

# Viticulture Test & Trial – Summary of workshops held in February 2021



Kent Downs AONB Unit

February 2021

# Viticulture: Tests and Trials Draft Proposed Actions February 2021 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. These two workshops examined updated proposed draft actions that can be delivered by vineyards and that will provide public good as defined by Defra.

Best practice recommendations drawn from all the research, workshops and farmer/grower consultations were used to create a set of proposed draft actions appropriate for viticulture to be delivered in schemes that reward farmers for environmental benefits. These schemes were once known as the Environmental Land Management scheme.

These recommendations were presented to growers during a second round of workshops held in November/December, where feedback was used to refine the recommendations. Further workshops were then held in February 2021 that were attended by growers, industry representatives and other stakeholders at the February workshops. These workshops were attended by 38 people from the three protected landscapes. 13 represented the industry and the remainder were growers. The participants were given a copy of the proposed draft actions and asked to comment on each of the 13 actions seen below:

Environmental Land Management Test and Trial – Viticulture Draft Actions				
Action (and suggested category)	Additional detail	Outcomes	Link to research and recommendations	Public Good
<b>1. Vineyard Land Management Plan</b>  Sustainable Farming Incentive Local Nature Recovery (competitive)	<p>It is envisaged that Land Management Plans for vineyards will be co-developed between growers and suitably qualified bodies (either individuals such as ecologists and agronomists or organisations such as FWAG and Protected Landscape Authorities where vineyards are within protected landscapes).</p> <p>The Land Management Plan for the vineyard will consider and balance viticulture/vineyard management needs with opportunities for ecosystem services and enhancements and will be designed and implemented for a minimum period of 5 years but with opportunities for reviews during that period and annual Vineyard Surveys. A review and engagement (with the aforementioned body or process) structure will allow for changes to the vineyard (e.g. additional planting, different viticulture practices, environmental challenges) to be accommodated into plans in a flexible way. Annual surveys will test the success of E.L.M.s interventions and impacts, i.e. away from the original 'benchmark'.</p> <p>Specific geographies, boundaries and physical limitations of the Plan (and associated vineyard) will be determined as part of developing the plan. However, the plan will cover both cultivated and uncultivated areas. The subsequent actions set out in a Land Management Plan will form the basis of an E.L.M. funding application. It is likely that Land Management Plans will be a compulsory element of the E.L.M. process.</p>	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>More vineyards working towards best practice and Public Goods.</li> <li>Opportunity for vineyards, no matter what their size, to work with an expert who can give advice on improving environmental outcomes (training and support).</li> <li>Closer engagement and understanding between environmental and landscape authorities and land managers</li> <li>A vineyard business fully integrated with E.L.M. and delivering a sustainable product.</li> </ol>	<p>See 3a (p20)</p> <p><i>"This includes vineyards developing a landscape plan which thinks about enhancing character but also removes detractors."</i></p> <p>1a i (p12) – Healthy ecosystems</p> <p>3a i (p19) <i>"Inspiration: Delivered through beauty, landscape enhancements and opportunity for engagement"</i></p>	<p>Whilst not delivered by the Plan alone, its design and subsequent implementation will be designed to deliver:</p> <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>Mitigation of and adaptation to climate change</li> <li>Beauty, heritage and engagement</li> </ul>



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<b>2. Farm Cluster Group</b>  Sustainable Farming Incentive Local Nature Recovery	<p>Vineyard Managers and Workers join a defined (geographically or by production method, e.g. organic producers) cluster of other Vineyard Managers, Workers, Ecologists, Advisory groups, Landowners, Corporations etc to support them through best practice knowledge exchange.</p> <p>The Clusters could target E.L.M. funding for co-ordinated local activities such as Nature Recovery programs or educational access.</p> <p>The Clusters could be new or formed as part of existing groups such as the Farm Clusters in the SDNP, the Surrey Hills Cluster, Kent Wildlife, or initiatives such as SWGB.</p> <p>This could be a mechanism for training</p>	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Stronger potential of achieving best practice and delivering Public Goods.</li> <li>Knowledge enhancements.</li> <li>Nature connectivity through an area.</li> <li>Joint activities reducing duplication of efforts and administration.</li> <li>Of particular benefit to smaller and less established vineyards.</li> <li>Trained land managers</li> </ol>	<p>Barriers to Adoption (p25)</p> <p><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></p>	<p>Shared actions developed through the cluster will deliver one or more of:</p> <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>Mitigation of and adaptation to climate change</li> <li>Beauty, heritage and engagement</li> </ul>



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<p><b>3. Participate in on site research into activities that may derive ecosystem services / Public Goods</b></p> <p>Sustainable Farming Incentive Component</p> <p>Local Nature Recovery</p> <p>The Innovation Research and Development Scheme (details to be announced in October 2021) may be a funding mechanism for this action</p>	<p>There is a lack of scientific research and innovation that vineyards can rely on with regards specifically to enhancing Natures Services and Public Goods in UK Vineyards. Questions raised through workshops, which would require research, include:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Which native insectary plants would work well in a specific UK vineyard environment?</li> <li>How productivity can be maintained or increased using Integrated Pest Management?</li> <li>What effect natural Pest Predators could have on the wider environment if encouraged in UK vineyards?</li> <li>What are the future climate change impacts going to be and how do we increase our resilience?</li> <li>What are the appropriate wildflower mixes for a specific UK vineyard environment?</li> <li>What is the most effective frost protection technology?</li> </ul> <p>To help address this knowledge gap E.L.M. could reward growers for participation in professional research and trials that use their vineyard space and risk their crop quality and quantity.</p>	<p>1. A greater understanding of new and emerging viticultural best practice and a likely increased uptake in activities that result in Public Goods.</p>	<p>1a i (p12) – Healthy ecosystems</p> <p>3a i (p19) "<i>Inspiration: Delivered through beauty, landscape enhancements and opportunity for engagement</i>"</p>	<p>Research (depending on the subject matter and value) could deliver any or all of:</p> <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>Mitigation of and adaptation to climate change</li> <li>Beauty, heritage and engagement</li> </ul>

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<p><b>4. Capital grants to support technological advances.</b></p> <p>To support vineyard activities and facilitate emerging best practice relating to:</p> <p>Sustainable Farming Incentive</p> <p>Local Nature Recovery</p> <p>The Farming Investment Fund is also likely to be a source of funding for viticulture and maybe the preferred mechanism for all capital funding.</p>	<p>Payments made to support, amongst other things, the purchase of:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Vineyard equipment (tractors, ATVs, frost protection, weather sensors etc) powered by renewable energy.</li> <li>Remote sensing technology to map, monitor and determine areas for targeted pesticide or other management interventions such as frost protection or nutrient additions.</li> <li>Rainwater harvesting and storage infrastructure for vineyard, winery and related use.</li> <li>Compost and/or grape marc storage/holding tanks and any required associated bunding.</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.</p>	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Improved productivity.</li> <li>Reduced carbon footprint.</li> <li>Reduced use of pesticides.</li> <li>Increased self sufficiency of water (particularly valuable in NVZs).</li> </ol>	<p>2a ii (p19)</p> <p><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></p>	<p>Capital good could deliver one or more of:</p> <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>Mitigation of and adaptation to climate change</li> <li>Beauty, heritage and engagement</li> </ul>

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<p><b>5. Soil regeneration</b></p> <p>Sustainable Farming Incentive</p> <p>Local Nature recovery</p>	<p>Soil management is a critical and common practice in UK vineyards. Soil is the medium through which water and nutrients 'feed' the vine via root systems. However, soil health in vineyards can remain low and its potential as a carbon sink often remains untapped. Payments can be made to reward the regeneration of soils and their increased carbon sequestration.</p> <p>The actions that will be paid for will be dictated by measures that are available to all through the Sustainable Farming Incentive. Defra press releases and documentation suggest strongly that soil regeneration actions will be available and the reason for adding them here is to emphasise the importance of these and that they should form part of the package of measures that are available for viticulturalists.</p> <p>It may be that these actions are covered elsewhere in this package of actions. (e.g. ground cover and restoration of species-rich grassland.</p>	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Removal of accumulated soil contaminants.</li> <li>Improved carbon sequestration.</li> <li>Improved water infiltration and reduced runoff</li> </ol>	<p>2a i (p18)</p> <p><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></p> <p>2a iii (p20)</p> <p><i>"Sequestration: Through permanent ground cover, evergreen shrubs and trees, and mulching of prunings (rather than burning)."</i></p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Clean and plentiful water</li> <li>Thriving plants and wildlife</li> <li>Protection from environmental hazards (flooding)</li> <li>Climate change mitigation and adaptation</li> </ul>

Action (and suggested category)	Additional detail	Outcomes	Link to research and recommendations	Public Good
<p><b>6. Ground Cover</b></p> <p>Sustainable Farming Incentive</p> <p>Local Nature Recovery</p>	<p>By encouraging permanent ground cover within vineyards it is possible to both improve soils and increase biodiversity. This will also help reduce the amount of pesticides that need to be applied by creating conditions that promote strong, healthy vine growth and the development of a functioning ecosystem where predatory insects can thrive and reduce the need for applying chemicals.</p> <p>This action would encourage:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Reduction in tillage</li> <li>Sowing and drilling insectary plants and plants beneficial to soil health</li> <li>The regeneration and long-term management of species-rich native grasslands will be dealt with in a separate action.</li> </ul> <p>This action will incentivise:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Planting vines without cultivating the entire field where the area to be planted is permanent grassland. This will not apply to cultivating vineyards on arable areas. This is an attempt to avoid losing high-quality grassland and long-developed soil profiles during the establishment of vineyards.</li> <li>Maintaining ground cover without cultivating across the entire vineyard (lowest level of payment with no requirement to plant specific species but avoiding cultivating between plants on rows)</li> <li>Sowing or drilling non-native insectary plants between rows and on headlands (higher level of payment) as identified in the land management plan.</li> <li>Sowing or drilling native insectary plants between rows and on headlands (highest level of payment) as identified in the land management plan.</li> </ul>	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Reduction in pesticide applications.</li> <li>Increased biodiversity</li> <li>Reduced risk of run-off into watercourses.</li> <li>Disease profiling</li> <li>Increase in numbers of insects that predate on vineyard parasites.</li> <li>Increase in number of pollinator species.</li> </ol>	<p>1a (p12)</p> <p><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></p> <p>1a i (p12)</p> <p><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></p>	<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>

Action (and suggested category)	Additional detail	Outcomes	Link to research and recommendations	Public Good
<p><b>7. Restoration and management of species-rich grass sward</b></p> <p>Local Nature Recovery</p> <p>Landscape Recovery</p>	<p>Where vineyards are on soils that have the potential to provide species rich grassland between rows and on headlands, payments can be made to regenerate the native flora and fauna. This can have benefits for biodiversity on site but can also help to create a functional network of grassland sites within priority areas.</p> <p>Restoration can happen either by:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Allowing the grass sward to regenerate by introducing suitable management techniques that encourage flowering plants (this can be either relaxing mowing between April and August to allow flowering and setting seed or by grazing the vineyard at strategic times of the year but excluding April to August). Inputs of fertiliser will be minimised or eliminated entirely. If a mowing regime is implemented then arisings must be removed.</li> <li>By mowing hard, scarifying the soil and adding a species-rich meadow mix appropriate to the soils and geology. Mowing must be maintained initially to allow the seed to germinate but management will be as per item 1.</li> </ul> <p>Management of established species-rich grass sward. Establish an agreed management regime which may include (as detailed in the regeneration of species-rich grassland):</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Appropriate grazing regime</li> <li>Mowing regime that enhances species-rich sward, including removal of arisings</li> </ul> <p>N.B. These establishment techniques have been part of Higher Level Stewardship and Countryside Stewardship for many years. This is simply applying the same principles to vineyards. Once a high-quality grass sward has been established, the management of species-rich grass sward is the natural follow on.</p>	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Increase in native flora and fauna on-site including the potential to include locally and/or nationally significant species.</li> <li>The potential to connect or extend existing habitats.</li> <li>Improved carbon sequestration when compared to many other land management techniques.</li> <li>Increased predatory insect populations.</li> <li>Reduced run off</li> </ol>	<p>1b i (p15)</p> <p><i>"Biodiversity/biocontrol 1: 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></p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Thriving plants and wildlife</li> <li>Mitigation of and adaptation to climate change</li> <li>Beauty, heritage and engagement with the environment</li> <li>Clean and plentiful water</li> </ul>

Action (and suggested category)	Additional detail	Outcomes	Link to research and recommendations	Public Good
<p><b>8. Establishment and maintenance of native species windbreaks, trees and hedgerows</b></p> <p>Sustainable Farming Incentive</p> <p>Local Nature Recovery</p>	<p>Where vineyards would benefit from or already have tree windbreaks, hedges (internal or boundary hedges), or areas of woodland that provide biodiversity, inspirational and/or cultural heritage values, pollination, carbon sequestration, erosion reduction, soil formation, nutrient cycling and wildlife corridors payments can be made for:</p> <p>The establishment and management of trees, windbreaks and areas of woodland on adjacent land, including replacement of missing or poor performing trees with native species.</p> <p>The opportunity to establish windbreaks, trees and hedges in and around the vineyard would be identified as part of the LMP, in conjunction with viticultural advice on need and placement.</p> <p>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.</p>	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Increase in insectivorous birds and predatory insects.</li> <li>Increased carbon sequestration.</li> <li>Increase in vineyard biodiversity</li> <li>Create habitats for nature recovery</li> <li>Can create wildlife corridors</li> <li>Contributes to landscape character enhancements and conservation.</li> <li>Can contribute to vineyard performance by reducing wind exposure.</li> </ol>	<p>1b ii (p15)</p> <p><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></p> <p>2a iii (p20)</p> <p><i>"Sequestration: Through permanent ground cover, evergreen shrubs and trees, and mulching of prunings (rather than burning)."</i></p> <p>1a iii (p13)</p> <p><i>"Biocontrol: Incorporate the use of native insectary shrubs and trees that support populations of insectivorous birds"</i></p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Beauty, heritage and engagement with the environment</li> <li>Thriving plants and wildlife</li> <li>Clean air</li> <li>Mitigation of and adaptation to climate change</li> </ul>

Action (and suggested category)	Additional detail	Outcomes	Link to research and recommendations	Public Good
<p><b>9. Biodiversity features</b></p> <p>Sustainable Farming Incentive</p> <p>Local Nature Recovery Component</p>	<p>Installation of bird boxes, bat boxes, raptor perches to encourage both increased biodiversity and predators of pest species. These measures were specifically supported by project research and should be the highest priority.</p> <p>Best practice around biodiversity features that might be appropriate for vineyards might include the features below but there is not evidence to support whether these will have a positive or negative impact on vine and fruit health and condition.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• beetle banks</li> <li>• habitat piles</li> <li>• reptile hibernacula</li> <li>• badger gates</li> <li>• ponds and other freshwater habitats</li> <li>• pollinator strips</li> <li>• Areas of long grass and scrub</li> </ul> <p>These features are well suited to vineyards as they often have space where these could be placed.</p> <p>The choice of features can be determined during the creation of a Land Management Plan where both generic features and those that support wildlife populations known to be present locally and to be priorities can be integrated into vineyard management.</p>	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1. Increased levels bird and bat species</li> <li>2. Increased biodiversity in the vineyard (which may also assist integrated pest management but needs to be evidenced)</li> <li>3. Additional habitat types - greater structural diversity of vegetation</li> <li>4. Reduced run-off</li> </ol>	<p>1a ii (p13)</p> <p><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></p> <p>1a iv (p14)</p> <p><i>"Biocontrol: Incorporate bat boxes to supplement natural habitat and boost the presence of bats in and around vineyards."</i></p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Thriving plants and wildlife</li> <li>• Beauty, heritage and engagement with the environment</li> <li>• Clean and plentiful water</li> <li>• Mitigation of and adaptation to climate change</li> </ul>

Action (and suggested category)	Additional detail	Outcomes	Link to research and recommendations <a href="https://bit.ly/TandTRecommendations">https://bit.ly/TandTRecommendations</a>	Public Good
<p><b>10. Interpretation</b></p> <p>Local Nature Recovery</p>	<p>Payment for the creation of interpretation panels or other features within the publicly accessible area of the vineyard telling:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• How E.L.M. is being used to enhance sustainability features on the vineyard</li> <li>• The story of biodiversity on the site and how E.L.M. is assisting in this</li> <li>• The story of the vineyard and wine production (this should be secondary to the above)</li> </ul> <p>Would only be made available to those that sign up to permissive access. Should be linked to enhancing public access opportunities.</p>	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1. Increased understanding of the public benefits of E.L.M.</li> <li>2. Increased understanding of the landscape and how viticulture is becoming part of that landscape</li> <li>3. Better understanding locally about what the vineyard contributes to sustainability, biodiversity and local landscape character.</li> </ol>	<p>3a i (p22)</p> <p><i>"Inspiration: Delivered through beauty, landscape enhancements and opportunity for engagement."</i></p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Beauty, heritage and engagement with the environment</li> </ul>

Action (and suggested category)	Additional detail	Outcomes	Link to research and recommendations	Public Good
<p><b>11. Permissive access</b></p> <p>Local Nature Recovery</p>	<p>Create a new walking route in the vineyard or collaborate with a neighbour to create a walking route round and between the two vineyards and neighbouring farmland.</p> <p>The Enhancing Access opportunities Test and Trial run by the Kent Downs AONB Unit has looked in detail at payments for permissive access and has recommended that permissive and enhanced access should be paid for where there is a genuine public benefit. Access that E.L.M. pays for should either create a circular walking route, should address fragmentation issues within the public access network or provide good quality access to features in the countryside. Vineyards are well placed to offer good quality access as parking may be possible and there may be an incentive to have people visiting if on site sales are made.</p> <p>The kind of access that could be paid for might include:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• permissive footpath access</li> <li>• permissive open access</li> <li>• permissive bridleway and cycling routes</li> <li>• enhanced access features including access furniture that provides least restrictive access (e.g. replacing stile with kissing gate or, in the case of vineyards, removing access barriers completely)</li> <li>• for paths that are well-used some basic surfacing options may be available. Any capital enhancements would be more likely to be paid for if they were on statutory access routes (i.e. public rights of way)</li> </ul> <p>More likely to receive payment if collaborating with other vineyards or neighbouring farms.</p>	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1. Increased routes for local people to enjoy the vineyard.</li> <li>2. A less fragmented public access network.</li> <li>3. Enhanced access for those with limited mobility.</li> <li>4. Public access to heritage features and viewpoints.</li> <li>5. Increased footfall for vineyards that have wineries.</li> <li>6. Legitimise currently unpermitted access and receive payments for doing so.</li> </ol>	<p>3a iv (p23)</p> <p><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></p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Beauty heritage and engagement with the environment</li> </ul>

Action (and suggested category)	Additional detail	Outcomes	Link to research and recommendations	Public Good
12. Educational access  Local Nature Recovery	<p>Create educational opportunities for people of all ages and backgrounds to learn about farming, wine production and the environmental benefits of E.L.M.s. These can be for both children as part of school visits or other interested groups (e.g. botanical survey/guided walk session)</p> <p>Activities for children linked to the school curriculum. Ideally, sample lesson plans created to assist vineyards to deliver sessions themselves.</p> <p>All sessions will be free to attend.</p> <p>Under plans being developed in another test and trial, facilitators may be available to help connect vineyards to people from groups that are under-represented in the countryside.</p>	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1. Increased opportunities for people to learn about the countryside, sustainability issues and wine production.</li> <li>2. Broaden the demographic base of people who get the opportunity to visit the countryside and learn about it.</li> <li>3. An opportunity for vineyards to connect more fully with local communities.</li> </ol>	<p>3a iv (p23)</p> <p><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></p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Beauty heritage and engagement with the environment</li> </ul>

Action (and suggested category)	Additional detail	Outcomes	Link to research and recommendations	Public Good
13. Health and wellbeing activities  Local Nature Recovery	<p>This action is similar to educational access but the outcomes are driven by the health and wellbeing agenda rather than education.</p> <p>There has been a lot of work providing evidence that access to the outdoors, particularly green spaces, can have a measurable effect on people's physical and mental health.</p> <p>This action would pay for sessions that would benefit health and wellbeing. These sessions could include:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• A mindfulness walk</li> <li>• A practical volunteer session implementing some of the E.L.M. actions</li> <li>• A nature connectedness session for people with trauma</li> <li>• Yoga</li> </ul>	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1. Increased opportunities for people to experience the benefits of being outdoors and improved health and wellbeing outcomes.</li> <li>2. Broaden the demographic base of people who get the opportunity to visit the countryside and learn about it.</li> <li>3. An opportunity for vineyards to connect more fully with local communities.</li> </ol>	<p>3a iv (p23)</p> <p><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></p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Beauty heritage and engagement with the environment</li> </ul>



## Comments from the vineyards and the industry –

### Industry workshop 11.2.21

#### General comments

The actions were generally well received. 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 discussions with growers. The most commonly asked question was what were the intervention rates that were going to be paid.

Ensuring labour is available is a key issue for those who require it for harvest. Pick for Britain was a disaster with 170 picking on the farm from Europe, three were from the UK and only one lasted picking until the end of the season from the UK.

DEFRA have suggested that schemes are going to pay for good practice but not for what could be described as normal business activity? It looks like there are payments for outcomes and income forgone as in Countryside Stewardship.

## **Comments about specific actions**

### **5. Regeneration of vineyard soils**

Comment 1: Rescaype UK have been focusing on many of the proposed actions already but it is only possible to do things above ground if below ground is healthy. Viticulture will have its own areas of requirements, but everybody is going to be judged on the same soil quality baseline. Present reporting of cross compliance is being adopted into the new Sustainable Farming Incentive. You can get paid but DEFRA's problem is having a framework for reporting. A set standard is needed and within the SFI there will be a soil management plan including the nutrient management plan. Suggested that a nutrient management plan should replace the land management plan. Productivity above ground is fully determined by soil health and depth. To reach the soil health index this will be used to report to DEFRA. This is made up by a range for good soil, retention of nutrients and pollution. Everything depends on the soil. We need to think about how we are going to report the same framework of data to DEFRA and what is the final information for our product of full soil health and what kind of water we use on our farms. This will be a factor for future payments.

Comment 2: Interesting to hear about the focus on soil and water health. Reducing water and increasing soil benefits are important and there should be more distinction between what the system is based on. There is an opportunity to deliver greater ecosystem services depending on how vineyards are managed. We all want our farming systems to be running on the same system towards regenerative farming.

### **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.

### **8. 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.

### **5. Regeneration of vineyard soils**

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

### **6. 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 banded area. This could be funded.

### **6. Ground cover**

We need to find a solution not to trim by hand. Tractor mounted trimmers 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.

## **12. Educational access and permissive 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.

## **13. 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 provide public benefit.

## **Summary of chat**

*Company 1:*

We collect and assess a wide range of soil & water data to advise best use of our unique soil flocculant, m-PAM, for reducing soil erosion and diffuse-pollution at source. In-house development of a hybrid, GIS, Machine-Learning software for use by Landowner/managers and government, to provide efficient Soil Management Planning and reporting (DEFRA-ELMs-SFI) by landowner/managers.

*Company 2:*

I agree with the plan and think that results of different management actions will vary from site to site, as influenced by soil type, climate, P&D pressure etc, so actions should be assessed in the first place for ELMS.

*Company 1:*

We believe DEFRA is going to look at soil macro elements more and use the General soil health Index as a minimum bar, anyone else know of this? How would one prove results?

*Company 3:*

Do you need to investigate what other fruit growers are looking for: apple, blackcurrant growers etc. If all have similar aims in the way they farm, then DEFRA will treat them all as a group?

*Company 2:*

It was stated that a consultation currently for 'Row fruit growers' It was confirmed a consultation on Row Fruit was being undertaken.

*Company 4:*

I like the ideas of incorporating species rich grassland and other biodiversity gains within vineyards rather than seeing them as mutually exclusive.

*Company 2:*

I couldn't agree more, but there needs to be a balanced approach that would not increase the risk of Botrytis exponentially

*Company 4:*

I also like the idea of incorporating some of the capital items mike described in the scheme

*Company 5:*



Yes, so do I. For invertebrates, it's good to think about the whole life cycle rather than just the flower resource.

*Company 4:*

I think we have suffered too much from the RPA/NE/Defra process wagging the outcome dog and excluding certain farming systems from being able to engage. Can I ask about two potential areas of conflict - Landscape and Historic Environment? We have found resistance to not only vineyards but also broadacre regenerative agriculture from both of those.

*Company 1:*

Does anyone take NVZ/DWSZ into their planning as a specific item?

*Company 3:*

I have found that most biodiversity opportunities in a vineyard are found on headlands and surrounding hedges. The vines with generally mown grass have limited habitat for wildlife. Also, higher soil fertility levels maintained within the vineyard soils often prevent establishment of wildflowers.

*Company 2:*

It is important to ensure good conditions for establishment of vines in the 1st year - ploughing is the practical approach for a larger project (due to costs and practicality), to reduce weed pressure and aid establishment.

*Company 1:*

Agree, the benefits are greater in the long term when viticulture replaces Arable. So ploughing is the lesser of the two evils. Soil modelling is the key there.

*Company 2:*

I agree and ploughing is one action to affect soil at establishment, followed by years of vineyard cropping, when growers can improve soil quality and C sequestration.

*Company 1:*

All Viticulture growers should prepare for Big Data integration and use. That will be the way we plan and get very close to forecast reality on 5 - 10-year terms. It will also assist in planting comparisons, like the form of companion planting of old but now with Sub data to relate, we can get more accurate.

*Company 5:*

Great work so far! thanks

*Company 1:*

Thank you, very interesting meeting, learnt lots. Look forward to speaking with anyone in Viticulture.

# Viticulturist, farmer and land manager workshop 18.2.21

## General Comments/questions

The actions are great, have any of these actions been costed?

**Q:** How will the outcomes be measured?

**A:** DEFRA were keen that we investigated how to measure the outputs. This has been very because of a number of factors. Payment by result does not give growers certainty on payment. Payment levels need to be worthwhile for growers. Our research has shown that it is appropriate to make payment to the viticulture sector.

Several comments suggested that payment rates should be higher than existing BPS payments.

Is there are framework for how payments are going to be paid and what evidence is required.

The weighting of payment is going to be crucial; priority is to make sure our business is sustainable and profitable. We shall be all in recovery mode the most important thing is we get the business back on track. How are the payments going to be portioned out? We think the take up rate is dependent on whether they think it is worthwhile.

## Comments about specific actions

### **14. Organic conversion and management (AN ORGANIC ACTION HAD BEEN ADDED BEFORE THIS WORKSHOP THOUGH NOT IN THE PRESENTATION SLIDES)**

Organic and biodynamic can be very useful. Our vineyards which follow this method look better than the neighbours. Will biodynamic be incorporated in the organic action? The planting of different species such as peas etc. within rows is another method which is being used abroad to mitigate the use of nitrogen. These different methods of management, which are organic or biodynamic, both should be added to organic and biodynamic as actions. The species of insectary plants need to be clarified.

### **3. Participate in on site research into activities that may derive Public Goods**

As regards organic production. Nobody has any data on chemical residues in the product, could this be added to the list in section 3, research to be undertaken. Wine is not like growing row fruit. With vines you are producing a product which can be seen as anti-social so therefore showing that there are no residues in the product can be potentially a public good. It is the technological advances which are important.

### **10. Interpretation**

Interpretation is good idea and the actions state that signage would only be available if you signed up to permissive access. If you have a footpath going through your farm it should be available for that as well. – THIS CHANGE HAS BEEN MADE TO RECOMMENDATIONS

### **11. Permissive access**

We found that having the public on the land is good, but it does present staffing issues, therefore having staff to help with events goes beyond having just educators. High levels of staffing are required. It is brilliant doing it, but it is hard work. Open days are good as well as seasonal events such as LEAF open farm Sunday. You need to offer good finance for staff and other things like loos etc.

### **Questions put to participants**

**Q:** Given that grapes are a high value product, is ELM going to play an important part in your farming or is it going to be a smaller element?

**A:** I think that we have such a broad mix of people who own vineyards including those that have other farming activities. For some it will be crucially important but for others less so.

**A:** A large vineyard in Kent suggested that they were in favour of most of the actions and did some already. "I am very excited but payments are unlikely to be a huge percentage of the revenue at the moment. We would be very happy to be part of this to promote sustainable practices."

**Q:** How many would be interested in the scheme? **A:** Most raise their hands

**Q:** Would anybody not be interested. **A:** Nobody raised their hand

### **Summary of chat (18/02/2021) Viticulturalist, Farmers and Land Managers**

*Land manager 1:* Organic and Biodynamic. Thanks Mike and Pippa, very interesting and exciting.

*Land manager 2:* Thanks for this...very useful!

*Land manager 3:* Thank you a great call.