

Cross Visit Report Burren to Dartmoor

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1 PROGRAMME OVERVIEW

The HNV-Link Burren cross visit to Dartmoor took place between the 22nd and 25th of November. Two days were devoted to travelling to and from Dartmoor, with 2 full days of meetings and farm visits planned. Friday 23rd of November. The innovation topics identified by the Burren LA before the visit were:

- Producers groups involved in direct sales and online marketing of products.
- Marketing and novel products for adding value to meat and other products from relatively remote HNV areas.
- Innovations linking tourism and HNV farming directly e.g. revenue raised to fund community projects through bed taxes.
- Labour saving technologies – e.g. for control of invasive species, for herding of livestock.
- Integrated approaches to land use management.
- Community well-being initiatives.

The innovation needs broadly relate to adding value to HNV and wider community support. The TB control plans in Dartmoor are of particular interest due to the ongoing discussions and developments in this area in Ireland. These topics led to the joint development of the cross visit programme (Appendix 1) by the Dartmoor and Burren teams. The programme was designed as a knowledge sharing exercise. The main concentration was on improving the Burren participants' knowledge of the Dartmoor innovations with some time devoted to learning from the Burren innovation experiences and their application in Dartmoor. The main topics covered included:

- Overview of Dartmoor innovation including introduction to geographical, cultural and farming systems context.
- Celebrating farming traditions.
- Tourism and Marketing initiatives.
- Agri-environment scheme design, results/outcome based schemes.
- Collaborative farming initiatives: TB control, fire management etc.
- Cooperation, engagement and wider community support.

2 FRIDAY 23RD OF NOVEMBER

The first day began with a meet and greet session, including an introduction to the Dartmoor area by John Waldon.



Particular initiatives of note were “Dartmoor Farming Futures” and “Our Common Cause” which aims to reconnect the public with Dartmoor commons. This round table introduction and discussion established from the start of the visit that the Burren and Dartmoor have shared cultural heritage experiences; extensive farming systems prevail; both have high tourism footfall; they



have similar issues and challenges; and there is significant potential to find solutions together and share innovative ideas.

Second session concentrated on celebrating the farmer with a focus on exchanges experiences from both areas. Brendan Dunford gave an overview of the Burren Winterage Festival and other activities in Ireland including those of the Burrenbeo Trust. A number of initiatives were highlighted: Local schools programmes; Farmer led walks including tea talks; Annual Burren Winterage Festival and School; and the Farming for Nature Awards. In the case of Dartmoor, successful events included "Live Lambing" with approximately 1000 people per week visiting farms to experience lambing. In both areas, it is important people make connections with farming and nature. Importance of media profile emphasised including radio, press, TV and social media. Need to build respect and trust across wider society through engagement with farming and nature.

The final session of the day was a visit to Princetown Prison arm to get an overview of marketing initiatives. This is a mixed cattle and sheep farm. They have explored marketing and selling produce boxes, however that was a lot of work and effort. They have set up a Dartmoor Farmers Association (five Directors – wider association of 60 members, one employee) they try to



sell to butchers directly. Butchers and pubs now the main customers, developing a pie range. When selling, a good salesperson is a big plus as all buyers want the best bit. They have expanded their thinking to look at providing already tested recipes for cheaper cuts e.g. beef and jail ale pie, mince onion and Worcester pie. They have link ups with existing companies so they can invest in people not facilities. Recently have expanded their market into Morrisons supermarkets and happily 95% of lamb have hit Morrisons specifications.

What is interesting about the setup is that most members of the Dartmoor Farmers Association are Duchy of Cornwall tenants. One staff member on the association is sponsored by Prince Charles. The value of being a member of the association is that they provide 5p generally above the trade price.

Looking to the future one of the big issues raised is loss of good stockman skills and ability to respond to market demands.

The day finished with an evening meal at the Forest Inn run by a local farmer. This informal setting allowed for discussions and reflections on the day between Dartmoor and Burren participants.

3 SATURDAY 24TH OF NOVEMBER





Saturday began with a visit to Lower Godsworthy Farm operated by Colin Abel. The visit began with a walk on the commons and an overview of how Dartmoor Farming Futures and agri-environment schemes operate on the ground. This was followed by a Round-table discussion in the farmhouse. The relaxed environment and hospitality of the Abel family resulted in in depth discussions and exchange of ideas on the

future of agri-environment schemes and land management in the area.

Dartmoor farming futures attempts to take a broad approach to a range of ecosystem services/outcomes (nature, carbon, water, fire management, archaeology and landscape)-monitoring for each outcome planned. Look at sites and take photos. Farmers design and run the programme. Importance of facilitator was emphasised. Must reflect localness of the common. Same suite of outcomes but relevance is changed according to local condition. Basis of ecosystem services framework concentrating on synergies between services has been developed. Need to move on now and develop payment systems related to delivery of outcomes/results. Burren experience can be utilised and learnt from in this case. Some concerns expressed about who judges achievement of outcome(s). System must be designed to give the robust and repeatable scores.



The final farm visit of the day was to the farm of Anton Coaker where the focus was on TB control plans, fire management, tourism management and a range of on farm diversification innovations including an on-farm saw milling enterprise.



4 REFLECTIONS AND LESSONS LEARNT

A debriefing session took place on Saturday evening. This was a joint meeting between the Dartmoor and Burren participants over the two days. Key points emerging from this meeting were:

- Key to link in with the many organisations and interest groups in an area.
- Farmer's voices need to be taken into account in decision-making.
- How do we set up better communications/partnership structures? Ideas can be gleaned from "Our Common Cause" and LEAF "Open Farm Sunday".
- HNV-Link important for networking farmers and nature conservation bodies.
- Need appropriated governance structures for common land.
- Need to investigate whole farm approach to ecosystem services provision.
- Hill farm training for department staff and non-farming sector and important take home initiative for the Burren. Will help build further understanding and facilitate knowledge sharing.

Burren participants were very appreciative of the openness of the Dartmoor farmers and stakeholders. The free sharing of information provided an enriching experience for all participants. It is clear that Dartmoor farmers have an entrepreneurial spirit trying a range of innovations.



APPENDIX 1: CROSS VISIT PROGRAMME



PROGRAMME OF THE CROSS-VISIT TO Dartmoor

Host Facilitators:

- John Waldon
- Gwyn Jones

Practical information:

- Clothing: bring warm clothing, rain gear and shoes with ankle support.

Thursday 22nd of November

When	What	Where	With	Comments
22:05	Arrive Exeter Airport			
22:10– 23:00	Transfer by mini Bus to Brimpts accommodation	arrival at accommodation		http://www.brimptsfarm.co.uk

Friday 23rd of November

When	What	Where	With	Comments
9.30	Introduction to Dartmoor, farming systems and commons, at Brimpts Farm. Introduction to Dartmoor's innovations.	Brimpts	David Attwell, Tracy May, Philip French, Helen Radmore	
10.30	coffee	Brimpts		



11.00	Celebrating farming tradition: how to do it. What can we learn from others and what can Dartmoor use to celebrate its farming heritage. An opportunity to pick our guests brains re: The Winterage school and to review	Brimpts	Russell Ashford, Tracy May, Bridget Cole, Ally kohler	
13.00	lunch	café?		
14.30	visit to farm to hear about marketing initiatives (Dartmoor Meat etc.; what we have learnt successes and failures) hosted by Matt Cole	Prison farm, Princetown	Ed Williams, Matt Cole, Russell Ashford, Tracy May, John Draycup	
16.00	tea	Tor Royal, Princetown	Justine Colton	
19.30	evening meal	Forest Inn	Philip French, Ally Kohler	

Saturday 24th of November

When	What	Where	With	Comments
9.30	Dartmoor Farming Futures, an outcome based agri-environment trial. Hosted by Colin Abel (Chairman) & Tracy May (Administrator). Exchange of ideas and experience of outcome focused AE trials.	Lower Godsworthy Farm	Colin Abel, Tracy May, Naomi Oakley	
12.30	lunch	café?		
14.00	Farm visit to discuss TB Control Plans, Fire plans and other collaborative initiatives hosted by Anton Coaker.	Sherberton farm, Hexworthy	Anton Coaker, Layland Branfield, Helen Radmore	
16.00	tea	Brimpts		
17.00	opportunity for any other issues	Brimpts	All invited	



19.30	evening meal	?	All invited	
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Sunday 25th November

- Depart and Travel to Exeter airport. Flight at 11.40 to Dublin.

APPENDIX 2 : IRISH PARTICIPANTS LIST

NAME	ACTOR	Institution/Farm
Dolores Byrne	Researcher	Institute of Technology Sligo
James Moran	Researcher	Galway-Mayo Institute of Technology
Brendan Dunford	Advisor/NGO	Burrenbeo
John Marrinan	Farmer	Farm
Donal Hogan	Farmer	Farm
Patsy Carrucan	Advisor	Private company
Siobhan Daly	Advisor	Private company
Patrick Nagle	Farmer	Farm

