EHFN Directors Update
Exmoor Nature Recovery Vision
In our view, the Exmoor Hill Farming Network’s position was misrepresented at the Exmoor National Park Committee Meeting last week. We have asked for a meeting at senior level with the Park. The constructive relationship on Exmoor which led to the creation of Exmoor’s Ambition should not be put at risk.

Latest Covid-19 Update
With the new national restrictions in place from 5th November 2020. The new measures will apply nationally for four weeks up to Wednesday 2 December. For further information about what you can and cannot do visit https://www.gov.uk/guidance/new-national-restrictions-from-5-november#national-restrictions-from-5-november

EHFN Office at Cutcombe Market
With the new restrictions in place from 5th November, the office will be closed until further notice. The Network Officer will continue to work remotely. Please continue to get in touch via email or 07970 795808.

Projects Update
IT Support and Training on Exmoor – Launch of our Second Bite sized Video - Routers and Wi-Fi. Getting the best out of your broadband connection
Welcome to a series of bite-sized videos about the internet and computers, produced for us by Exmoor IT. Each video is about 20 minutes long and tackles issues that we hope you find informative and helpful.
We recognise that Covid-19 is producing a ‘new normal’ in the way businesses need to use IT, especially in remote upland locations like Exmoor. We are very thankful to the Princes Countryside Fund, supported by The NFU Mutual Charitable Fund, for helping us with this initiative using its Covid-19 Grants Programme for Farmer Support Groups.

Between October and December 2020, our videos will be released and followed up with an interactive session over Zoom with this IT project ending in January 2021. For those wishing to take part in the interactive sessions, who would like help on how to use Zoom, please view our step by step guide attached. Any problems please contact Katherine at EHFN and she will be very happy to assist.

We are delighted to launch the second video - Routers and Wi-Fi. Getting the best out of your broadband connection
  - Accessing your router settings
  - Changing your router
  - Things that block signal
• Extending your wi-fi coverage
• When it doesn’t work

To view the latest video and the series visit our website, click the page link here http://www.ehfn.org.uk/it-support-and-training. The 10 top tips for Internet connections. Keeping things simple, safe and secure can be found attached or on our website.

Our Zoom online participatory session to discuss the above topic area in further detail with EHFN and Andrew at Exmoor IT will be held on Monday 16th November at 8pm. If you would like to join on 16th November please contact katherine@ehfn.org.uk for the zoom log in details. Thank you to those who joined the first session last week. Everyone is welcome and don’t miss out on this great opportunity. We can help you get up to speed with zoom and computers!

Headwaters of the Exe

Headwaters of the Exe

Water Management on Farms

Winter means rain, and on the highest parts of Exmoor that means receiving on average 120 inches of rain a year. So, how can we make the most of such a valuable resource and why would we want to? Through good water management we can: improve and protect water quality, efficiently use a valuable resource potentially saving costs on mains water use, reduce and mitigate flooding and adapt to a changing climate.

Separate clean and dirty water in farmyards by maintaining or installing shed gutters and yard drains, this will help to reduce slurry and the amount of dirty water to handle but also means that you can use the clean water for something else – such as free (and on Exmoor, plentiful!) livestock drinking water in sheds.

Regularly clear out soakaways, silt traps and cross drains on tracks, rather than remembering to do it during a heavy rain event, something I have been guilty of on occasions. Think about ways that you can temporarily store water on the farm to help reduce issues downstream. Options include creating soakaways, silt traps or cross drains on key run-off routes and tracks, considering moving gateways or key access routes if they are prone to run-off draining through them or are in a wet area of a field, considering your travel routes across the farm, planting trees on key run-off routes and increasing surface roughness by allowing longer vegetation.

Healthy soils are by far the most effective way of retaining valuable moisture in your fields. The free draining soils on Exmoor can be prone to spring and summer drought and making sure soils are able to capture and retain moisture throughout the soil will help reduce winter run-off and benefit spring grass growth. Identify and address soil issues that will affect efficient water infiltration such as compaction and capping, previous articles have discussed this in more detail.

Hedges and hedge banks have been proven to slow the flow of water, particularly if planted along contour lines. They act a physical barrier to slow run-off, improve infiltration and uptake of water, reduce soil erosion, reduce the risk of nutrient leaching and increase habitat diversity and wildlife. The Pontbren Project, mid Wales, found on one farm that in
the shelter belt water soaked into the soil 60 times faster than in grassland pasture 10m away, and the beneficial effect also extended beyond the tree edge (Woodland Trust).

Other aspects of natural flood management can include woody flow spreaders (made from logs or branches mimicking naturally fallen trees, which help to reduce erosion in temporary flow channels, can allow more time for water to soak into soils and slow flows), in-field bunds (earth banks used for run-off interception and storage or run-off diversion away from high risk areas such as field gates onto roads or directly into watercourses), leaky run-off ponds (to store run-off during heavy rainfall) and in-ditch features (barriers or traps within ditches to slow flow and allow sediment to settle). For more information see the FWAG SW website natural flood management information sheets. If you are interested in a free visit to discuss water management or how the Headwaters of the Exe project can benefit you, please get in touch with Anne May by email anne.may@fwagsw.org.uk or phone 01823 660684.

**Peer Support Groups**

**Exmoor Women in Farming Group – Zoom meeting TONIGHT**

After two very successful Women Health talks with Dr Jenny Capps on Menopause and Breast Cancer Awareness last month. The group will meet for a general catch up meeting tonight Monday 9th Nov. **Time:** 8pm – 9pm **Venue:** From your own home **Peer Support Contribution:** £5pp (optional) Join the Zoom Meeting here https://us02web.zoom.us/j/85066620559?pwd=bTBKOU1FMm5YRkd0enc2WkRQTRGQTO9 Meeting ID: 850 6662 0559 Passcode: 912436. Thank you to those who have sent over voluntary peer support contributions, your support is greatly appreciated.

**Next Generation Group**

We will be arranging a zoom meeting for the group over the forthcoming weeks, if you have any suggestions of guest speakers please get in touch.

**Training Update**

After a successful response to our Food Hygiene and Trailer Test call for interest. With the latest lockdown announcement, all training is on hold until further notice. Apologies for any inconvenience caused and as soon as we can rearrange we will do so.

**Two Day Mental Health First Aid Course – 2 places left**

**Date:** Wednesday 2nd Dec and Thursday 3rd December 2020 via Zoom **Time:** 9am-4pm **Cost:** FREE to those working in Agriculture, funded by Somerset Community Foundation and the Somerset Mental Health in Agricultural Group. For further information please contact Becky Wright 07590 684888 or becky@newleaf.uk.com

**Exmoor Lamb Register**

Don’t forget to support local this Christmas. Do you have family and friends near or far away? Are you struggling for ideas for a Christmas present? How about a lamb box for Christmas or for your Christmas lunch? Do take a look at our register showcasing some of our local producers producing Exmoor Lamb. [http://www.ehfn.org.uk/exmoor-lamb](http://www.ehfn.org.uk/exmoor-lamb)
Fundraising News
Exmoor Hill Farming Network Cake Sales has Macmillan Cancer Support at heart this Autumn raising £1,204.80.

The Exmoor Hill Farming Network is an independent, 100% farmer-led organisation and operates as a Community Interest Company (CIC).

The ongoing Covid-19 pandemic has had a fundamental effect on the Network’s activities, many of which have come to a halt. However, the Network has remained open, based remotely and available to members as a source of trusted information and at the forefront, responding to the needs of our farming community here on Exmoor and in the Greater Exmoor area. One of our Peer Support Groups which tackles rural isolation and mental health has continued throughout this pandemic and meet fortnightly via zoom since April. The Exmoor Women in Farming Group has met from the comfort of their own homes, engaging with over 40 individuals to date. The meetings have ranged from women’s health talks, to guest speakers from other rural parts of the UK talking about their farming opportunities and challenges and it is generally an opportunity for our members to talk about their experiences too. Earlier this Autumn it was suggested to support Macmillan Cancer Support as we had held a very successful coffee morning last September. After a discussion ensuring Covid measures could be observed, it was agreed to hold two cake sales at Blackmoor Gate and Cutcombe Market livestock markets during October by kind permission of Exmoor Farmers. The cake sales were overseen by Katherine Williams, EHFN Network Officer, and members of the Women in Farming Group. The cake sales were also accompanied by two prize draw meat hampers. The efforts of our farming communities raised a grand total of £1,204.80 for the charity working to provide specialist health care, information and financial support to people affected by cancer.

Katherine Williams, EHFN Network Officer explains “We wanted to show our support in these unusual circumstances as this charity is close to many of our hearts in one way or another. This year we had to change our direction and ensure whatever we did was Covid secure. Everyone was very generous with their donations and we are exceedingly thankful for the support the farming community gave to this worthy cause”.

Pictured: Representatives from Exmoor Women in Farming Group who dedicated their time to assist with the sales. L-R Catherine Cowling, Lesley Nicholas (centre) and Samantha Lole.

Exmoor Hill Farming Network Christmas Quiz
In light of the current restrictions and unable to hold our Annual Christmas Review at Woolhanger this year. We will be celebrating with a ‘Quiz Night’ via Zoom. We will seeking a prize for the winning team. Teams and individuals are most welcome in line with government guidelines. Date to be confirmed very soon starting at 7.30pm. We are asking
for a £5 donation per log in and log in details will be circulated on receipt of payment. If anyone would like to help with preparing the quiz questions please get in touch.

**Farming Help**
The Farming Help partnership is a collaboration between The Addington Fund, The Farming Community Network, R.A.B.I, RSABI and Forage Aid and is supported by The Prince’s Countryside Fund. [https://www.farminghelp.co.uk/](https://www.farminghelp.co.uk/)

**RABI launch new support and counselling service for farming people**
Mental health issues can affect anyone, but people working in agriculture face some unique and complex emotional and practical challenges. For a start, farming is often a 24/7 business where it’s hard to switch off and impossible to get away from the workplace. Many in farming work long hours in isolation in remote, rural areas. Future uncertainty over funding, weather extremes, pandemics and more - all of these factors present challenges to farmers and this can affect people in many ways. RABI have just launched a new mental health wellbeing service that’s based online. **It's free, safe and anonymous.** It allows people to choose how they want to access help: magazines, forums, messaging and live counselling. The counsellors are trained in agricultural issues, so will understand farming related concerns and pressures. There is a section for adults, called Qwell, and a separate section for those aged 11 - 17 called Kooth. More info on both can be found on RABI’s website.

**Commercial Adverts**

**JERSEY COW WORK**
Living at Wheddon Cross we seek an enthusiastic, hard working person to help us with farm duties. Primarily the role consists of looking after, including once a day hand milking, our gentle, quiet and well-mannered Jersey cow and calf. As a minimum we would require one hour per day, 5 days per week to cover milking, this could be morning or evening. In addition, there could be other duties up to a maximum of a further 12 hours per week. Passion, interest and enthusiasm will be rewarded with increasing responsibilities. Don’t worry if you have not milked before we will help you learn but you have to be very keen and interested. Please contact David Yiend for further information [dy.raleigh@gmail.com](mailto:dy.raleigh@gmail.com) or 01643842907
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