

Pendle Hill Farmer Network Newsletter

Welcome to the third edition of the Pendle Hill Farmer Network Newsletter. We hope this finds you and your family well and coping with these strange times. The Pendle Hill Team are all still working from home so if there is anything we can assist you with, please do get in touch. As the Clitheroe office is still closed, so it's best to use email, either Sarah (sarah.robinson@lancashire.gov.uk) or Helen (helen.coar@lancashire.gov.uk) or phone Sarah on 07818 645662. Help and support is also available through the Royal Agricultural Benevolent Institution at <https://rabi.org.uk/> as well as through the Farming Community Network at <https://fcn.org.uk/>.

Upcoming Events

We still can't meet up, even in small groups, but we hope to do so in the New Year. In the meantime, we have arranged another online meeting in place of our usual Christmas celebration.

Adam Briggs from NFU will be joining us on 2nd December 2020 to talk about the developments in ELM, Brexit, trade deals and the direction of travel for agriculture. Although we can't offer our usual pie and pea supper, we hope this will be an informative and enjoyable evening. The meeting will start at 7.30pm and will run for approximately an hour. Please let Helen or Sarah know (on the above emails) if you will be attending. The meeting details are below:

Date: Wednesday 2nd December 2020

Time: 7.30pm

Meeting Link: <https://uso2web.zoom.us/j/86915872438>

Meeting ID: 869 1587 2438

New Pendle Meadows project

This summer Sarah has been surveying meadow sites across the Pendle Hill area, as the start of a project to help to diversify them more, adding in missing characteristic meadow plant species. In the main we have been looking for meadows which already have species such as yellow rattle and red clover in them. Throughout the autumn Sarah has been adding additional seed to those meadows.

So far we have looked at ten meadow sites, seven of which are on member's farm, as well as three mini-meadow patches.

Diversifying meadows and managing them with low inputs of FYM and a late hay cut can be a great way of increasing the biodiversity on your farm, as well as adding to the 'ecosystem services' such as pollination and soil health which your farm can deliver. All important as we move towards the new ELM scheme.

If you are interested and would like to know more, just give Sarah a ring on 07818 845662. This project is part of the Pendle Hill Landscape Partnership 'Wild about Pendle' project and is funded by PHLP.

Future of the Pendle Hill Farmers Network

The Pendle Hill farmer Network has been running since April 2018, and is currently set to close at the end of March 2021. However, there is the chance of an extension for another 12 months, and we would like to take this up.

We still have lots of things we would like to do – work on Integrated Parasite Management, visits to farms across the AONB, support to learn about 'public goods' and lots more on soil health and management, as well as being able to offer endorsements for people applying to Countryside Stewardship this coming spring and support with maps and photos for boundary scheme applications.

Obviously this year we have not been able to hold our normal range of meetings and visits, and so we have not used all the budget allocated to us. It is hoped that we can carry this money forward into an extension period, however we need to show evidence of the following:

- That the group is used and valued by its members
- That the group have a range of relevant topics still to cover during the extension period.

We would be very grateful for your thoughts. We know this sort of discussion is much easier in person, but please, if you have any comments/suggestions, email them either to Helen or Sarah using the email address above.

What's a Hill Worth? Research Project

Natural Capital Solutions (<http://www.naturalcapitalsolutions.co.uk/>) will be carrying out two pieces of work for us. The first is to map and explore the variety of 'natural capital' that exists within our Pendle Hill landscape. Whilst it is difficult to actually put a price on these assets the mapping helps us to identify the opportunity to conserve and better utilise them and the services they provide. NCS will also be carrying out a lengthier piece of research working with three local farms to draw up plans to better manage the natural assets on their land; to explore how this might be linked to payments of future agricultural support; and to discover what their future farm business plans might look like. This research will be fed back to the Pendle Hill farmer network and to other organisations studying natural capital and the future of farming later in 2020.

We will be having an online meeting in the New Year with Alison Hold & Joe Morris from Natural Capital Solutions on how valuing environmental assets can help.

Date: Wednesday 13th January 2021

Time: 7.30pm

Meeting Link: <https://uso2web.zoom.us/j/88559538266>

Meeting ID: 885 5953 8266

Pendle Hill Boundary Restoration Scheme

We have four more hedgerow restoration lengths going ahead this winter, as well as another stretch of walling in the spring. This means that we have reached capacity in the budget available, but we will be seeking further funding, as the scheme has proved so popular with members

