

## FARMING IN PROTECTED LANDSCAPES

**Summary:** To update the Executive Committee on progress to date

**Recommendation:** That the report is noted

**Report by:** Mark Connelly, Land Management Lead  
Scott Brown, Farm Engagement lead

## INTRODUCTION

1. The Farming in Protected Landscapes (FiPL) programme launched on 1 July. It is part of the Government's Agricultural Transition Plan, sitting alongside other programmes and schemes such as the Environmental Land Management (ELM) Scheme pilots, Tree Health pilot and Farming Investment Fund. FiPL runs until March 2024 when the full ELM scheme is due to start
2. FiPL is being delivered across all 44 of England's AONBs and National Parks, not by Defra, Natural England or the RPA, but by the AONB Conservation Boards, Partnerships and National Park Authorities.
3. The programme works with farmers and land managers to deliver across four themes:
  - **Climate** – *supporting the delivery of net zero through nature and nature-based solutions to help communities mitigate and adapt to climate change*
  - **Nature** – *supporting their leading role in the delivery of the Nature Recovery Network and achieving the Government's commitment to protect 30% of land by 2030*
  - **People** – *providing a natural health service that will improve the nation's public health and wellbeing through increased access to nature across all parts of society, as part of our green recovery*
  - **Place** – *supporting these landscapes as centres of excellence and green innovation that are flourishing places to live and work, each with a strong identity and cultural heritage, and high recognition as attractive visitor destinations.*

FiPL is not an agri-environment scheme, it is much wider and it has to deliver the priorities in the protected landscape's statutory Management Plan. More detail on the programme, advice for applicants etc. is available on the CNL website:

<https://www.cotswoldsaonb.org.uk/looking-after/farming-in-protected-landscapes/>

4. The funding allocation for each of the Protected Landscapes is based on area, number of farm holdings, population in and around the protected landscape and deprivation in populations around the protected landscape. AONBs are also given a weighting compared to National Parks. The funding includes grant monies and funding for delivery and administration. The Cotswolds AONB due to its extent, number of farm holdings and population in and around the AONB, is the third largest at £1.1M for 2021/22. The allocation includes funding for programme delivery and administration
5. FiPL is driven by financial year and the allocation for 2021/22 must be spent by March 2022, a particular challenge bearing in mind the July launch. A new allocation

is then made for the 2022/23 and finally for 2023/24. The amount of grant available will change for 2022/23 and 2023/24 but the allocation for delivery and administration is fixed across all three years. Decisions on funding for applications is made by a Local Assessment Panel.

### PROGRESS TO DATE

6. The allocation for delivery and administration has enabled the CNL to appoint three part-time Farm Engagement roles - Scott Brown, Heidi Gibbs and a third due to start in October. We have also appointed a Programme Administrator - Caroline Regan.
7. The Local Assessment Panel has been established. The panel has met informally but is due to hold its first formal meeting on 30 September. The panel comprises:

Nick Bumford	CNL Board Member, Farmer and nominated Panel Chairman
Jonathan Brunyee	Tenant farmer, Head of Regenerative Agriculture and Sustainable Food Systems, FarmEd
Rebecca Charley	CNL Board Member, Farmer, National Trust Food and Farming Adviser
Nigel Colston	Farmer, Oxfordshire, former CNL Board Member and LEADER LAG
Mark Connelly	CNL Land Management Lead
Georgia Craig	NFU Oxfordshire
Jenny Forde	Cotswold District Council Member, Health and Wellbeing lead
Jo Leigh	Farm Environment Adviser, FWAG Southwest
Tom Mason	CLA Southwest Rural Surveyor
Brendan McCarthy	CNL Board Member
Roger Mortlock	Chief Executive, Gloucestershire Wildlife Trust
Danny Newman	Land Management Adviser, Natural England

8. Following the launch in July over 65 enquiries have been received, some of which have been redirected to other more appropriate funding streams, and 36 proposals are under development. There is a good spread across the CNL (mostly north of Tetbury) with a variety of farm types and sizes across all four FiPL themes. The types of projects in development include:

#### Climate

- Soil carbon baselining
- Natural Flood Management – wetland creation, leaky dams
- Regenerative Agriculture – Silvopasture, livestock infrastructure

#### Nature

- Grassland creation and management
- Winter bird feeding
- Raptor box scheme

**People**

- Disability access routes
- Access upgrades – gates for stiles
- Farm facilities for education workshops and visits

**Place**

- Dry stone wall restoration
- Local food initiatives

9. Regular reports are required by Defra on a monthly and quarterly basis. Two reports, for July and August, have been submitted with the first quarterly report due at the beginning of October. Funding for grants, programme delivery and administration is paid in advance by Defra to the CNL on a quarterly basis.
10. Farmers, land managers and advisers have been encouraged to ‘sign up’ to our Farming Mailing List for updates on FiPL, and related matters. To date we have 474 registered contacts and the number continues to grow. The CNL had a stand at the Moreton-in Marsh Show on Saturday 4 September, principally to promote FiPL and Glorious Cotswolds Grassland. Interest in both was very good as well as in the CNL generally.
11. During September the recording, monitoring and reporting systems will be consolidated and preparations made for the first Panel meeting at the end of the month. The Farm Engagement team continues to be very busy with farm visits, new enquiries and guiding developing projects through the application process.

**SUPPORTING PAPERS**

- There are no supporting papers

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