

A network on High Nature Value  
farming  
Learning, Innovation, Knowledge



# The HNV Link project – an example of an innovation that benefits HNV farmers

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*This project has received funding from the European  
Union Horizon 2020 research and innovations  
program under Grant Agreement No. 696391*

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# Dartmoor Farming Futures

## An outcome focused agri-environment scheme

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**Project initiated and supported by Dartmoor National Park Authority, Dartmoor Commoners' Council and Natural England.**



## Why?



- Agri-environment essential to farmers in the uplands (LFA)
- Agreements on common land failing = lack of ownership of agreement.
- 401,200 ha common land in England and 59% of notified as SSSI (national importance for wildlife) and 49% as Natura 2000 (internationally important).
- Farmers in AE schemes for over 20 years but still unclear what the scheme/payments were for.
- Farmers want to be part of the solution and offer experience/skills.

**The Forest of Dartmoor (common)**  
11,400 ha. moorland dominated by blanket bog and deep peat. Notified as an SSSI/Natura 2000 and includes several important water catchments. 78 active farmers.

**The Haytor and Bagtor commons.**  
Managed as one unit (c700 ha.) well used for recreation and public access. It is rich in historical sites and includes a geological SSSI.  
9 active farmers.



## New scheme design



- Designed by farmers on 2 commons + independent facilitator
- Designs merged = new scheme trial/pilot (started in 2012)
- Outcome focused – outcomes agreed following consultation between farmers and agencies
- No prescriptions – farmers decide land management to deliver outcomes
- Address array of ecosystem services (biodiversity, water, carbon, archaeology, public access)
- Monitoring programme essential – give confidence to farmers and agencies.

## Forest of Dartmoor: Ecosystem services / natural resources

Natural resources	relevant to location	further information
Public access	limited	open public access + tracks
Archaeology and historic environment	yes	national & international importance
nature or biodiversity	yes	national & international designations
Landscape	yes	national and international importance
water - quality and quantity	yes	also reduce flood risk down stream
carbon	yes	mapped and measured
food production	yes	livestock - sheep & cattle.

# An example of outcomes: Haytor

## Access

The main access routes and paths, identified by DNPA, are widened by the removal of vegetation.

## Nature/biodiversity/ecological

The areas of Western Heath, mires and areas of bracken are managed to prevent an increase in area and to create a mosaic for specific species (no SSSI).

## Historical/archaeological

Selected archaeological sites (6), including the Tramway and boundary stones are kept free of encroaching vegetation

## Water

No actions by the commoners will result in reducing the water quality

## Landscape

Grazing cattle, sheep and ponies remain in the landscape.

The tors remain visible and connecting paths are not visually intrusive.

## Food production (farming)

There is no decline in the number of grazing livestock days (number of cattle and sheep x days grazing).





- New scheme improves understanding of aim of agreement – what it is hoping to achieve.
- Enables traditional/local farming practice to continue.
- Farmers have more ownership & responsibility.
- Improved relevance of land management to local conditions.

**Lessons learnt – so far**



**Further information from Dartmoor National Park**  
**[www.dartmoor-npa.gov.uk](http://www.dartmoor-npa.gov.uk)**