



## Braydon Forest Future Association Zoom. Tuesday 30<sup>th</sup> March 2021

### Present:

Jonny Cooper, Ellie Jones, Stuart Milsom, John Tuck, Emma Brook, David Mitchell, Treena Ryall, Simon Graley, Becks Booker, Malcolm and Nic Davis, David Fitzherbert, Sophie Scruton. Apologies from Richard Skeate, Dai Davies.

Our survey shows that we have a shared interest in seeing farming and wildlife survive side by side and that the Braydon Forest is a well-preserved landscape and habitat.

**Ellie Jones** reported on a project to support the Marsh Fritillary Butterfly <https://butterfly-conservation.org/butterflies/marsh-fritillary>

In summary the Marsh Fritillary is a landscape scale species that suffers with the decline of habitat. However sightings in 2018 and 2020 suggest Braydon Forest is a habitat that still provides support for this endangered species. It requires tussocky grasses and it breeds on and eats the devil's-bit scabious plant. <https://www.wildlifetrusts.org/wildlife-explorer/wildflowers/devils-bit-scabious>

In an ideal world there would be patches of this throughout the Braydon Forest landscape to support the Marsh Fritillary colonies. Ellie Jones will run a landowner workshop in May, please let her know if you can attend. [EllieJ@wiltshirewildlife.org](mailto:EllieJ@wiltshirewildlife.org). Her colleague Sue will undertake visits to individual farms for anyone interested.

**Stuart Milsom** reported on his work supporting farmers with rural payment applications and on his own connection with the Braydon Forest. He highlighted a number of deadlines the most pressing being **mid-April** for the 'expression of interest' for the Sustainable Farming Incentive. <https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/sustainable-farming-incentive-scheme-pilot-launch-overview/sustainable-farming-incentive-defras-plans-for-piloting-and-launching-the-scheme>

The government's pilot schemes are a chance for both policy makers and farmers to learn from each other.

Three important new agricultural policy initiatives:

1. Sustainable Farming Incentives (apply to join pilot by mid-April)
2. Local Nature Recovery (pilot yet to be launched (this could be for us! See footnotes below)
3. Landscape Recovery

Applications for capital grants such as for boundaries, and Higher Tier applications need to be complete by the **end of April**. BPS by **17<sup>th</sup> May**.

**Jonny Cooper** reported on the 4000 species to be found in the Braydon Forest and highlighted some rare ones such as the Bechstein's bat and the lapwing. He reported that the SSSIs in the Braydon Forest form a good basis for protected species. Farmers in the Braydon Forest have the opportunity to create pollinator corridors through hedgerow management.

Jonny would like you to tell him of features on your arm that support wildlife and very importantly what you see. (Below is my quick recording, but Jonny says it is good enough! David Mitchell's calendar.) John Tuck reported the arrival of the first swallow today! Let Jonny know: [JonathonC@wiltshirewildlife.org](mailto:JonathonC@wiltshirewildlife.org)



## Q&A

Treana Ryall asked whether applications for new schemes such as sustainable farming would cause a reduction in BPS.

SM pointed out that farmers should try to find new schemes to join so that they have support when BPS ends in 2027. The BPS money is ultimately going to be spent on the three new initiatives outlined above.

Ed Rawlings enquired about hedgerow management and best practice. His question reflected a general interest across the meeting and was echoed by John Tuck and Treana Ryall.

EJ talked of the Wildlife Trust 4 year rotation approach.

Ed suggested we try to connect all the farms through a continuous hedgerow managed for the environment.

David Fitzherbert recalled the work done by his mother, June and Paul Darby which took his farm into Higher Level Stewardship. He suggested that leadership in 'what to do' would be useful.

ACTION POINTS (follow up chat with Ellie Jones means that we feel we can deliver the following LEADERSHIP!):

- To focus Hedgerows. We will plan a workshop so that we can learn about hedgerows and agree best conservation practice. We will try to map out a hedgerow corridor across participating farms.
- To focus on the Marsh Fritillary Butterfly, a landowner's workshop will be arranged.
- A meeting in person in June, Stuart Milsom has already agreed to speak again, we will also find any other experts we think we need to lead us and help us agree a way forward. We will undertake a map making exercise where we link participating farms on paper.
- Keep up your survey work / recording during Spring: Curlews, cuckoos, newts butterflies, bats, orchids, grasses etc.

FOOT NOTES: (Government Pilot schemes to replace BPS). Key text from the website:

<https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/sustainable-farming-incentive-scheme-pilot-launch-overview/sustainable-farming-incentive-defras-plans-for-piloting-and-launching-the-scheme>

“The Sustainable Farming Incentive is one of three new schemes, alongside the future Local Nature Recovery and Landscape Recovery schemes, both of which we will begin piloting next year. These schemes will operate together and pay for sustainable farming practices, improve animal health and welfare, improve environmental outcomes, and reduce carbon emissions. They will create habitats for nature recovery and make landscape-scale changes such as establishing new woodland and other ecosystem services, providing key means to deliver against our 25 Year Environment Plan goals and carbon net zero targets.

For example, looking only at hedgerow management under the Sustainable Farming Incentive:

- the scheme will help to protect and enhance the estimated 9 million tonnes of carbon already stored in England's hedgerows
- initial projections indicate potential additional carbon savings of up to 100,000 tonnes of CO<sub>2</sub> equivalent over the CB4 period (the fourth carbon budget period under the

Climate Change Act, from 2023 to 2027). This rises to up to 300,000 tonnes of CO2 equivalent over the CB5 period (2028 to 2032)

- these additional savings are roughly equivalent to taking up to 40,000 cars off the road between 2023 and 2027, and up to 130,000 cars off the road between 2028 and 2032

Hedgerow management is just one part of the Sustainable Farming Incentive. The scheme will also include many other actions to encourage carbon-friendly farming, for example through soil management.

### **Local Nature Recovery**

This scheme will pay for actions that support local nature recovery and deliver local environmental priorities – making sure the right things are delivered in the right places. The scheme will encourage collaboration between farmers, helping them work together to improve their local environment. This scheme may be competitive.

Preparations for piloting the Local Nature Recovery scheme will begin in 2021. We expect to begin piloting this scheme in 2022. We will pilot a number of scheme aspects. This will include exploring how best to bring together groups of farmers and land managers to deliver large-scale environmental benefits that align with Local Nature Recovery strategies. More details will be released in due course.”