

REGENERATIVE AGRICULTURE ACCELERATOR PROGRAMME (RAAP)

Summary: To introduce the programme and progress to date

Recommendation: That the Executive Committee note the report

Report by: Scott Brown, Farm Engagement Lead

Introduction

1. Launched by the CNL Board in April, the Regenerative Agriculture Accelerator Programme (RAAP) is a 12-month intensive programme of workshops, farm walks, agronomy clinics, facilitation training, and other events for 25 farmers and advisors in the Cotswolds.
2. We want to deepen and accelerate the adoption of regenerative farming practices and agroecological thinking in the Cotswolds, to produce nutritious food, improve soil health, enhance biodiversity, and build resilience. The RAAP will help by:
 - Helping to build a confident and innovative regenerative farming community;
 - Connecting pioneers with those taking their early steps;
 - Facilitating high impact peer-to-peer learning and mentoring;
 - Introducing and sharing specialist knowledge;
 - Communicating regenerative farming principles, practices, and stories to a wider audience.
3. Over the 12-month period, core participants could receive over 150 hours of free or subsidised contact time and learning if they engage with the whole programme, including:
 - Sessions with US-based regen pioneers Gabe Brown and Allen Williams
 - Participation at the [Regenerate Outcomes](#) Soil Academy at FarmED
 - Study tour to [Groundswell Regenerative Agriculture Festival](#)
 - Agronomy clinics
 - The Cotswolds' first regenerative agriculture conference (which the RAAP will design and host)
4. Selected activities and events will also be open to the wider community of farmers and advisors in the Cotswolds, giving them opportunities to get involved and contribute.
5. The programme is being hosted and administered by the CNL team and core-funded with a FiPL grant of £35,000. Additional contributions (non-public matched funds) worth c. £19,500 have also been secured.
6. The group has been set up as an independent, facilitated, farmer-led group. The CNL team has invited Cotswolds farmer, agroecological mentor and advisor, Jonty Brunyee, to lead and facilitate the programme and group.
7. Other UK specialists and leaders, such as Nikki Cannon (RAU), Anna Jones ([Just Farmers](#)), Fiona Galbraith ([Ruralink](#)) and [Niels Corfield](#) are currently being engaged to support the programme. Additional support is provided by Regenerate Outcomes, who are bringing in specialists from [Understanding Ag](#) from USA (including Gabe Brown and Allen Williams).
8. The CNL recognises the valuable role that regenerative agriculture could play, pursuant to the delivery of strategic priorities for the protected landscape, notably regarding nature recovery, climate action and rural land management. For example, the CNL

Board recently commissioned and adopted a report by 3Keel sustainability consultants, which proposed the following priorities for 2024-28:

- Increasing support and knowledge sharing about Regenerative Farming Principles and Practices.
- Continued use of Farming in Protected Landscapes (FiPL) grants.

Progress to date

9. Following a successful FiPL application, the programme officially launched in April and the first group meeting was held on 24 April at the Sainfoin Centre, a FiPL-funded events space on a regen ag demonstration farm in Whittington. The meeting was a chance to meet each other and begin co-designing plans for the year ahead.
10. The group comprises farmers and advisors who are active in the Cotswolds and successfully applied to take part. The application form was openly accessible online (via the CNL website) and advertised through our networks and 400+ farming mailing list.
11. We wanted a diverse membership, and applicants were required to demonstrate a genuine interest in (and capacity to influence) the deeper adoption of regenerative farming practice and agroecological thinking in the Cotswolds.
12. We received 42 applications and selected 25 people to join the core group (majority farmers). Selection was made by Jonty Brunyee and Scott Brown. We estimate that the group represents around 60,000 hectares. We were delighted by the quality of the applications and feel that we have a very strong group with an incredible breadth of skills, experience, and knowledge to offer.
13. Members of the group have signed an MoU which serves as a collaborative agreement and commitment to attend at least 80% of the activities.
14. It's early days but feedback so far is overwhelmingly positive and there is broad agreement that the programme is very timely and has great potential.
15. The programme webpage can be viewed here: [Regenerative Agriculture Accelerator Programme](#)

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