

Wales Land Management Forum (WLMF) Minutes

Title of meeting:	Wales Land Management Forum (WLMF)
Location:	Microsoft Teams Meeting
Date of meeting:	5th June 2023
Members present:	Professor Rhys Jones, NRW Board Member (Chair) Dominic Driver, NRW Huwel Manley, NRW Bradley Welch, NRW Anthony Geddes, Confor Lee Pritchard, Wales YFC Gareth Parry, FUW Sarah Hetherington, NRW John Browne, NRW Dennis Matheson, TFA Rachel Lewis-Davies, NFU Cymru Tim Kirk, Confor
Attendees present:	Tristan Hatton-Ellis, NRW (Item 3) Richard Park, NRW (Item 4) Nicola Rimington, NRW (Item 4) Louise Pennington, NRW (Item 4)
Apologies:	Ruth Jenkins, NRW Martyn Evans, NRW Dav Letellier, NRW Fraser McAuley, CLA
Secretariat:	Bronwen Martin, NRW

Item 1 Introductions, Apologies and Declaration of Interest

1. Professor Rhys Jones (WLMF Chair) welcomed all to the meeting and noted apologies.
2. No declarations of interest were raised in respect of Agenda items to be considered.
3. The group were reminded that the meeting was being recorded for the purpose of capturing the minutes and the digital file will be deleted once the meeting minutes have been compiled.

Item 2 Minutes from the last meeting, actions & matters arising

4. Once the meeting minutes have been reviewed and formally agreed they will be translated and published on the NRW website. The Group reviewed the minutes from the meeting held on 13th March 2023. The minutes were approved as a true record.
5. The group reviewed the outstanding actions and verbal updates were provided.
6. Rhys recalled the previous discussions regarding the Strategic Review of Charges and the potential conflict relating to Sustainable Drainage and the Control of Agricultural Pollution Regulations. Rhys asked if there were any further updates on these topics.

AP June 01: Bronwen Martin to see whether there are any updates regarding the FUW query about a potential conflict relating to Sustainable Drainage and the Control of Agricultural Pollution Regulations.

7. Rhys asked if there could be a follow up on the Natur a Ni from Russell De'Ath at a future meeting to close the loop on that topic.

AP June 02: Bronwen Martin to source an update regarding Natur a Ni for the next WLMF meeting.

8. Regarding the previous update on Beavers, Rachel Lewis-Davies, NFU Cymru asked if NRW has now submitted the evidence to Welsh Government and that is with them to be considered. Rachel also asked if that is purely environmental evidence or does it consider wider social and cultural implications as well. An organisation representing farmers and land managers, we are very keen to input into this process and we haven't had that opportunity thus far. We want to ensure that we do have that opportunity before key decisions are made. Bronwen said she would have to refer those questions to NRW colleagues to get a clarification on that.

AP June 03: Bronwen Martin to seek clarification for queries regarding the beaver review work NRW have undertaken for Welsh Government.

Item 3 River Restoration & Pearl Mussels

9. Tristan Hatton-Ellis, NRW joined the meeting to provide a presentation on the river restoration work undertaken to boost the pearl mussel population in Wales.
10. Tristan described the rate of biodiversity decline over the last 150 years and illustrated this with a graph. There is a goal to start seeing some recovery by 2030 with the aim to see significant improvements by 2050. Freshwater Pearl Mussels and salmon are both good examples of freshwater species that are really suffering at the moment and undergoing major declines.
11. Tristan discussed climate change and the impact of extreme weather. The way that we manage our rivers can help them become more resilient. Tristan described resilient headwaters, traditionally these areas have been drained because we want to make maximum use of the land but actually there is a case for perhaps considering whether we should be trying to keep them wetter over a longer period. In summer time, these could actually be quite important watering areas for stock, and they are also brilliant for biodiversity.

12. The riparian zone is an important section which is the area next to the river. The reason that is important is because rivers are not just about the water that is flowing down the middle of the channel, they also need to be connected to the adjacent terrestrial habitat. A lot of the things that live in rivers actually live on things that have fallen into it (e.g., aquatic insects, leaves and bits of dead wood etc.). The shade from trees and other vegetation is also very important because it helps to cool the water temperature, for example trout living in this kind of habitat would quite likely die of heat if there was no shade. Excluding some livestock from the margins is important for those rivers to work well, even if the water quality is absolutely fine. Heavily grazed areas also cause issues when it rains due to run off into the water. The riparian zone also serves as a buffer to stop pollutants getting in the water. Tristan discussed the importance of habitat structure like having places for species to hide, shade and cover for fish, trees dropping leaves which is a food source for some species, nectar and cover for insects and open areas for beetles and spiders. A diverse habitat structure and good water quality both contribute to a healthier river ecosystem. More variability in flow creates different kinds of underwater habitat as well.
13. Tristan described the effect of flooding on river ecosystems and the role of floodplains. Floodplains provide very productive land but also have benefits for the river. This is the link between the river and its terrestrial environment.
14. Freshwater Pearl Mussels are very long lived, the adults can get to about 10 or 15 centimetres long and they can live for over 100 years. They need high quality, relatively unmodified, fast flowing rivers. They need a diverse flow and substrate because the adults need fast flow, and the juveniles are much smaller and can't live in quite the same habitat. They are critically endangered and there used to be millions of them in Wales but there's probably only about 1000 adults now in the wild in Wales. Tristan described the lifecycle of the Pearl Mussel. The adults live for a very long time, and they live half buried or fully buried in gravels. Every summer they release glochidia larvae, which live in the water column for a few hours. Some of those glochidia will manage to infect the gills of a young trout or salmon, mostly in Wales they use trout. They live on there for about six months and then they'll drop off and live in clean sand or gravels for about five years or so until they are big enough to filter feed with other adults.
15. The problem is that the juveniles don't seem to be surviving. This is seen throughout its range and not something that's confined to Wales or even to Britain. The main problem seems to be that there's more siltation going on in rivers these days, which is causing the gravels to become clogged and too low in oxygen for them to survive.
16. NRW have designed a strategy looking at Pearl Mussels and how we can best conserve them. It is also about managing rivers more sustainably in general. Many of the problems that Pearl Mussels face are the same problems that a lot of other freshwater biodiversity faces. This includes looking at some of the issues including the loss of habitat, clogging and deoxygenation of gravels and silt, climate change, pearl fishing, water pollution, ecosystem engineer and umbrella species.
17. NRW have a captive rearing and release programme in two hatcheries which has become increasingly successful. We're hoping to release the first mussels from the breeding programme this year.

18. The other strand of this work is habitat restoration. This is being delivered by a Pearl Mussel Coordinator and several large-scale river restoration projects.
19. Tristan described some of the work undertaken in the 1960s and 1970s including the Gwynedd River Board drag line removing boulders from the river. NRW has now dismantled a lot of these boulder embankments and returned them to the river. We were very careful to remove any muscles beforehand. We put in over 800 tonnes of boulders and added woody material to trap gravels. You can see now once we've put all those boulders back in how much more complicated the river is and how much more variability and flow there is and that just creates a great habitat for salmon and trout. Tristan showed drone footage to show the difference in the river between May 2022 before the work where it was quite a uniform, compared to the river after the work.
20. Gareth asked if an evaluation has been done to see how this type of work could increase the risk of flooding in the future, for example from a build-up of gravel further downstream. Tristan said all of this work has gone through various processes and assessments. On this site, we're trying to increase the amount of flooding which will therefore slightly reduce the risk of flooding downstream because we've reconnected the river to its flood plain – there's an increase in flood storage which holds back the flood peaks.
21. Rachel recalled that there was no mention of who actually owned the land in the presentation. It would be good to understand the landowner's perspective and how NRW got their agreement. Did NRW also consider the social and cultural dimension of this because in most cases there is a farmer on the land adjacent who will perhaps have to deal with consequences if the river is reconnected with the floodplain (e.g., more frequent flooding on their land). Tristan said the land was owned by a farmer who also had a campsite – he sold the land to NRW (the campsite was sold separately). NRW bought that particular land because it was of key strategic value for Pearl Mussels. Tristan discussed some of the multiple benefits of this work. Rhys asked if there are other NRW schemes on land which is owned by farmers or other landowners. Tristan said yes, but the context for each one of them is different. Tristan said this particular case is unusual, NRW does not usually buy land, but this was a very critical site for Pearl Mussels. Tristan described the general process of communicating with farmers and landowners including negotiating and establishing agreements for projects.
22. Regarding flooding, Huwel Manley said for any work NRW does in rivers, we also have to apply for a Flood Risk Activity Permit. Huwel described the internal process which goes to the flood risk mapping teams to assess. This ensures we are compliant with the habitat regulations etc. (e.g., considers screening for species, checks for any invasive species etc.). Huwel said NRW is responsible for main rivers, but Local Authorities are responsible for minor water courses. Tristan clarified that this particular site involved a minor watercourse in Gwynedd.
23. Dennis said he had a very interesting day with the Water Management Forum on the Upper Conway Catchment Area to see the rewetting of the National Trust Estate on the moor. This has had a dramatic effect on the cleaning of the water downstream. This started in 2012 and the initial thought was that if you rewet the moor then the methane emissions would increase more than the carbon that would be captured, but in fact is it the opposite. The river downstream is cleaner than it has been in a lifetime, and it has also stopped flooding the houses in the village downstream and fields adjacent. In that particular location, it has worked but there are still questions about whether rewetting

as a means of improving water quality of a river would work at every location. This project had the cooperation of the tenant farmers, landowners and others and was a success. Rhys discussed the connections between the different subgroups and the importance of linking topics with the WLMF.

24. Tristan said NRW are hoping to deliver more projects like this in the future and it would be good to return to the group to talk about some of the wider issues.
25. Rhys asked whether this particular project is now self-sustaining. Tristan said NRW will certainly be doing some post project monitoring and so far, we have seen some measurable improvements. When NRW are happy with the habitat, we will be reintroducing juvenile mussels there. From the habitat point of view, we are hoping that we won't need to do massive amounts of extra work because the aim is to create a self-sustaining habitat.
26. John Browne asked if this something that could be rolled out across Wales. Interested farmers might be keen to put some boulders back into the rivers that cross their land. Tristan said possibly, but it needs to be done with care and with the advice from someone who understands the situation like a geomorphologist.
27. Dominic Driver said he is proud of many NRW projects but is particularly proud of this project because Pearl Mussels are amazing creatures. The Pearl Mussels are at the centre of the project, but this has also involved turning a miserable, silent, canalised river into a happy, noisy, wonderful river which has many benefits. We are also looking at how we manage the land around it and have introduced things like pony grazing. We are also talking to the neighbouring farmers and the water company that is operating in the area because there are some challenges about water quality and how the water is managed. The Pearl Mussels are the centrepiece for a well-integrated catchment management type initiative.

AP June 04: Bronwen Martin to circulate a copy of the Pearl Mussel presentation.

Item 4 Coastal Adaptation

28. Coastal adaptation was briefly mentioned at the June WLMF meeting and an invitation was extended to NRW specialists to provide a presentation to the group. Nicola Rimington, Louise Pennington and Richard Park, NRW joined the meeting to discuss coastal adaptation. Nicola works in NRW's Marine and Coastal Policy and Planning team. Rick and Louise both work in NRW Strategics Flood Risk Management.
29. Nicola said the key pressures on the coast are around sea level rise and storminess. In about 100 years' time, sea level is likely going to rise between a metre and a metre and a half around the Welsh coast (it varies slightly depending on where you are and what sort of scenario you take). In terms of storminess, the evidence is pretty unclear what's going to happen in terms of increased storminess.
30. As the sea levels rise, the existing flood risk management infrastructure that we have got around the coast will not protect us as well as it does now. Nicola showed a graph illustrating present day water levels compared with 0.5m of sea level rise.
31. The other challenge is saline intrusion which is a more gradual change that we might experience. There was a project by the National Trust and British Geological Survey

looking at the impacts of rising groundwater in the changing salinity at the coast for National Trust properties. There is also work happening in America and around this. This is a growing threat to coastal agriculture, but we do not know to what extent.

32. Nicola showed some photographs showing the impacts of the winter storms from 2012/2014 ([Wales Coastal Flooding Review Phase 1 Report - Assessment of Impacts](#)). There were lots of impacts to infrastructure as well as impacts to the natural environment. Nicola then showed some maps taken from a report that was commissioned by Welsh Government ([Welsh Government: Loss of agricultural land under sea level rise scenarios](#)). In this the report, the most extreme scenario suggests that around 33,000 hectares of agricultural land could be at risk over the 100-year period.
33. Nicola provided a brief overview of Shoreline Management Plans (SMPs). The second round of SMPs were developed about 10 years ago and they aim to bring together an understanding of coastal processes, the effects of climate change, how we currently manage the coast and how we can best manage the coast looking forward to 100 years into the future. Further information can be found on the [NRW website - NRW: Shoreline Management Plans](#).
34. Welsh Government have a flood and coastal erosion, risk management strategy ([Welsh Government: National Strategy for Flood and Coastal Erosion Risk Management in Wales](#)). This informs the where the work that risk management authorities undertake in terms of flood and coastal erosion and risk management. Risk management authorities would include local authorities, NRW and also water companies. The overall aim in that strategy is to reduce the risk to people and communities from flooding and erosion.
35. Richard said there is a challenge for all of us to sustainably managed flood risk while optimising the outcomes for Sustainable Management of Natural Resources (SMNR) and also the imperative of protecting communities at risk. There are key policies that underline this particular direction, including the Environment Act (which relates to SMNR) and the Wellbeing of Future Generations Act.
36. Richard discussed the three policy responses that apply to the coast in Wales are all examples of coastal adaptation:
 - Hold the line requires adaptation either by changing coastal defences, or accepting a reduction in the standard of protection
 - Managed realignment and No active intervention: are also forms of adaptation because the susceptibility of some areas of land to coastal flooding will change. This will influence land use and flood risk.
37. There comes a point where the investment decisions that are made in relation to managing those assets face the challenge of no longer being sustainable and that's where it suddenly switches into the need for a major investment.
38. We are looking to identify and adaptive management strategy whereby we try and ascertain the residual life and standard of protection and how that would diminish overtime and come up with options that may be an alternative to 'hold the line' in compliance with shoreline management plan policy where those policies go through a

transition because many areas in Wales which are currently 'hold the line' switch into 'no active intervention' or 'managed realignment'.

39. The adaptation programme is a programme of prioritised sites which relates to impacts around the coast over time. Porthmadog, Pwllheli (and the surrounding area) and the Dyfi Estuary are examples of a handful of the sites that we are currently looking at. Those sites are going to undertake a pretty thorough review and that review is aligned with the requirements we have for sustainability.
40. NRW's Coastal Adaptation Programme addresses the need to develop resilience and sustainable ways of managing future flood risk, in the context of the SMPs. The programme appraises evidence and options and develops plans for the management of flood risk and habitats, in line with the Sustainable Management of Natural Resources. Richard discussed the various criteria and priorities which triggers interest in a particular site for a potential coastal adaptation project and then described the project process.
41. Richard said this is an extremely complex, and an enormous challenge for us all. The Sustainable Farming Scheme (SFS) may be a key opportunity to support land management transitions in the areas at risk. Our programme and projects offer a collaborative framework through which we can work with stakeholders to appraise options together and promote solutions that balance flood risk, the environment, wellbeing and value.
42. Dennis mentioned that it is alarming to know that 33,000 hectares of land will eventually be affected by sea level rise. Dennis said that only reinforces his earlier argument that we also shouldn't be sacrificing thousands of hectares of land that can produce food to grow trees.
43. Rachel said NFU Cymru recently responded to NRW's flood risk management consultation. It is a continuing concern to NFU Cymru that people and property are prioritised, this is undervaluing agricultural land and the agricultural community. It is a big concern because often farmers are being asked to deliver more in terms of natural flood management, but actually there is very little value in these actions. Nicola acknowledged Rachel's comments and the challenges mentioned. One of the potential opportunities could be the SFS to try and see where we can get the best out of managing change at the coast. Rhys asked about the potential of the SFS to help respond and adapting to this challenge. Nicola said NRW have put forward various ideas looking at how it could support a shift from current practises to things like salt marsh developing on some of this land because salt marsh is enormous in terms of blue carbon potential. Richard said it is important to build upon the evidence.
44. Regarding the challenge of tree planting and farming, Anthony suggested integrated land management is key and will probably need some revised thinking. Anthony discussed the opportunity to slow the flow through afforestation further up the catchment to try and minimise the impact of peak flooding. Anthony asked if there are proposals to look at bridged financing. Nicola said in terms of the recent NRW flood risk management plan consultation, which wasn't just focused on the sea, which was a combined look at the risks of flooding from all sources, so there is joined up thinking in that sense. Management measures happen in the catchment and can help alleviate the pressures further down at the coast, but it's quite a complicated picture in terms of the combined risk of high tide, sea level, a storm and a high river flow all happening at the

same time and what risk that describes. The modelling around that is really complex to get that joint probability information. We are trying to get gain a better understanding and are working with the likes of the Environment Agency as well. The key message is that anything that helps to manage the flood risk is a help, whether that's up the catchment or down at the coast.

45. Regarding Anthony's point on financing, Nicola said she did not have anything else to add and asked if Anthony wanted her to take this query away and talk to colleagues. Anthony said in the initial phases, many people will be looking to Welsh Government to finance initiation works for resilience and the start of the adaptation instead of just 'hold the line'. We know that the SFS budget is quite small, and we know that the government spend is reducing, so where is the money going to come from.
46. Regarding the SFS, Rachel said that at every SFS related meeting she has attended, she hears that the SFS is going to help with that particular environmental problem. There is a huge amount of naivety around the budget and how far that is going to stretch. People are also overlooking the fact that they need a practical, workable and implementational scheme by 2025 that has to deliver multiple objectives and underpin farm businesses that in turn underpin the rural economy and our communities, culture and language. We are told that there are multiple objectives that this particular scheme is seeking to address and whether it's for access, phosphates or coastal erosion, everything is going to be done through the SFS. However, there are huge practical and financial issues with that idea.
47. Gareth said the agricultural land figure that Dennis referred to earlier is a concern along with the predictions over the next 100 years or so. Gareth emphasised the importance of placing agricultural productivity and farmers on par with protecting urban areas when coming up with strategies. We don't want to see that loss of agricultural land around our coastal areas and also potentially increased flooding in the uplands due to Beavers and another species in the future. When NRW create these strategies, it is key that agricultural land doesn't get left by the way side in order to protect certain areas, it needs to be considered on a level playing field. Richard said for clarification in terms of strategies, these are not NRW's directives in terms of priorities. We are extremely sensitive to the impact and implications of utilising our directive and mandate to ascertain our management decisions. We want to get the best out of it for everyone.
48. Huwel said it is key that WLMF member organisations share messages with their membership and networks, especially that the risk from coastal waters is increasing. Huwel mentioned that in February 2022, there was a very close call around the South Wales coast and had the wind not eased off, we could have been in a serious situation. It is important to get people to prepare themselves for those circumstances.

AP June 05: Bronwen Martin to circulate a copy of the Coastal Adaptation presentation.

Item 5 NRW Updates

49. Prior to the meeting, the WLMF Update Paper was circulated. Members are encouraged to review the document beforehand and come to the meeting with questions. Dominic welcomed questions from the members.

50. Rachel said the update paper is really useful but questioned how NRW can ensure that it is fully comprehensive. Following the last WLMF meeting, an issue emerged relating to permitting and the fact that permitting decisions were being put on hold by NRW as a result of the phosphates issue and nutrient neutrality. That came to Rachel's attention from one of NFU Cymru's members. Rachel said a key part of these meetings is for there to be a no surprises approach. Bronwen thanked Rachel for the feedback. Bronwen mentioned that if there are other topics that members want more information on then she can contact colleagues for more detail. Bronwen reminded the group that suggestions for agenda items is also helpful.
51. No further comments were made in respect of the written NRW updates provided prior to the meeting.

Item 6 Updates from FUW / NFU Cymru / Wales YFC / Confor / CLA / TFA / Welsh Government

52. **FUW:** Gareth Parry thanked the group for the warm welcome since joining. Gareth said he is still working through Bernard's handover notes. Gareth mentioned that he recently received a question from an FUW member regarding incoming changes to waste exemptions and there was a recent review and there will be upcoming changes to waste exemptions in Wales. If that is the case, it would be useful to receive an update or discuss it at a future meeting.

AP June 06: Bronwen Martin to source an update regarding changes to waste exemptions for the next meeting.

53. **NFU Cymru:** Rachel said NFU Cymru have a watching brief regarding the progress of the Agriculture (Wales) Bill. We are watching that very closely to see how that influences the development of the Sustainable Farming Scheme which is expected this autumn. NFU Cymru are involved in a number of the SFS working groups including tenancy, common land, next generation and a key performance indicator group. There are a lot of issues to be resolved in those key areas if we're going to have a scheme that is workable for all farmers in Wales.

NFU Cymru are involved with the Nutrient Trading Task and Finish Group which is looking at nutrient trading and catchment permitting. NFU Cymru are also involved with pulling together a report relating to agriculture.

Rachel mentioned the Net Zero 2035 Challenge Group which has a theme on food. NFU Cymru will be supplying written evidence as part of their call by the end of the month.

NFU Cymru are also holding their Sustainable Farming Conference on 28th September 2023 showcasing the economic, environmental and social contributions of farming. Rachel said Bodwi in Pwllheli is going to be an excellent host farm for the event and diary markers will be sent out shortly, but all are welcome to attend.

54. **Wales YFC:** Lee Pritchard, Wales YFC had to leave the meeting before this item. However, Lee had sent Bronwen a short-written email to read out –

Lee thanked the everyone once again for including Wales YFC on this stakeholder group. Wales YFC are currently working on launching a YFC Welsh Water Champion

Partnership with Dwr Cymru Welsh Water. That will allow two of their Wales YFC members to go through an interview process to have the opportunity to visit different Welsh Water treatment plants and to see how the water is treated, cleaned and processed to drink.

55. **Confor:** Anthony said Confor have also been watching the progress of the Agriculture (Wales) Bill with interest. There were some amendments laid at Stage 3 that were beneficial in terms of removing the opportunity for vexatious complaints which could suspend licencing. Linked to that, Confor are working with NRW on drafting of the level 1 and level 2 conditions. This process has been a bit frustrating because the work feels quite disconnected from the sector. The rate and flow of progress and information isn't matching the rate at which the Agricultural (Wales) Bill has been developing and certainly the proposals by NRW and Minister for these new programmes being put in place from the 1st of January 2024 frankly is unachievable. The reality is that the guidance and the new conditions are not going to be explored and published until October. Anthony explained that there is simply not enough time when the planting season has started to engage with the sector and engage with all the other bodies who are advising and help them get up to speed on what the new application process and programme is going to look like and what those conditions are going to impact. Anthony said there will be 2 months from publication to roll out and that is just totally unacceptable. Confor will be approaching the Minister to request that she extends the implementation period beyond the end of the 2023-2024 planting season as we think it would be more appropriate, sensible and actually ensure there isn't a severe manipulation of the harvesting market as well.

There has been a significant revisit of the planting grants for Wales, they now reflect the cost of tree planting on farm and support things like fencing and deer fencing. For those farmers who are contemplating it, this is a good opportunity even if they are just looking at getting fencing costs covered.

Confor are in the process of responding to a HMRC consultation on the treatment of environmental and carbon credits. Anthony said he would encourage others to look at that if they have not already and offered to engage with them. However, this involves quite a short deadline unfortunately.

56. **TFA Cymru:** Dennis Matheson mentioned that TFA Cymru has been trying to get amendments to the Agricultural (Wales) Bill to enable tenants to participate in the Sustainable Farming Scheme. We have had some success but it's an uphill struggle.

TFA Cymru are still communicating with Welsh Government regarding the Agricultural Pollution Regulations and have not really got any progress regarding the issue of tenants being unable to comply with these regulations. The latest Frequently Asked Questions document for tenants produced by Welsh Government has not addressed any of the problems that TFA highlighted in the draft stage. In fact, if we followed the guidance, some tenants would probably end up losing their tenancies.

Another problem for tenant farmers is the 10% tree cover requirement of the SFS and we haven't overcome these difficulties either. Dennis said time is running out on this and he doubts if this problem will be solved in time, but TFA will continue to try.

57. Dominic mentioned that members of the forum might be interested to know that the Institute of Chartered Foresters (ICF) ran a conference in April that was connecting

trees, farmers and foresters. There is going to be a full review of the conference in the ICF Trees magazine in their summer issue. Dominic said he would take an action to try and get that review shared with this group, because there are some really interesting things there. Geraint Davies (NRW Board Member) presented at the event along with Abi Reader (NFU Cymru Deputy President), both of whom were really fascinating.

AP June 07: Dominic Driver, NRW to share the ICF conference summary with this group.

Item 7 Any Other Business

58. The Royal Welsh Agricultural Show (RWAS) is on the horizon and the group discussed some of the key priorities and focusses for the event. The group agreed that an informal get together at the RWAS would be nice, if possible.
59. Rachel mentioned that NFU Cymru are lobbying Welsh Government on the future of Glastir because currently, farmers only have Glastir contracts to the end of this year and yet the new Sustainable Farming Scheme is not going to start until 2025. In effect, those farmers who have been engaged in the delivery of environmental outcomes (some for 20-30 years) are facing a cliff edge regarding funding. This is not a good message to be sending the industry and it is not inspiring confidence. NFU Cymru are urging Welsh Government to make an early decision and put in place funding extensions for 2024 to provide that certainty.
60. The next meeting will be held on Monday 18th September – WLMF members are encouraged to suggest potential agenda items and discussion topics, please forward them to Bronwen.
61. No other business was raised.

Close meeting