

Land Managers Forum

Update paper 3b - ELM Test

What was the Peak District ELM Test?

Following initial planning by the Land Managers Forum, the Peak District Test was one of the first of the Tests & Trials approved by Defra to co-design the new Environmental Land Management schemes. Between November 2019 and October 2021 farmers and land managers from 96 holdings from across the Peak District were involved in helping to answer questions on local prioritisation, planning and recording, and support and advice.

What did we do?

- 7 workshops
- 30 one to one interviews
- 9 in depth land management plan design sessions
- 3 practical field trials visits
- Developed and tested National Character Area summaries, a carbon 'ready reckoner' and a business 'ready reckoner'.

Local prioritisation

Unanimous support for local spatial prioritisation, alongside local decision-making and trusted local advisors.

National Character Areas could be used to set and agree priorities, because:

- Good spatial scale and can be applied nationally
- Based on soils and landscape, which most influence farming type and land use
- Easy to identify with
- Use local data that is easy to access and update
- Include all six public goods identified from the 25 Year Environment Plan
- Easy to extract key priority features and public goods



Collaboration

National Character Areas could help:

- Bring together similar farming systems
- Helped participants consider their holding as part of the wider landscape
- Focussed groups or events help farmers and land managers envisage how they could collaborate

Planning and recording

Land Management Plans could:

- Help construct the offer of public goods
- Form the basis of an agreement or contract
- Record agreed actions, timescales, relevant information, guidance and regulation
- Demonstrate delivery and progress against public goods outcomes, including recognition of existing public goods delivery, long-term ambitions and a facility for change

Participants would need:

- Updated National Character Area descriptions and summaries
- Maps, set in the landscape context
- An online platform to bring all information together
- Clarity, e.g. carbon as a public good
- More detailed assessments for some public goods, e.g. carbon and soils
- A simple financial planning tool

Advice and support

Farmers and land managers must have access to a local, experienced, trusted advisor.

Participants said they would also like:

- A program to enhance public understanding of the public goods farmers and land managers are delivering
- More support in visitor management and engagement
- Regular monitoring, with help not punishments and penalties
- Peer to peer learning, sharing of ideas and facilitation to help collaboration
- Training



The findings from the ELM Test are available in full in two reports via the link:

[Environmental Land Management scheme: Peak District National Park](#)