

# Viticulture Test & Trial – Summary of workshops held in November/December 2020



Kent Downs AONB Unit

December 2020

# Viticulture: Tests and Trials Draft Proposed Actions

## November/December 2020 Workshops

The 'Environmental Land Management' Test and Trial for viticulture is centred on the protected landscapes of the Kent Downs, Surrey Hills and South Downs. It is examining possible actions that can be delivered by vineyards and that will provide public good as defined by Defra.

Following the first round of workshops held in March 2020 with viticulturalists, land managers, farmers and vineyard owners, areas of sustainability and best practice were identified as a focus for the 1 to 1 interviews and research programme undertaken in Milestone 2.

In Milestone 3, the best practice recommendations drawn from all of the research and consultation work was used to create a set of draft actions for a viticulture Environmental Land management scheme. These actions were sent to viticulturalists, land managers and farmers and all of those involved in the project were invited to workshops in November and December 2020. The four workshops were attended by 68 people from the three protected landscapes and beyond and included the director of Wine GB as well as Sustainable Wines GB. This report summarises the comments made at the workshops.

The participants were given a copy of the proposed draft actions and asked to comment on each of the 18 items seen below:

### Environmental Land Management Test and Trial – Viticulture Draft Actions

#### Farm/Vineyard Management

Action (and suggested category)	Additional detail <i>Suggested payment mechanism in italic</i>	Outcomes	Link to research and recommendations <a href="https://bit.ly/TandTRRecommendations">https://bit.ly/TandTRRecommendations</a>	Public Good
<b>1. Land Management Plan</b>  Sustainable Farming Incentive Component	Site visit by suitably qualified agronomist or similar to help draw up a land management plan for the vineyard that balances land use activities with the environment, conservation, and landscape character.  This will identify the subsequent actions which will form the basis of an Environmental Land Management application. It is likely that Land Management Plans will be a compulsory element of the Environmental Land Management process and dealt with outside of this Test and Trial.  This would be incorporated into (or added as an addendum) to a land management plan/whole estate plan for the entire holding if required.  <i>Set payment for the plan if an application made.</i>	Vineyard specific best practice measures identified for all vineyards within the Environmental Land Management scheme.	3a (p20)  <i>"This includes vineyards developing a landscape plan which thinks about enhancing character but also removes detractors."</i>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Clean air</li> <li>• Clean and plentiful water</li> <li>• Thriving plants and wildlife</li> <li>• Protection from environmental hazards</li> <li>• Reduction of and adaptation to climate change</li> <li>• Beauty, heritage and engagement with the environment</li> </ul>

#### Farm/Vineyard Management continued

Action (and suggested category)	Additional detail <i>Suggested payment mechanism in italic</i>	Outcomes	Link to research and recommendations <a href="https://bit.ly/TandTRRecommendations">https://bit.ly/TandTRRecommendations</a>	Public Good
<b>2. Farm Cluster Group</b>  Local Nature Recovery Component	A group of experienced viticulturalists and ecologists should be brought together to support farmers/land managers and vineyards in best practice.  The work would identify additional actions for a group of vineyards (e.g. co-ordinated educational access, purchase of shared capital items)  <i>Set payment to co-ordinate/facilitate group</i>	Co-ordinated and shared best practice for a group of vineyards.	Barriers to Adoption (p25)  <i>"Provision is therefore required, within any Environmental Land Management scheme, to provide technical support to growers to research, plan, implement and maintain new areas of ecological restoration and enhanced provisioning, regulating and supporting ecosystems services. In addition, this support could complement or be used to facilitate grower-to-grower meetings."</i>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Clean and plentiful water</li> <li>• Thriving plants and wildlife</li> <li>• Protection from environmental hazards</li> <li>• Reduction of and adaptation to climate change</li> </ul>
<b>3. Ongoing Vineyard surveys</b>  Sustainable Farming Incentive Component	Undertake and record a vineyard survey of biodiversity found around and in the vineyards each year to discover how the actions implemented are working for the vineyard and associated eco-systems services.  <i>Set payment per annum for agreed survey effort</i>	Providing evidence for impact of Environmental Land Management scheme and specific Land Management Plans.	1a i (p12) – Healthy ecosystems  3a i (p19) <i>"Inspiration: Delivered through beauty, landscape enhancements and opportunity for engagement"</i>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Thriving plants and wildlife</li> </ul>

## Farm/Vineyard Management continued

Action (and suggested category)	Additional detail <i>Suggested payment mechanism in italic</i>	Outcomes	Link to research and recommendations <a href="https://bit.ly/TandTRRecommendations">https://bit.ly/TandTRRecommendations</a>	Public Good
4. Taking part in on site viticultural research  Local Nature Recovery Component	Be available to take part in viticultural research projects when appropriate. This could be anything from planting insectary plants to trialling new varieties.  <i>One-off payment made for taking part in a trial based on area given over to research</i>	Increased understanding of viticultural best practice	Existing challenges 1 Limited knowledge (p9) <i>"Funding and knowledge (research &amp; education) were the two most important factors that were raised in 1-1 interviews as barriers to adopting more or better ecosystem service enhancements ..."</i>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Clean air</li> <li>Clean and plentiful water</li> <li>Thriving plants and wildlife</li> <li>Protection from environmental hazards</li> <li>Reduction of and adaptation to climate change</li> </ul>
5. ATVs, visitor vehicles using renewable energy, robotic vehicles, and drones  Capital payments that may include	Payments made to support the purchase of: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Machinery powered by renewable energy</li> <li>Robotic machinery that is cleaner, more energy efficient and quieter as well as reducing compaction</li> <li>Drones to map, monitor and determine areas for targeted pesticide or other management interventions.</li> </ul> <p>Applications where machinery will be shared between vineyards will be looked upon more favourably where this can be identified as part of a farm cluster. <i>Capital payments for equipment.</i></p>	<p>Reduction of carbon footprint.</p> <p>Reduced use of pesticides.</p> <p>Soil compaction reduced.</p>	2a ii (p19) <i>"Renewable energy: Installing charging points for electric vehicles including visitors' vehicles, tractors, ATVs; and using renewable energy powered vineyard equipment including Tractors, ATVs and Robotic vehicles."</i>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Clean air</li> <li>Reduction of and adaptation to climate change</li> <li>Thriving plants and wildlife</li> <li>Protection from environmental hazards</li> </ul>



## Pesticide Reduction

Action (and suggested category)	Additional detail <i>Suggested payment mechanism in italic</i>	Outcomes	Link to research and recommendations <a href="https://bit.ly/TandTRRecommendations">https://bit.ly/TandTRRecommendations</a>	Public Good
6. Integrated Pest Management  Sustainable Farming Incentive Component	Integrated Pest Management that may include some or all of the following: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>biological control</li> <li>precision/spot spraying pesticide application.</li> <li>use of pheromone trapping, biological control agents and botanicals – predatory insects such as ladybirds, lace wings and arthrocoridia.</li> </ul> <p><i>Set payment per annum for each item used guided by Land Management Plan.</i></p>	<p>Reduction in pesticide applications.</p> <p>Increased biodiversity.</p> <p>Reduced risk of run-off into watercourses.</p>	1a (p12) <i>"A fully integrated approach to pest management which includes the use of biocontrol, cultural, and targeted chemical intervention (only if required) to reduce pest insect populations below damaging levels."</i>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Thriving plants and wildlife</li> <li>Protection from environmental hazards</li> <li>Clean and plentiful water</li> </ul>
7. Native insectary plants  Sustainable Farming Incentive Component	Plant/sow native insectary plants such as bird's-foot trefoil, carline thistle, cowslip, greater knapweed, salad burnet, viper's bugloss and wild thyme.  Plant/sow specific non-native species, where research supports this, such as phacelia and buckwheat, in areas of unused land surrounding the vineyard.  Actual species planted to be guided by the Land Management Plan <i>Payment by area per year.</i>	<p>Increase in numbers of insects that predate on vineyard parasites.</p> <p>Reduction in pesticide applications.</p> <p>Increase in number of pollinator species.</p>	1a i (p12) <i>"Establishment of locally adapted native insectary plants (in preference to introduced / non-native species) in and around vineyards in strategic locations to provide habitat for predatory species that contribute to the biocontrol of economically damaging insect pests."</i>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Thriving plants and wildlife</li> <li>Protection from environmental hazards</li> <li>Beauty, heritage and engagement with the environment</li> </ul>



## Carbon Sequestration

Action (and suggested category)	Additional detail <i>Suggested payment mechanism in italic</i>	Outcomes	Link to research and recommendations <a href="https://bit.ly/TandTRRecommendations">https://bit.ly/TandTRRecommendations</a>	Public Good
8. In-field trees  Sustainable Farming Incentive Component	Plant in-field native species trees in areas of the vineyard not used for vines.  <i>Payment per tree and set payment for aftercare for years 2 to 5.</i>	<p>Contributes to carbon sequestration.</p> <p>Additional biodiversity value of tree.</p> <p>Contribution to landscape character restoration.</p>	1a iii (p13) <i>"Biocontrol: Incorporate the use of native insectary shrubs and trees that support populations of insectivorous birds"</i>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Clean air</li> <li>Reduction of and adaptation to climate change</li> <li>Thriving plants and wildlife</li> <li>Beauty, heritage and engagement with the environment</li> </ul>
9. Establishment of native species windbreaks  Sustainable Farming Incentive Component	Establishment of native species windbreaks or replacement of missing or poor performing trees with native species identified in the land management plan.  <i>Payment per m established. One-off payment for ground preparation and planting and set payment for aftercare for years 2 to 5.</i>	<p>Increase in insectivorous birds and predatory insects.</p> <p>Increased carbon sequestration.</p> <p>Increase in vineyard biodiversity through planting native species.</p>	1b ii (p15) <i>"Biodiversity/biocontrol: Incorporation of a diversity of native insectary plants to provide functional biodiversity benefits throughout the entire year. These plants include ground cover (grasses, forbs, and prostrate growing plants) shrub and tree species."</i>  2a iii (p20) <i>"Sequestration: Through permanent ground cover, evergreen shrubs and trees, and mulching of prunings (rather than burning)."</i>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Clean air</li> <li>Thriving plants and wildlife</li> <li>Reduction of and adaptation to climate change</li> <li>Beauty, heritage and engagement with the environment</li> </ul>

## Carbon Sequestration continued

Action (and suggested category)	Additional detail <i>Suggested payment mechanism in italic</i>	Outcomes	Link to research and recommendations <a href="https://bit.ly/TandTRRecommendations">https://bit.ly/TandTRRecommendations</a>	Public Good
10. <b>Regeneration of vineyard soils</b>  Sustainable Farming Incentive Component	Establish ground cover using plants such as red clover, which help to decontaminate soils through the prevention of leaching into groundwater. To be identified within Land Management Plan if species rich grassland actions are not chosen.  <i>Payment per m<sup>2</sup> planted</i>	Removal of accumulated soil contaminants.  Improved carbon sequestration	2a i (p18)  <i>"Soil regeneration: Adopting and implementing practices that provide biocontrol and biodiversity-based ecosystem services and that also assist in regenerating vineyard soils. This includes phytoremediation"</i>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Clean and plentiful water</li> <li>Protection from environmental hazards</li> <li>Reduction of and adaptation to climate change</li> </ul>
11. <b>Vineyard mulching</b>  Sustainable Farming Incentive Component	Mulch vineyards with pruning's rather than burn. This will be an optional annual action with vineyards making the decision based on perceived risk in high disease years.  <i>Payment per hectare of mulched pruning's paid only in years when mulching takes place</i>	Improved soils  Reduced greenhouse gas emissions  Cleaner air	2a iii (p20)  <i>"Sequestration: Through permanent ground cover, evergreen shrubs and trees, and mulching of pruning's (rather than burning)."</i>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Clean air</li> <li>Reduction of and adaptation to climate change</li> <li>Protection from environmental hazards</li> </ul>

## Increased Biodiversity

Action (and suggested category)	Additional detail <i>Suggested payment mechanism in italic</i>	Outcomes	Link to research and recommendations <a href="https://bit.ly/TandTRRecommendations">https://bit.ly/TandTRRecommendations</a>	Public Good
12. <b>Regeneration of species-rich grass sward</b>  Local Nature Recovery Component	Establishment of species-rich grassland from previous arable or improved pasture during the establishment of a vineyard both between rows and on headlands. This can either be established by: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>using an appropriate seed mix</li> <li>enhancing improved grassland by the addition of green hay</li> <li>allowing the existing seed bank to establish species-rich sward</li> </ul> <p>This action will also include implementing an appropriate grazing or cutting regime that includes removing any arisings. The exact management techniques will be established in the Land Management Plan.</p> <p><i>Payment per hectare established per annum.</i></p> <p><i>Capital payments for fencing if needed</i></p>	Increase biodiversity within the grass sward.  Improved carbon sequestration.  Increased insect diversity and increased predatory insects.  Reduced run off.  Restoration of landscape character.	1b i (p15)  <i>"Biodiversity/biocontrol: Incorporation of a diversity of native insectary plants to provide functional biodiversity benefits throughout the entire year. These plants include ground cover (grasses, forbs, and prostrate growing plants) shrub and tree species."</i>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Clean and plentiful water</li> <li>Thriving plants and wildlife</li> <li>Protection from environmental hazards</li> <li>Beauty, heritage and engagement with the environment</li> </ul>

## Increased Biodiversity continued

Action (and suggested category)	Additional detail <i>Suggested payment mechanism in italic</i>	Outcomes	Link to research and recommendations <a href="https://bit.ly/TandTRRecommendations">https://bit.ly/TandTRRecommendations</a>	Public Good
13. <b>Management of species-rich grass sward</b>  Local Nature Recovery Component	Management of established species-rich grass sward. Establish an agreed management regime which may include: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>appropriate grazing regime</li> <li>cutting regime that enhances species-rich sward, including removal of arisings</li> </ul> <p><i>Annual payment for management to include renewal of fencing, cutting and any removal of pernicious weeds.</i></p>	Increase biodiversity within the grass sward.  Improved carbon sequestration.  Increased insect diversity and increased predatory insects.  Reduced run off.  Restoration of landscape character.	1b ii (p15)  <i>"Biodiversity: Establish inter-row and under-vine native and locally adapted species. Also establish beneficial plants in headlands and unplanted areas of the vineyard to provide functional and enhanced biodiversity. This includes establishing them in/as windbreaks"</i>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Thriving plants and wildlife</li> <li>Clean and plentiful water</li> <li>Beauty, heritage and engagement with the environment</li> </ul>
14. <b>Biodiversity features</b>  Sustainable Farming Incentive Component	Installation of bird boxes, bat boxes, raptor perches and habitat piles and features that encourage invertebrate diversity.  <i>Set payment per feature</i>	Increased species diversity.  Encouraging predators of vineyard parasites.  Reduced use of pesticides.	1a ii (p13)  <i>"Biocontrol: Incorporate the use of species-specific predator perches and/or nesting boxes to support populations of predatory (including the endangered honey buzzard and tawny owl) and insectivorous birds."</i>  1a iv (p14)  <i>"Biocontrol: Incorporate bat boxes to supplement natural habitat and boost the presence of bats in and around vineyards."</i>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Thriving plants and wildlife</li> <li>Protection from environmental hazards</li> </ul>

## Beauty, Heritage and Engagement

Action (and suggested category)	Additional detail <i>Suggested payment mechanism in italic</i>	Outcomes	Link to research and recommendations <a href="https://bit.ly/TandTRRecommendations">https://bit.ly/TandTRRecommendations</a>	Public Good
15. Interpretation  Sustainable Farming Incentive Component	Payment for the creation of interpretation panels or other features within the publicly accessible area of the vineyard telling:  • The story of the vineyard and wine production • The story of biodiversity on the site and how Environmental Land Management is assisting in this  <i>Flat one-off payment per interpretation panel/feature</i>	A better public understanding of the environment and farming.	3a i (p22)  <i>"Inspiration: Delivered through beauty, landscape enhancements and opportunity for engagement."</i>	• Beauty, heritage and engagement with the environment
16. Permissive access  Local Nature Recovery Component	Create a new walking route in the vineyard or collaborate with a neighbour to create a walking route round and between the two vineyards.  More likely to receive payment if collaborating with other vineyards or neighbouring farms.  <i>Annual base payment for including permissive access and payment per m depending on quality of access (e.g. footpath, cycle path, limited-mobility access)</i>	Increased access and enjoyment of greenspaces and the farming environment.	3a iv (p23)  <i>"An integrated approach that builds on Recommendations 1 &amp; 2 to target interventions and enhancements of the landscape (beauty), heritage and public engagement."</i>	• Beauty heritage and engagement with the environment

## Beauty, Heritage and Engagement continued

Action (and suggested category)	Additional detail <i>Suggested payment mechanism in italic</i>	Outcomes	Link to research and recommendations <a href="https://bit.ly/TandTRRecommendations">https://bit.ly/TandTRRecommendations</a>	Public Good
17. Educational access  Local Nature Recovery Component	Create educational opportunities for people of all ages and backgrounds to learn about farming, wine production and the environmental benefits of Environmental Land Management scheme. These can be for both children as part of school visits or other interested groups (e.g. botanical survey/guided walk session)  Activities for children linked to the school curriculum. Ideally, sample lesson plans created to assist vineyards to deliver sessions themselves.  All sessions free to attend.  <i>Annual base payment plus set fee for each visit</i>	A better public understanding of the environment and farming.	3a iv (p23)  <i>"An integrated approach that builds on Recommendations 1 &amp; 2 to target interventions and enhancements of the landscape (beauty), heritage and public engagement."</i>	• Beauty heritage and engagement with the environment
18. Health activities  Local Nature Recovery Component	As educational access but open vineyard for specific health and wellbeing activities such as yoga, mindfulness, guided walk.  Sessions free to attend.  <i>Annual base payment plus set fee for each activity (based on length of activity)</i>	Increased access and enjoyment of greenspaces and the farming environment.  Improved levels of wellbeing amongst participants.	3a iv (p23)  <i>"An integrated approach that builds on Recommendations 1 &amp; 2 to target interventions and enhancements of the landscape (beauty), heritage and public engagement."</i>	• Beauty heritage and engagement with the environment



## Comments from the vineyards and industry – Workshop 24.11.20

### General comments

FWAG agreed that the viticulture Environmental Land Management scheme needs to cover orchards since the actions will be comparable for all row fruits.

It was recognised that the actions were good, and it was asked whether there was going to be a certain size of orchard or vineyard before the actions kicked in. It was also suggested that the funding should be for an area payment, this was not really acceptable since it would not create a level playing field for the variation in size of vineyards. There are more small vineyards under a hectare than the much larger ones and these small vineyards have to be included.

There were several comments stating that people wanted the actions to be straightforward, particularly the paperwork, be easy to sign up to and the recording of the actions such as biodiversity easy and straightforward.

It was suggested that the actions seemed very similar to the Sustainable Wines GB standards. However, it was stressed that the actions were taken from research and the 1:1 reports.

## **Comments about specific actions**

### **2. Farm cluster group –**

Many thought that training was imperative and asked how it was going to be supported. The farm cluster system was considered to be the tool for that as well as the support/agronomist/ecologist for the Land Management Plans. Shaun, a conservation adviser mentioned that a cluster group was a good idea and very important for many of the smaller vineyards.

### **4. Taking part in on-site viticulture research –**

It was mentioned that it was very important to include the research for ecosystem services since it was very important to understand what effect natural predators would have on the wider landscape. It might be more prudent to apply pesticides if research shows that these natural predators do more harm to the neighbouring landscape/arable crop. It is also important to ensure the correct wildflower mixes/packages were used for the soil and landscape type. It was suggested that this could be part of further research.

Rainwater harvesting should be included and show best practice where there is a Nitrate Vulnerable Zone. Solar panels were also mentioned for adding to buildings such as wineries. It was also suggested that waste recycling should also be included since many plastic containers were used.

It was suggested that it would be difficult to share equipment since everybody would want to use it at the same time.

One participant stated that a lot of the actions are taking place already which is public good, and this is without funding. Will there be back dated funding? Payment for good practice should be recommended.

## **Workshop 30.11.20**

### **General comments**

Vineyards asked whether the proposals would reward what is already in place and whether there would be payments for what vineyards are already doing? Countryside Stewardship has been too autocratic, and the paperwork needs to be far more flexible. It is so important – but what are the competitive advantages?

## **Comments about specific actions**

### **2. Farm cluster group**

The Surrey Hills has a cluster group where the vineyards provide sustainability and nature connectivity through the area. They find it good to engage with all the other farmers in the area. They are working with landowners and corporations as well.

It was felt that it is so important for smaller farmers to be able to access the Environmental Land Management scheme. However, guidance and support and a farm cluster group would help and advise them on work required.

There needs to be freedom to move round the actions. Paperwork must not be too onerous, and the requirement of photos needs to be reduced. Finally, the language used by DEFRA needs to be clear so we can understand what is required.

Many vineyards are members of WineGB, and Sustainable Wines of Great Britain and they should work together with the new Environmental Land Management scheme. They are

looking after the land already; it should be the environment as well. Viticulture is slightly different to agriculture and motivations are often different. Land Management Plans can provide assistance for this point.

#### **10. Regeneration of vineyard soils**

We also need to address flood management since our vineyard has been flooded from runoff from the top of the South Downs.

#### **16. Permissive access**

It was asked whether the rate of funding would be the same for everybody. The answer was yes, but the level of payment will depend upon what is actually done.

There is a need to encourage people to walk around vineyards. They are the catalyst and then that will draw them to the winery and vineyard shop if there is one. Vineyards have more incentive to encourage access. The route could take in 10 times the area of the vineyard linking other vineyards and therefore create significant public benefit.

The South Downs Way passes round the outside of one vineyard. The land manager would not like to encourage footpaths through the vineyard since there were so many people during lockdown which caused many problems such as leaving the path and just wandering where they wanted. Walkers need to be educated in the use of the countryside code.

## **Workshop 10.12.20**

### **General comments**

Managers of smaller vineyards suggested that WineGB is too expensive for them to join. They also felt that small vineyards must not be excluded.

Rainwater harvesting needs to be written into the actions since it was very important for many land managers and viticulturalists. It was asked whether there will be back payments for actions such as rainwater harvesting equipment. There also needs to be more recycling of old plastic pesticide containers and pots etc.

And again, they asked the key question, how much money will be paid.....?

### **Comments about specific actions**

#### **1. Farm cluster group**

All vineyards should have a dedicated person who is trained and has PA1 and PA2 to be able to apply pesticides. There is a lot of bad practice around.

#### **4. Taking part in on site viticulture research**

Research needs to be undertaken to look at heated wires to combat frost.

#### **5. ATVs, visitor vehicles using renewable energy, robotic vehicles and drones**

Funding is required for electric vehicles or drones, as well as the need for weather stations on all vineyards to be funded as a capital expense.

#### **6. Integrated pest management**

One vineyard suggested that all vineyards need to undertake disease profiling – only spray when needed and ensure the rate is correct and at the right time.

## **9. Establishment of native species windbreaks**

Windbreaks should involve corridors to encourage biodiversity not only in the trees but at the base of the windbreak. The timber should be used for habitat piles for biodiversity.

## **10. Regeneration of vineyard soils**

Soil analysis should be undertaken. Low input red clover will break up clay soils.

## **11. Vineyard mulching**

If the vineyard has disease, mulching is a barrier to eradicate the disease, so chopping and composting the prunings is essential and that requires an area on the farm which is a dedicated bunded area. This could be funded.

## **12. Management of species rich grass sward**

We need to find a solution not to strim by hand. Tractor mounted strimmer's are available. Pollinator seed mix plus tillage radishes and phacelia should be rotated every three years as a suggestion to help enhance the health of the soil and biodiversity.

## **16. Educational access**

If we were to partake in education, and we do not have any facilities, this needs to be addressed. We would need to sign access and have to think about health and a safety when we have muddy fields. There is also an opportunity to educate the community about heritage vine varieties.

## **17. Health and therapy activities**

The local community came to pick the grapes in one vineyard, and they were paid with wine, it was a fantastic atmosphere. This would work for small vineyards and work well for public money for public good.

Pick for Britain was a disaster with 170 picking on the farm from Europe, 3 were from the UK and only 1 lasted picking until the end of the season from the UK.

# **Workshop 17.12.20**

## **General comments**

Much of this workshop focussed on questions about ELM. A key question was, how much will we be getting paid if we partake in the ELM? However, it was mentioned that if it was not funded properly many vineyards would not partake. It was asked whether it was competitive. Will it be area related? It was said that some actions would be area related but much of it would not, such as education.

Viticulturalists asked whether there would be funds for work which they have already undertaken, if not will it be only maintenance which will be funded such as the action of rainwater harvesting and not the capital of the reservoir tanks.

It was also asked whether the roll out of the new system would be on time, and will there be enough people to administer it since there are problems at the moment with Countryside Stewardship administration for the few joining this year. It was mentioned that those who had been part of the Countryside Stewardship scheme found that the bureaucracy was too onerous, and the RPA is extremely difficult to work with, so many people may not participate.

## **Comments about specific actions**

### **5. ATVs, visitor vehicles using renewable energy, robotic vehicles and drones**

One vineyard thought that sharing machinery is a good idea so long as it is not required by everyone at the same time.

### **6. Integrated pest management**

One participant asked whether IPM should be funded as these actions are already supported by the market. He felt it should not be funded since it was standard commercial management. Should DEFRA be paying for actions we should be doing commercially?

### **9. Establishment of native species windbreaks**

Management of hedgerows is important.

### **12. Regeneration of species rich grass sward**

With regards to the buying of wildflower seed, at what rate will we be able to buy it? The response suggested that growers will be incentivised to purchase the seed. Whether there will be an agreement with various firms is unknown.

### **10. Management of species rich grass sward**

It was suggested that where you have an organic /pesticide free vineyard, weed control methods need to be included. One vineyard had a species rich permanent pasture under Higher Level Stewardship. The grant was dropped, and funding considerably reduced as soon as it had achieved the required number of species per area. Will this happen? They felt the funding should have continued at the same rate.

### **16. Educational access**

With regards to educational access, often facilities are required so will this extend to the local planning authorities to support vineyards in their applications for educational facilities?

### **17. Health and therapy activities**

Would ecotherapy be adopted in engagement for those less able?

## **Summary of chat (17/12/2020)**

**Participant 1 to Everyone:** 09:35 AM

My main question is regarding availability of affordable seed, are seed companies going to be incentivised to produce commercial quantities of seed for vineyard planting and does this come out of ELM fund for viticulture?

**Participant 2 to Everyone:** 09:39 AM

Is there any discrepancy between encouraging school visits and our obligations under the licensing objectives to keep children distanced from alcohol outlets?

**Participant 3 to Everyone:** 09:45 AM

I would echo the points about maintenance because we are currently looking to invest in improving habitats, but theoretically if we have already done it successfully by 2024 and there isn't much room for improvement, will we still be entitled?

Under 'Engagement' would ecotherapy be something that would be covered?

Thank you for this introduction to the issues. With respect to Ecotherapy or involving volunteers and the community with vineyard work, I don't know if you have already spoken to

Fortyhall Vineyard and Warden Abbey? They both have a lot of experience about where the costs and benefits lie which may feed into suggested grant qualification criteria.

**Participant 4 to Everyone:** 09:57 AM

Well done for trying to collate all the info in one place. I think that this will be very helpful.

**Participant 5 to Everyone:** 09:59 AM

Might be worth tailoring approach for small vineyards (e.g., less than 15-20 acres) versus larger undertakings as the needs, what can be invested, and what can be done to support ELM, will be different.

**Participant 3 to Everyone:** 10:01 AM

These all look like things that I can imagine applying for, but as people have said - the detail is so important

**Participant 6 to Everyone:** 10:02 AM

Echo **Participant 4**. Thank you.

## **Summary of the main points raised by farmers, land managers and viticulturalists**

- What funding would they receive?
- Paperwork must not be too onerous.
- Smaller vineyards matter.
- Farmer to farmer support was important to the smaller vineyards and training was required in certain areas.
- Rainwater harvesting was important and possibly solar panels on wineries.
- Research was needed.
- Capital funding was required for electric vehicles, met stations and drones.
- Further looking at disease profiling was required for Integrated Pest Management.
- Biodiversity in the top and bottom of windbreaks must be considered.
- Bunded areas were required for composting of diseased prunings.
- Funding for management species rich sward must not be reduced once the species level has been achieved.
- Educational facilities would be needed and how would this work with the local planning authorities.
- Ecotherapy should be included in the health and well-being action.
- Local community pick for Britain would be good for smaller vineyards.

## **Further thoughts from the land managers, farmers and viticulturalists**

Many thanks for today's interesting session and for including me. I am certainly keen to remain involved going forward and can see a number of items on your list of possible actions that might be appropriate for me. As I mentioned during the session it all hinges on the process being reasonably straightforward and having the necessary advice/support in place. I look forward to hearing more!

Thanks for the session just now. Fascinating progress is being made. Our water harvesting is going to be extensive once we have built the winery and we want to use it not just in the winery but also in the vineyard for sprays and possibly for frost protection – lots of water needed.

I thought that the Draft Actions were good, with great similarity to WineGB's sustainability scheme. I would reinforce the comment about the importance of including smaller vineyards and also about maintaining good work already started. I assume that renewable energy and rainwater harvesting are include in the more general parts of the Environmental Land Management.

I would have raised the important 'public good' vineyards can and do play in relation to public access through wine tours, leading to a better public understanding of environmental and sustainability issues in vineyards.

Thank you so much for giving us the opportunity to participate we found it very useful and are keen on improving our vineyard sustainability and have recently signed up to the SWGB scheme. Our first 2-acre vineyard was planted in 2015, and we just planted a new 3ha site this year with a further 3ha remaining to be planted within the next 3 years.

As relative newcomers to the viticulture industry we really value the support of schemes such as the SWGB as a way of receiving some guidance on best practice for sustainability, reducing carbon footprint and promoting biodiversity. The fact that the ELMS scheme will include support for cultural service delivery is exciting too. These are all things we are planning on doing anyway, but it's fantastic to have the benefit of the research you have put into the ELMS because we know for sure that if we follow best practise that we have the best chance of reaching our goals.

I'm pleased that there will be an element of crossover between the two schemes as it will definitely make administration a little easier if we can use evidence from our sustainability applications for the ELMS.

I'm very keen to see how this develops so would love to participate in future discussions if possible- it was really interesting to gain insight into what you are doing, and I hope my comments above have been useful.

I enjoyed the call this morning. Always interesting to hear from others and ELMS is such a massive thing I'm glad we're being represented.

Thank you for today's webinar. Thought you did a great job and I found it interesting to hear some of the perspectives coming through.

Grape growing itself is quite a new activity for so many in the UK, that putting this alongside all the other general noise of sustainability and ELM can seem quite daunting.

One of my early interests as a teenager in the UK was game conservancy - and much of this flowed through to when I managed mixed farming estates in Italy and applications for EU set-aside subsidy.

Fortunately, there is a large body of work now around the world, emerging on viticulture sustainability.

It seems participant payments are a sine qua non but I would feel a fraud to take money for tuning in tomorrow. We have a hectare acre of vines which is part of a farm many times larger and I'm not clear that we will be able to run two schemes. We'd struggle to record all the things you identify and there are some ambitions – favouring “native species” is one – that I do not share. I don't want to sound critical, and I do support your aims, but I thought I owed you an explanation for why I won't be joining you tomorrow morning.

Thank you for allowing me to participate in the zoom meeting on the 10th of December. All the ideas put forward in the meeting were very interesting. Some of the ideas we have already started implementing here at Bluestone. Reading more into the changes on a whole for land grants with DEFRA, I think it is brilliant to see changes as an industry.

I really like the idea of hiring more local people and the education of the community are really good themes to run with.

My only concern would be for the carbon footprint point, we would love to reduce our tractor and machinery use but the economics of either using more people or use a tractor to do the work. out weights in my opinion.

I would love to be kept in the loop with any further discussions happening, or if you want to do any trails here at bluestone vineyards. We would be happy to help. So please let me know.

I would love to work with you guys on everything. Really enjoyed it.

Thanks for letting me join the discussion this morning. It is always hard to manage these meetings and so thanks for making it run smoothly. It is clear that a lot of work has already gone into this. I have several ideas and thoughts that arose during the meeting, but I will email you later about these when I have had time to organise my thoughts.