



Dartmoor HILL FARM PROJECT

May E-News



All the 'B's!

Boundaries, Birds, Bats and Biophones: Under our Boundary Boost programme we are in spring deployment mode to collect practical examples from 10 farms across Dartmoor and their range of hedges, banks and walls. This includes working with a local company (Wild Connect) who have developed a Biophone; a unit that records audio data to provide records of both bird and bat species.

The evidence will support other field data including a new hedge survey tool (ultimately to release as an App) to better reflect the complex boundaries we have locally for hedgerow assessments. This is part of the overall ambition to explore options to develop an alternative scheme to incentivise and reward hedge management in parallel with Agri Environment options. Funded by Defra and administered by the Environment Agency, project details can be found on our website by clicking below.

[Learn More](#)



Food on your Fork – Nature on the Farm

Working with Dartmoor Farmers Limited (DFL) and Shallowford Farm, we are pulling together the final figures to reflect on this project which secured funding through a Farming in Protected Landscapes (FiPL) grant. Since the start of 2024, the two main activities have been:

- To support farmers to deliver on-farm educational visits by schools to learn about food, farming and the environment with an opportunity for hands-on tasks and learning linked to the curriculum: **Reaching 1000 children over 35 visits and from 21 schools**
- Carrying out a light environmental audit across 10 farms to highlight these assets which are managed as part of the farm business – and which may indicate the potential if calculated across the wider 100+ DFL members collectively. Eg.
 - Total river & stream corridor protecting water quality and supply
 - Kms of hedges and walls being managed that connect nature
 - Number of historic features being maintained

Further details will be used and shared via the new Dartmoor Farmers website [Dartmoor Farmers - Farming together for sustainable futures](#). This will provide positive messaging that supports and illustrates how extensive livestock farming, the environment and landscape work hand in hand.



Making the Most of Wool

Over the past few years we have been supporting the South West Peatland Partnership (SWPP) to utilise wool as part of their restoration plans. Working with Ruth Lindsey we helped purchase and process over 20 tons of hill fleece with the aim of adding value and identifying new markets. The product was evaluated alongside other materials used by the SWPP and we are awaiting a summary report. In the meantime we are still keen to support innovative uses of felt matting or log rolls so do get in touch if you have any suggestions.

[Learn More About the Wool Pilot](#)



Sheep Discussion Group - Upcoming Meeting

The next meeting of the Sheep Discussion Group will be on Thursday 22nd May 10am-3pm and will be held at Starcross Lab, Exeter by kind invitation of APHA. This will cover the common disease issues they see in upland sheep and how they present in the field. There will be a tour of the facilities and a chance to watch a postmortem (for those with a strong constitution!). A great chance to get behind the scenes and to improve your understanding of animal health and welfare.

Places are limited so please do email hfp@dartmoor.gov.uk or call 07805 329704 to book a place.



Duchy of Cornwall - Future Farming Team Event

The Duchy are holding an event at Huccaby Farm courtesy of Shirley and David Mudge on Wednesday 21st May (10-3PM). The focus is 'life in the soil' with the Farm Carbon Toolkit and Jake Corin from Symbiosis Soil Lab. Jake will look at innovative analysis and regenerative tools to improve your understanding of soil health and the complex ecosystems beneath our feet. A large microscope will be used to share results on a screen and lunch is provided. Booking is via the Duchy of Cornwall and places are limited.

[Book Here](#)

Mental Health Contacts

Helplines and help is always available to those in crisis - contact:

RABI 24hr Helpline: 0800 188 4444

FCN Helpline: 03000 111 999

Samaritans, Call: 116 123 or email: jo@samaritans.org

Contact us:

Russell Ashford, Steering Group Chairman

David Attwell, Land Management Adviser

Hazel Kendall, Dartmoor Farming Officer

Columb Anderson-Hague, Farm Support Officer
Office Telephone: 01822 890913

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