REPORT OF THE CROSS-VISIT TO SWEDEN

This is a report of a visit to Dalsland, the Swedish Learning Area (LA) by a group from the Dartmoor LA (UK) and took place between 6th to 10th June 2018. The visit was prompted by a number of innovations identified within the Dalsland LA and described in the Dalsland Innovations Report (http://www.hnvlink.eu/download/SE_Dalsland_INNOVATIONREPORT.pdf). Those innovations linked to livestock farming , particularly cattle, were of particular interest to farmers and National Park staff from Dartmoor. This report describes the issues that proved to be of most interest and what was learnt during a very successful visit.

The participants:

+

The hosts; the Swedish Team:

- Lars Johansson, agricultural advisor, County Administrative Board
- Katrin McCann, environmental specialist, Environment and Energy office of Dalsland
- Magnus Ljung , Swedish University of Agricultural Sciences

The host team reflection on the visit: https://youtu.be/QQUGm8NHcsI

THIS PROJECT HAS RECEIVED FUNDING FROM THE EUROPEAN UNION HORIZON 2020 RESEARCH AND INNOVATION PROGRAMME UNDER GRANT AGREEMENT NO. 696391

The local Dalsland Farmers who participated in the visit:

Gyltungebyn/Kingebol farmers - Johan and Malin Larsson (*beef farmers, diversification and direct sales)*

Upperud – Svanangen farmers - Marie and David Naraine. *(new entrants, sheep farmers and marketing innovations)*

Stockelanda – Andersson family *(beef farmers and mobile abattoir)*

The Hillingsater community:

Jimmy Högberg and Lars Häger.

(restoring pastures)

Stenkas, Bullaren – Andreas Gustafsson and family *(extensive beef and restoring pastures)*

THIS PROJECT HAS RECEIVED FUNDING FROM THE EUROPEAN UNION HORIZON 2020 RESEARCH AND INNOVATION PROGRAMME UNDER GRANT AGREEMENT NO. 696391

And in Narsidan the Närsidan dairy farm (Jesper Johansson, Hanna Strutz) *(organic dairy and robotic milking)*

The visitors from Dartmoor:

1. Russell Ashford, farmer (organic – dairy, beef and sheep).
2. David Mudge, farmer (cattle & sheep)
3. Alison Kohler, Director of Conservation and Communities, Dartmoor National Park Authority
4. John Waldon, local LA co-ordinator
5. Gwyn Jones, EFNCP

Other participants:

Pavlin Antonov, farmer from Bulgaria's LA.

Knut Per Hasund, Swedish Board of Agriculture.

Bosse Sanderberg, Nature reserve manager and Börje Pettersson who is the farmer Bosse rents cattle from to graze the Kednäs and Skärbo nature reserves.

And project staff from HNV-Link - Fabrice Gouriveau, Maite Puig de Morales & Irina Herzon

THIS PROJECT HAS RECEIVED FUNDING FROM THE EUROPEAN UNION HORIZON 2020 RESEARCH AND INNOVATION PROGRAMME UNDER GRANT AGREEMENT NO. 696391

Outline programme			
	where	**who**	**focus**
Day 1	Gyltungebyn - Kingebol	Larsson family	Extensive beef farming, direct sales, diversification
	Svanängen, Köpmannebro	Naraine Family	Community Supported Agriculture, marketing
Day 2	Gyltungebyn	Knut Per Hasund	results based and value based approach within AE.
	Hillingsäter	Hillingsäter community	FOCLUM
	Stockelanda	Andersson family	mobile abattoir, extensive beef production
Day 3	Bräcke ängar, Åmål	Bosse Sanderberg & Börje Pettersson	FOCLUM -LUP & grazing nature reserve
	Närsidan, Bengtsfors	Jesper Johansson & Hanna Strutz	Semen sex selection, HNV-grazing & organic robotic dairy production
Day 4	Stenkas, Bullaren	Gustafsson Family	extensive cattle grazing, restoration of pastures

Reasons for visit; the innovations identified by the Dartmoor LA and considered to be on interest to farmers in the Dartmoor LA:

- Meat marketing initiatives
- Incentives to restore HNV farmland
- Agri-environment delivery
- Mobile abattoir
- Technologies to aid small livestock farmers

Information exchange:

Face to face farmer engagement was extremely successful and resulted in the exchange of ideas over a range of issues. Farmers were able to ask and hear about the practical application of the various innovations. The farming systems on Dartmoor (UK LA) and Dalsland (SE LA) had sufficient similarities to enable suggestions to be rapidly understood and their relevance assessed.

Timing of visit: Early June proved to be a suitable time for the visit, after calving and lambing and before the main grass cutting season. Finding windows of opportunity for farmers to be able to leave their farm is a serious issue and must be considered when arranging cross-visits.

THIS PROJECT HAS RECEIVED FUNDING FROM THE EUROPEAN UNION HORIZON 2020 RESEARCH AND INNOVATION PROGRAMME UNDER GRANT AGREEMENT NO. 696391

Main findings:

Meat marketing initiatives

Of the 5 farms visited two were selling meat direct to (local) consumers using methods familiar to UK – boxed meat and farm shop. All are new ventures (under 2 years) and on a relatively small scale so their long term viability is difficult to judge. All used the grazing of HNV vegetation as a unique selling point and most were registered as organic farms. The innovation from Svanangen (Nariane family) of **community supported agriculture** was of particular interest; the potential purchaser developed a relationship with the farm, farmer and animal. They were selling the animal at a set price – not weight related prior to slaughter. The venture is new, at a relatively small scale and their lambs were marketed directly (web based selling) to individual shoppers in Gothenburg. The price per animal (220 euro in 2017 plus 150 euro for the skin/hide) is substantially higher than the conventional markets. See their web site for further detail www.andelslamm.se

Most farms could secure a higher price for their milk/meat if it was registered as organic but concerns were raised that the consumer may not always be willing to pay solely for an organic product. Accreditation (KRAV) for the organic producer may not be worth the costs, especially if organic feed if it has to be bought in. The meat's taste, quality, localness and association with 'free range' grazing may be more attractive to the consumer.

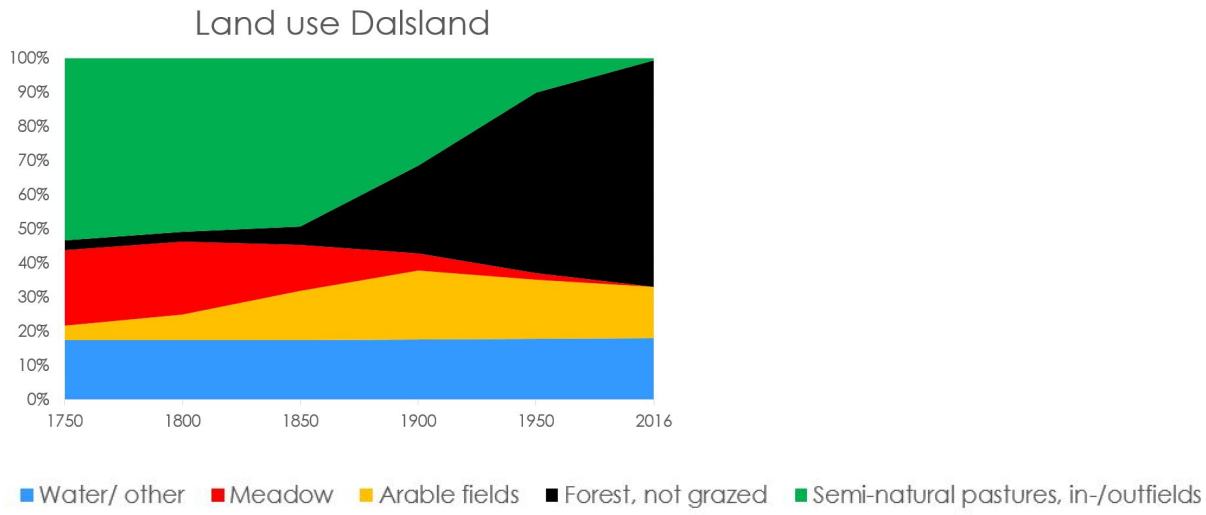
A farm's ability to finish (fatten) animals is essential for direct sales. The localness of suitable abattoirs and butchers (cutting) is an issue for some but is not a serious obstacle.

None of the farmers had a formal arrangement with other local farms to create a collective for better continuous supply of meat or to share costs (publicity, marketing & production). That might be due to the newness of the venture and/or to the sparsity of farmers. One farmer was using artificial insemination (AI) to extend the calving season to provide suitable animals for slaughter over most of the year.

Incentives to restore HNV pasture

The Dalsland LA has undergone extensive land use change since the 1930's, particularly to the detriment of herb-rich pastures, following an economic crisis for the agricultural sector at that time.

THIS PROJECT HAS RECEIVED FUNDING FROM THE EUROPEAN UNION HORIZON 2020 RESEARCH AND INNOVATION PROGRAMME UNDER GRANT AGREEMENT NO. 696391



Returning land to pasture after it had been abandoned or planted with trees proved of great interest to the visiting farmers. In the UK the interest in re-wilding marginal farmland (of high HNV) is a cause for concern to farmers and those responsible for such areas. Whether marginal farmland should be abandoned or allowed, by the natural re-generation, to become woodland raises significant issues. The ecological benefits of restoring HNV pasture, alongside the benefits to the community, were explored as were the drivers for these changes.

The reasons and causes for the historic land use is addressed in the Dalsland baseline assessment, see: http://www.hnvlink.eu/learning-areas/vaestra-goetaland/

There are economic drivers to return some of the forest/woodland into pasture; farmers need more grazing and once returned to pasture CAP payments would be available. Natural regenerated woodland attracts no or little financial support apart from the selling of fire-wood or wood-chip. Once the trees are removed then the role of agri-environment is also crucial to ensure the correct HNV vegetation develops.

However not all the drivers are financial. Farmers and others spoke frequently about wanting an open landscape; a landscape that enables the lakes and features to be seen and appreciated. One member of the community had a vision (to see the lake from his house) and was able to bring the community with him. This is stressed in the ambitions of the farming community around the lake of Hillingsater, see: https://www.youtube.com/watch?time_continue=25&v=5ux0Z0bUydM and more recently in the farmer restoring gazing to a small hill top with archaeological features to enable access to the local community and to provide an open landscape for the features to be appreciated by the village

THIS PROJECT HAS RECEIVED FUNDING FROM THE EUROPEAN UNION HORIZON 2020 RESEARCH AND INNOVATION PROGRAMME UNDER GRANT AGREEMENT NO. 696391

community of Bullaren. It is what the local village community desired. There are also strong ecological reasons to see more pasture, grazed woodland and meadows. The regenerated woodland offers habitats for the commoner species but many specialist species have been lost following the dominance of woodland. One example would be the loss of the white-backed woodpecker *Dendrocopos leucotos* and restoration of its habitat is another driver for opening up the woodland and restoring HNV wood pastures.

Dave and Russell read the information on the archaeology at Bullaren.

However in addition to the drivers the role of advice and access to financial measures are essential for the successful completion of the restoration of pasture. The support and guidance provided by agricultural and ecological advisers appears critical to both sustain the farmer led proposals and to encourage other farmers to adopt a similar approach. The design and application of Facilitation of Collaborative Land Use Management (FOCLUM) is an innovation that appears to already producing benefits for farmers, the local community and the environment (including HNV farmland).

FOCLUM and the associated land use planning tool FOCLUM – LUP (Land Use Plan) are well described in the innovations report for Dalsland; http://www.hnvlink.eu/download/SE_Dalsland_INNOVATIONREPORT.pdf

Those aspects of this approach that are particularly relevant to HNV farming in the UK are:

- The role of an adviser and/or facilitator (both probably provided by the same person) is critical. The advisor with vision, communication and engagement skills is essential; a person to engender confidence and innovation.
- Someone (usually the farmer) has a vision for what the area should look like.
- Community engagement that places the farmer in the centre.
- Provides a collective approach that provides confidence to the farmer that his or her actions are acceptable to a wider community.
- Provides a clear ambition or outcome for the area including other public benefits in addition to the ecological targets.
- There is a long term objective necessary for farming.
- A tool box, including funding opportunities, to help delivery that can be tailored to individual conditions and although the tools may be blunt at the start they can be sharpened up as the process of delivery continues.
- It's a relatively simple process.
- It is a win – win situation; providing additional pasture as well as a range of public benefits for the local community.

THIS PROJECT HAS RECEIVED FUNDING FROM THE EUROPEAN UNION HORIZON 2020 RESEARCH AND INNOVATION PROGRAMME UNDER GRANT AGREEMENT NO. 696391

Other interesting innovations included:

Two farmers were renting cattle to other land owners to enable them to manage HNV pasture and retain the grazed woodland pasture and grasslands.

An innovative approach to agri-environment schemes

Most of the grassland/pastures that had been created were now under an agri-environment (AE) agreement. Recent agreements were less prescriptive than earlier schemes and encouraged farmer input. However farmers had to undertake the work necessary to create the vegetation suitable for an agreement, at their own cost. There is a move towards results based schemes that value public goods including landscape features (e.g. stone walls)but this is yet to be fully adopted into the scheme design. The development of results based approach was presented by Knut Per Hasund from the Swedish Board of Agriculture. For further details see: http://webbutiken.jordbruksverket.se/sv/artiklar/nya-trycksaker/ra1321.html

The objective of the pilot study is described below:

The result and value-based agri-environment payments are a new way of reimbursing farmers producing biodiversity, open landscapes, cultural heritage and other environmental services that will not be paid for by the private market.

This approach is currently under trial in Falbygden until 2019 when it will be evaluated and considered for wider application.

Aspects of the new design are similar to Dartmoor Farming Futures (Dartmoor LA innovation) and the opportunity to develop learning to benefit each innovation is recognised.

Specific ideas for :

- Provision of an identification key for important plants.
- Maintenance and enhancement of key landscape features (e.g. stone walls).
- Landscape approach that fits well with FOCLUM.

Mobile abattoir

We were unable to see the mobile abattoir due to a mechanical breakdown however Mr. Andersson at Stockelanda had first-hand experience of the abattoir; he had used it for his cattle and worked for it as a slaughter man.

The development costs were high (4m euro) but the model is beginning to be franchised in France and potentially in New Zealand and Australia.

The system is very efficient, with the abattoir purchasing the meat and then reselling through its retail outlets. The on – farm slaughter results in less stress for cattle and therefore better meat. There is a reduction in transport costs for the farmer and a premium price is paid for the animal/meat. A vet is

THIS PROJECT HAS RECEIVED FUNDING FROM THE EUROPEAN UNION HORIZON 2020 RESEARCH AND INNOVATION PROGRAMME UNDER GRANT AGREEMENT NO. 696391

part of team (4 or 5 staff) and the unit comprises of 3 vehicles. The size of the vehicles and the space that is required may prove a potential problem in areas with poor infrastructure and small farms.

The unit requires between 40 to 50 animals per day. Smaller producers can join up to provide sufficient animals.

The mobile abattoir unit

See: www.globalmeatnews.com/Article/2016/09/21/France-powers-up-Sweden-s-mobile-abattoir

Technologies to aid small livestock farmers

- Self-closing gate
- Grain silo (*see photo of David Naraine*)
- Semen sex selection – more heifers (female cows) for dairy more steers (male animals) for beef production.
- Seed mixes (mix of Timothy grass with clover).
- Use of mobile chicken units to clean ground of invertebrates after sheep grazing; to remove potentially damaging pests and disease.

The Dartmoor farmers' comments

In addition to the innovations presented with in this note the following observations , made by the farmers are of particular interest;

THIS PROJECT HAS RECEIVED FUNDING FROM THE EUROPEAN UNION HORIZON 2020 RESEARCH AND INNOVATION PROGRAMME UNDER GRANT AGREEMENT NO. 696391

- Good project advisers are essential to support and guide farmers; with a "can do" attitude.
- Farmers being paid to provide cattle and/or grazing regime to other land owners' land is novel but may well become more accepted (in UK).
- Role of "off farm" employment useful if not essential to support rural and farming community (e.g. snow clearance, fire fighting).
- Communication between Swedish farmers (aided by local facilitators) is refreshing and healthy.
- A tool box/kit for advisers enables the right tool for different jobs to be accessed. Then the tools can be improved (sharpened) as the idea is developed. Not having the ideal sharp tool at the beginning is not seen as a barrier.
- A scarcity of farmers and low land prices encourages risk and innovation.

Reflection from Russel Ashford, a farmer from Dartmoor;
https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=hR2DFPPayXM

Additional observations from Alison Kohler (DNPA):

There are similar problems across both areas (Dartmoor and Dalsland); consumers are not always willing to pay a premium for high quality meat, there is a lack of understanding (by the consumer/public) of what HNV farming means. We need to counter the often inaccurate evidence that eating meat is bad for the environment. This needs to be a concerted/collaborative effort.

There is a disconnect between people in urban areas and rural communities. However got a sense that those coming to the (Swedish) countryside do want to switch of slow down and be with nature and this could be used to the advantage of HNV farmers.

Rural communities struggling – Dalsland – it's a summer destination – high percentage of summer residences (holiday homes). Past policy decisions have impacted leading to a loss of community, farmers and loss of habitat. In England uncertainty about future policy directions and could learn from the Swedish example. Dalsland has seen fewer but larger farms which makes it difficult for young people to make a start, concern what this will mean on Dartmoor. Succession – proves difficult in both areas.

In Dalsland most of the farmers had more than one business – their work often included forestry operations, but they also helped clear roads in winter. It appeared that farmers in Dalsland, although we only met a few, had a wider business base, recognised the need to innovate and were encouraged and supported to do so.

The project officers we met were not "average" and they did exemplify the skills set necessary to achieve good outcomes for the environment, the farmer and the wider community. Vision, passion, good communications skills are at the heart of this but particularly an inclusive and collaborative approach that treats all equally.

Equally important in my view was the role of the tool box, not only the tools within it but to use Lars Johansson simile the ability to adapt the tools you use and sharpen them up with experience.

THIS PROJECT HAS RECEIVED FUNDING FROM THE EUROPEAN UNION HORIZON 2020 RESEARCH AND INNOVATION PROGRAMME UNDER GRANT AGREEMENT NO. 696391

Reflection from Alison Kohler, DNPA; https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=GKUQDYbkr4I

Additional comments:

from Gwyn Jones, EFNCP https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=5io-Ub_Bh2w

and from Irina Herzon, a communication officer of the project, University of Helsinki, Finland

https://youtu.be/I4cntZi9C-o

Follow-up, next steps:

The Dartmoor team will present their findings to the wider farming community on Dartmoor.

Communication between Dalsland and Dartmoor will continue as various innovations are developed.

Report provided by Dartmoor (UK) LA team: Gwyn Jones, Ally Kohler, Russell Ashford, Dave Mudge and John Waldon with help and support from Irina Herzon and Lars Johansson.

July 2018

THIS PROJECT HAS RECEIVED FUNDING FROM THE EUROPEAN UNION HORIZON 2020 RESEARCH AND INNOVATION PROGRAMME UNDER GRANT AGREEMENT NO. 696391