and Natural Resources and Deputy Chair Uplands Alliance

### 2. Farmers - Showcasing Stewardship

Many upland farmers have a strong stewardship ethic and value the landscape they produce and the environment they farm. How can farmers and other land managers actively demonstrate their active custodianship of the Uplands environment; taking responsibility for its upkeep and protection by committing to reduce pollution, increase biodiversity and proactively adapt and embrace the need for sustainability given climate change. How do we deliver all this while maintaining the strong cultural heritage of hill farming and commoning systems?

Speakers:

- Naomi Oakley: a Dartmoor second generation Tenant Farmer, a PFLA certified farmer and commoner
- Viv Lewis, Lake District Our Common Cause Area Facilitator: Our Upland Commons: HLF funded partnership
- Kay Hutchinson: Hill Farmer in Teesdale, Co Durham, and Addicted to Sheep film star

Session Chair: Kevin Bishop; CEO Dartmoor National Park Authority

### **3. Making the most of the public benefits your farm provides – An Upland Farming Renaissance**

The Government's consultation document is very clear that public money will be in return for public benefits. Now is the time to be bold and ambitious. These landscapes need to be supported, managed and enhanced. This will require public investment and new financial structures that recognise the public benefit the Uplands deliver. Like all public services, we need to invest and reward appropriately in order to maintain and enhance these benefits.

What are public benefits? How can we make this work in practice and avoid the huge challenges and pitfalls of the current Countryside Stewardship scheme? Is HNV farming the way forward? How do we reward landscape scale delivery?

Speakers:

- David Corrie-Close: Horn Beef Company and new tenant of a National Trust farm in Cumbria, Vice-Chair (England) Nature Friendly Farming Network
- Hannah Fawcett: a Hill Farmer's experience of the Yorkshire Dales Payments by Results Wensleydale Pilot
- Christopher Price: Director of Policy CLA: Potential of Land Management Contracts

Session Chair: Rob Stoneman; CEO Yorkshire Wildlife Trust

## Biographies

- Julia Aglionby, Chair of the Uplands Alliance and Executive Director of the Foundation for Common Land
- Patrick Begg, Deputy Chair Uplands Alliance National Trust, Outdoors and Natural Resources Director
- Robin Milton: Deputy Chair, Uplands Alliance Hill, Farmer, Chair of Exmoor National Park Authority
- Professor Janet Dwyer: Countryside and Communities Research Institute, University of Gloucestershire
- Will Cockbain: Lake District Hill Farmer and Chair of the Swaledale Sheep Breeders Association
- Naomi Oakley: a Dartmoor second generation Tenant Farmer, a PFLA certified farmer and commoner
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- Kay Hutchinson: Hill Farmer in Teesdale, Co Durham, and Addicted to Sheep film star
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- Hannah Fawcett: a Hill Farmer's experience of the Yorkshire Dales Payments by Results Wensleydale Pilot
- Christopher Price: Director of Policy and Advice; CLA
- Rob Stoneman: CEO Yorkshire Wildlife Trust