

Land, Life & Livelihoods Conservation Fund application

Celebration and Consultation in the Upper Clun / Project Reference: CF/1617/27

Final Claim (31/3/2017)

Requirements for the year 2016-17

- 1) Hold Land, Life & Livelihoods anniversary weekend: "Fields, Farming & Food"
- 2) Involving school children, plant one/more future veteran oak trees in each parish and/or a hedge or copse linking existing habitats around Newcastle, Mainstone and/or Llanfair Waterdine villages, as the communities wish.
- 3) Produce river information leaflet
- 4) Produce a special anniversary Land, Life & Livelihoods newsletter, to celebrate our first decade, explain our purpose and tell our story from AONB beginnings onwards
- 5) Celebration supper for farmers with talk entitled "Practical Farm Ideas" with Mike Donovan (of *Practical Farm Ideas* magazine) and brief environmental scheme update.

1) Fields, Farming & Food Festival, 4-6 November 2016.

Our Fields, Farming & Food festival took place over the weekend of 4-6 November. As well as gathering together a host of local food suppliers and arranging walks and talks on the subject of fields, farming and food, Land, Life & Livelihoods produced a 12 foot long printed timeline to mark our 10 years' activities, which was much admired (see Interim Claim submitted November 2016). We will consider for the future how and where this can best be stored and displayed.

2) Veteran tree planting

Land, Life & Livelihoods has deferred the future 'veteran' tree planting until October 2017 (w/o 10th Oct to coincide with our founding 'week') because the pre-lambing period has included Land, Life & Livelihoods, AONB and CPRE events, making too much demand on people's time to plan extra activities.

We have made contact with the Head of Newcastle CE Primary School and landowners in the four parishes and agreed to proceed with planting of future 'veteran trees' starting w/o 10th October (to commemorate our founding 'week') on the following plots of land:

- Llanfair Waterdine: Turbary/Triangle (email confirmation from Llanfair Waterdine Community Trust). Also, possibly village recreation field, to be considered, with the community.
- Newcastle: Middle Spoad near new permissive footpath (verbal confirmation from landowner)
- Bettws y Crwyn: Near Old Vicarage/St Mary's Church, Bettws y Crwyn. Trustees of Trebodier and Rhugantine Trust agreeing most appropriate field site.
- Mainstone: on Mr Evans' ground near the Offas Dyke path and Mainstone Church (Ann Lewis is confirming with landowner. Alternatively on Martin Hudson's ground).

We will confirm these tree planting events in the Autumn in writing to the AONB and will photograph the planting activity. Oak and beech saplings to be supplied by Woodland Trust, along with suitable tree

guards. Fencing for sapling protection will be provided as in kind. Please note we are not claiming any costs from this activity in this claim.

3) River information leaflet

A 12 page A5 river information leaflet has been drafted, written by Rob Harris and Joy Greenall. The leaflet aims to inform and educate residents in the Clun Forest about the River Clun and its ecology, geology, topography, habitats (dingles, upland grass/mire and river corridor), plus species associated with the river and wetlands - dippers etc. How it sits within the Teme catchment (a separate leaflet for the Teme is planned for the future); pollution risks and effects and what 'everyone can do' to reduce impacts; advice for farmers and public.

The AONB has given permission for use 'of as many illustrations as wished' from their Water Friendly Farming leaflet' produced in 2008 for which they hold the copyright. This permission and the graphic designer are acknowledged in the Land, Life & Livelihoods leaflet.

A copy will be made available for every household in the 4 parishes. It will also be available electronically and along the route of the recently-created permissive path from Newcastle village to the river near Middle Spoad.

Details of the permissive footpath, opened across the Mill meadows on the evening of our Celebration Summer Stroll and supper in August, by kind permission of Glyn Davies, Bob and Susie Cuning also are provided, along with advice for dog walkers on safe handling where sheep are grazing and the importance of worming pets, for your own health, children's health and the health of livestock.

The River Leaflet will be printed and displayed in boxes for walkers for use in conjunction with the permissive path from Newcastle Village to the River Clun. We will print 500 x A5 12pp leaflets.

Joy Greenall has met with the Severn Rivers Trust to discuss outline plans for a water walk and a 'schools day'/summer gathering for which Mike Morris has agreed some Trust funding. Post lambing, there will be a follow-up meeting with the designer of the River of Lights event in Newtown who helps plan smaller similar events for the Severn Rivers Trust to run in partnership with others.

4) Anniversary newsletter

An 8 page A3 format full colour newsletter was designed (in house) to celebrate 10 years of Land, Life & Livelihoods' activity in the Clun Forest.

Along with facts, figures and statistics, the newsletter's aim was to tell our story from the start, outline our aims and objectives and highlight the amount of work and variety of activities (from bus tours to farmers dens and community consultations to spinning workshops) we have undertaken in a decade, much of it funded by the Shropshire Hills AONB.

We collected quotes from farming and non farming residents on their thoughts about our activities and published some short 'case studies' of farmers who have been helped in some way by Land, Life & Livelihoods. Cath Landles wrote a short piece for the newsletter and we also included a section on 'what happens next,' to encourage people to consider joining us to help with future work, including taking part in planning Brexit consultations in the four parishes.

The newsletter was deliberately kept very visual with many photographs and some basic text. Links to more in depth information on our new website will be included for those who would like to know more.

The newsletter was designed to be kept as a 'keepsake' and a record of 10 years' community and voluntary effort and acknowledges the SHAONB's contribution to our work over the years.



It has been agreed with Cath Landles that the final text on our Beginnings and also Future Work and Consultation post-Brexit and a review with our Christmas 2016 Steering Group can be strengthened by Joy Greenall and others by the end of this month, ready for circulation to the whole community post lambing, in early May. We will print 500 x A4 8pp newsletters w/o 1st May (Craven Print, Craven Arms).

An important section on learning points over our 10 years is included, plus detail of our beginnings and an early exercise with the Steering Group held to clarify and agree our Vision. Also, the necessary time spent on preparing a Business Plan in order to be able to obtain funding, with much appreciated expert help from Nick Read (who formerly worked as an employment specialist with the NFU in Oxfordshire, then as Agricultural Chaplain for Herefordshire Diocese based at Lydbury North, and is now Director of the Bulmer Foundation which exists “to promote sustainable development and sustainable practices in Herefordshire and beyond...”). More recently, a LEADER-funded 18 months period of community work, demanded a large commitment of management time from Joy Greenall, Sarah Jameson and Gill Binks, ably assisted by Joy Howells and our Treasurer, Michael Whithouse who handled the very complex financial requirements. (Most recently Michael has done considerable preparatory work to enable us to apply to become a Community Interest Company).

Encouraged by John Williams, then Head of Sustainability at Shropshire Council and with a small amount of their seed funding, Joy Howells of *Resources for Change* was commissioned to produce a Scoping Study, bringing together much of the work encapsulated in our Land, Life & Livelihoods’ Vision, in a community catchment project for the river Clun and its catchment land. This included an outline Action Plan for Households, Farmers and Landowners and the Community as a whole.

With the importance of both water and soil conservation being recognized both locally, nationally and internationally, for water quality and flood management, and of soil organic matter and structure, to store nutrients and carbon and hold onto potentially damaging free floating sediment, this catchment approach will be returned to, in discussion with both EA and NE CSF. They are wishing to work in partnership with land managers, to achieve high enough water quality status to save the threatened pearl mussel and resilient enough catchment management in our upper reaches to curtail the flooding which threatens towns such as Tenbury Wells and Tewkesbury every year.

Our invitation from NE to re-apply this year for their Facilitation Fund which we narrowly missed gaining approval for last year, is gratifying and encouraging, and will, we trust, provide us with the funds and facilitation resources, plus local and national skills and expertise, to achieve real conservation benefit locally based on conserving and managing surviving high value habitats and creating new linking features.

Aims & Outcomes:

- 1) To clarify and to quantify Land, Life & Livelihoods’ activities over 10 years for both new residents of the 4 parishes and long time residents,
- 2) To explain our beginnings and try to get people to think of the future of the Clun Forest, particularly after Brexit, re threats and opportunities, their wishes for the area and what actions everyone can take to help conserve this special place,
- 3) To help people understand the work of our “Land, Life & Livelihoods” initiative (there is still

- confusion) and our reasons for actions,
- 4) To celebrate our voluntary community initiative's many achievements over a decade in a hopefully visually attractive way

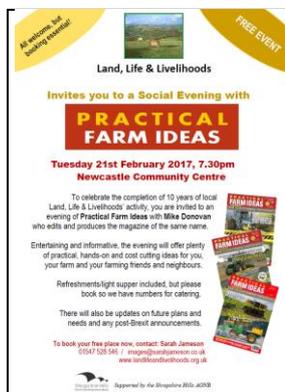
5) Practical Farm Ideas farmers evening and celebration supper– Tuesday 21st February 2017

Land, Life & Livelihoods deferred the date of the Practical Farm Ideas evening from 16th December 2016 to 21st February 2017 to allow for better publicity and attendance and particularly to reach younger farmers and the next generation taking on management responsibility.

The event was communicated to all farmers via a mailshot in the autumn and a reminder in late January (sent to 145 farms, including young farmers separately). The event was also disseminated via Facebook (to attract the younger generation) and on local noticeboards and farmer stores (eg Countrywide and the markets in Bishops Castle and Knighton).

In order to ensure the event was a social one, we wanted to include a hot supper. Michelle Evans from Newcastle cooked a delicious stew with Rhos Fiddle Highland beef (supplied by Trevor Wheeler, Brynmawr Farm) and locally bought vegetables. We had requested bookings for catering, and whereas 46 farmers did book, many more turned up on the night, which was gratifying. In total the attendance was 60 farmers, many of them of the younger generation and many we had not seen at Land, Life & Livelihoods events before, which was very encouraging (and what we had aimed for) since we wish to work more with this age group in future.

The presentation itself was entertaining and enjoyed by all. We captured many farmers' email addresses at registration which will be very useful for future communications and asked for feedback on future planned local meetings, to consult on the future of upland farming, our countryside and viable rural communities following the Brexit vote.



Date: 21/2/2017

Venue: Newcastle Community Centre

Attendees: 60

Volunteer helpers: 5

Outcomes:

- 1) Practical farm advice which farmers can use in future on-farm
- 2) Social evening – for relaxation, enjoyment pre lambing
- 3) Attendance by younger (and new – to us) farmers was encouraging. The event introduced them to Land, Life & Livelihoods and our work and will be a 'hook' by which we can involve them in our future work and communications.

Land, Life & Livelihoods was also a partner in, and lead disseminator (via our mailings) of, the Mainstone local history weekend (May 16) and Llanfair Waterdine's Turbary summer event (June 16) as part of our tenth anniversary year.

In addition to the Fields, Farming & Food festival (see interim report, November 2016), Land, Life & Livelihoods held a Summer Singing & Stroll event down the Folly Brook (August 2016) with outdoor supper, and Bettws Ladies Choir and Bonnie Dobson providing the songs and music.

Along with our Fields, Farming & Food festival (see interim report, November 2016), Land, Life & Livelihoods' activities in 2017/18 have reached out to the whole community, both farming and non farming, and offered information and hopefully inspiration about the Clun Forest and its special landscape. Our Practical Farm Ideas event was entertaining as well as informative and provided a good social event prior to lambing for farmers and landowners. Our Newsletter, produced we hope in an attractive way, will clarify people's understanding about our initiative, how it started, what it has done so far, and why it is so important that it – or something like it – continues into the future.

In Kind funding

Along with over 400 hours of donated volunteer time (worth £7053) plus over £1200-worth of in kind donations (such as travel, B&B and other in kind contributions), Land, Life & Livelihoods received the following 'income' during the project year:

Cash raised

- Fields, Food & Farming event - raffle, teas, soups, donations: £451
- Llanfair Community Trust: £500
- Rhugantine and Trebodier Charity, Bettws y Crwyn for work with young people in the parish: £200 promised
- Bluefin Insurance: £200
- **Amounting to a total of £1251**